

Social Construction of Participation Among Dayak Deah Indigenous Communities in Village Fund Management

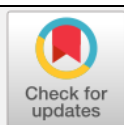
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ABSTRACT

This study employs a qualitative research approach to explore the social construction of participation by the Dayak Deah indigenous community in the oversight of village fund management in Pengelak Village, Upau Sub-District, Tabalong Regency. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions with key informants. The findings reveal that participation by the Dayak Deah community is deeply rooted in cultural values and local identity, reflecting a strong sense of collective responsibility for environmental stewardship and community development. Traditional practices such as gotong royong (cooperation) are central in shaping their involvement. Participation is influenced by three interrelated dimensions: cultural and communal values, which reflect indigenous norms and shared heritage; social and institutional structures, particularly the role of traditional leadership and customary institutions; and communication and knowledge systems, including interaction patterns, access to information, and levels of education. Additionally, historical experiences with governance, development interventions, and resource management shape the community's trust in participatory mechanisms. In conclusion, the Dayak Deah indigenous community's participation in village fund supervision results from a complex interplay of cultural traditions, institutional arrangements, communication practices, educational factors, and historical context. Understanding these socially constructed dimensions is essential for developing inclusive and sustainable strategies to strengthen community-based governance.

Keywords: Indigenous Communities; Participation; Social Construction; Village Fund Oversight

1. Introduction

Supervision of village funds is vital for promoting transparency and accountability in allocating and using village budgets. Effective oversight ensures that funds are utilized as intended, reinforcing public trust in village governance. With the increasing allocation of village funds across Indonesia, the importance of robust supervision mechanisms has become more pronounced. The involvement of Indigenous communities in these oversight processes presents an opportunity to enhance governance by integrating local wisdom and community-based values, particularly concerning environmental sustainability and development priorities.

The Dayak Deah community in Pengelak Village, Upau Sub-District, Tabalong Regency, exemplifies the significant role that Indigenous groups can play in village fund monitoring. Their participation is not solely based on formal institutional mandates but is also profoundly rooted in culturally embedded social constructions, including collective identity, customary traditions, and localized social structures. Examining the social construction of Indigenous community participation is essential for understanding how meaningful engagement is shaped and sustained.

This study investigates how the Dayak Deah's cultural identity, traditional norms, and institutional structures influence their engagement in village fund oversight. A nuanced understanding of these factors can inform the development of more inclusive and culturally responsive policies. Furthermore, the study aims to identify structural and contextual barriers that may limit Indigenous participation in financial oversight processes.

The participation of Indigenous communities in monitoring development programs is not unprecedented. In Papua, Indonesia, research has shown that incorporating local cultural values can enhance the effectiveness of village fund monitoring systems (Beck, 1992; McDonald, 2023; Pereira, 2021). Similarly, Indigenous involvement in public program monitoring in Australia has demonstrated improvements in governance outcomes (Pereira, 2021). In West Kalimantan, Indigenous communities' participation in village fund governance is shaped by long-standing traditions of cooperation and mutual aid (Lili, 2018). Research in the Amazon has shown that Indigenous participation in development oversight reduces the risk of corruption and ensures that projects are more closely aligned with community needs (Pereira, 2021).

A study on the Baduy community in Indonesia revealed that collective responsibility and solidarity were fundamental to their participation in supervising village development projects (Eccles et al., 2020; Eynon & Young, 2021; Herdiana, 2019). Likewise, research on the Toraja community in South Sulawesi found that strong customary institutional frameworks contributed to effectively monitoring village fund disbursements (Connolly, 2020; Naeem, 2021; Ta'dung & Lisdani, 2021). In other contexts, African Indigenous groups have played a key role in overseeing the implementation of international aid programs (Olaopa, 2022). Their participation in infrastructure monitoring in Sumatra has improved project quality (Tumbel, 2017). In South Korea, Indigenous education and local knowledge were found to influence the effectiveness of community participation in government programs significantly. However, they remain underrepresented in the village fund management literature (Torri, 2012).

Building on these findings, the present study focuses on how social constructions shape the participation of the Dayak Deah Indigenous community in monitoring village funds. Understanding these constructions is key to formulating empowerment strategies that encourage sustainable, community-based governance. It is anticipated that this research will contribute to improved transparency and accountability in village fund management, while also reinforcing the role of Indigenous communities in fostering sustainable development at the village level.

While existing studies on village fund management have primarily focused on program implementation from a top-down perspective (Bustomi et al., 2020; Idrus & Dunakhir, 2022), relatively few have examined Indigenous perspectives and lived experiences within these governance systems (Ismail & Tenrirawe, 2011; Mushalli, 2017). The socio-cultural dynamics that shape participation among Indigenous communities remain underexplored, despite their importance in shaping effective governance outcomes (Ison et al., 2024; Rink et al., 2024). This research thus addresses a critical gap by offering an Indigenous-centered analysis of participation in village fund management.

This study introduces a novel approach by examining the social construction of participation among the Dayak Deah Indigenous community in the context of village fund oversight (Payadnya et al., 2024; von Baeyer et al., 2024). By focusing on cultural and traditional frameworks that inform local understandings of governance, the research provides insight into the complexity of community engagement within a specific Indigenous setting (Zhang, 2024). Moreover, the Dayak Deah remains underrepresented in the village fund management literature, making this study a timely and valuable contribution to the broader Indigenous governance and development policy field.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Indigenous Peoples' Participation in Village Fund Supervision

Community participation in village fund supervision is vital to effective and accountable village governance. Within Indigenous communities, participation is not merely an administrative function; it also embodies a collective responsibility rooted in cultural values, customary norms, and local identity. For many Indigenous groups, such involvement is expressed through informal, trust-based mechanisms grounded in cooperation and adherence to traditional authority (Tjondronegoro, 2004).

The effectiveness of village fund supervision in Indigenous contexts is closely tied to the social legitimacy of local actors perceived as trustworthy by the community. In the case of the Dayak Deah community, participation in overseeing village funds reflects their cultural identity and shared values (Setiawan, 2021). Practices such as mutual assistance, loyalty to customary leaders, and communal solidarity form the basis of their engagement with local governance processes.

This participatory model aligns with the concept of participatory accountability, which emphasizes the role of citizens in exercising social control through direct and inclusive community involvement (Ackerman et al., 2005; Erb et al., 2006). Rather than relying solely on formal institutions, Indigenous participation operates within relational and culturally embedded frameworks prioritizing consensus, reciprocity, and legitimacy. Understanding Indigenous participation in village fund supervision requires a perspective that integrates cultural meaning and institutional practice.

2.2. Cultural Identity and Indigenous Social Structure

The cultural identity of Indigenous peoples provides a cognitive and normative framework that shapes their participation in village governance. Traditional value systems and social institutions, such as the roles of customary elders, deliberative rituals, and the principle of consensus-based decision-making, form the foundation of local governance practices (Fox, 2024). In Dayak society, the social structure is hierarchical and communal, fostering a mode of social interaction that prioritizes moral responsibility over formal administrative procedures.

This participatory orientation can be understood through the lens of *social construction*, wherein shared experiences shape social reality, inherited cultural practices, and institutionalized knowledge (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Within this framework, cultural identity defines the boundaries of acceptable behavior and informs collective action and local governance norms.

In village fund supervision, these social structures serve a dual function: facilitating participation and morally regulating village officials' behavior. In many Indigenous communities, customary leaders are regarded as more legitimate guardians of social norms than formal state-appointed village officials, frequently perceived as external to the community's traditional governance system (Sirait et al., 2017). This dynamic reflects the enduring influence of Indigenous institutions in shaping participatory governance at the village level.

2.3. Communication Patterns and Social Literacy

Communication patterns and levels of social literacy play a critical role in shaping Indigenous participation in village fund management. In many Indigenous communities, communication is often indirect and takes place through culturally embedded symbols, gestures, and informal networks governed by norms of politeness and social hierarchy (Hadi, 2021; Kaban, 2016). Among the Dayak Deah, participatory communication rarely involves open forums or public debate. Instead, it is expressed through consultative practices that deeply respect customary structures and social roles.

Social literacy, the ability to understand governance systems, village financial mechanisms, and citizens' rights, can facilitate or hinder active involvement in decision-making. According to Cornwall, limited access to formal education does not necessarily hinder meaningful participation, provided local knowledge transmission mechanisms exist (Cornwall, 2008). These mechanisms may include traditional counseling practices or the informal guidance of respected community leaders.

Consequently, empowerment strategies to improve Indigenous participation must be culturally sensitive, integrating local modes of communication and education. Efforts to increase participation should build upon the community's existing forms of knowledge exchange and align with traditional values and structures. Doing so makes interventions more likely to be accepted and sustained within the Indigenous context.

2.4. Historical Experience and Social Constructs of Participation

Indigenous peoples' participation in village fund supervision is significantly influenced by their historical experiences with development initiatives and interactions with the state. In many cases, Indigenous communities possess a collective memory of marginalization, exclusion, or exploitation by external actors, which continues to shape their engagement with formal governance structures (Scott, 2001). These experiences often lead to a cautious or skeptical attitude toward state-led programs. However, they can also be a powerful motivator for proactive involvement to safeguard communal resources and rights.

In the case of the Dayak Deah community, participation in village fund oversight reflects not only a cultural obligation but also a strategic response to evolving local political and social dynamics. This participation form emerges from the interplay between Indigenous values, customary power structures, and state interventions through village governance programs. Rather than being a passive outcome, participation is actively constructed through the community's adaptation to institutional change and historical conditions.

Understanding the historical and sociopolitical context in which participation is constructed is essential for designing policies and empowerment strategies that are contextually grounded

and culturally responsive. This approach enables more inclusive and effective governance by aligning with Indigenous communities' lived realities and institutional frameworks.

3. Research Methodology

This study was conducted to explore the participation of the Dayak Deah Indigenous community in monitoring the use of village funds in Pengelak Village, Upau Sub-District, Tabalong Regency, located at approximately 1°18'-2°25' S and 115°09'-115°47' E. A qualitative research design was employed, integrating direct observation and in-depth interviews to examine community involvement in village fund supervision.

Direct observation captured real-time interactions and practices related to community participation in monitoring activities. In-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including the Head of Upau Sub-District, the Village Head of Pengelak, representatives from relevant government agencies, members of the Village Consultative Body (Badan Permasyarakatan Desa/BPD), and local environmental activists.

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative methods, combining descriptive and thematic analytical approaches. ATLAS.ti software was employed as a supporting tool for managing and coding qualitative data to enhance the organization and depth of analysis. The use of ATLAS.ti enabled systematic categorization of themes and patterns, thereby increasing the analytical rigor and transparency of the research process.

4. Results

4.1. The Role of Community Participation in Village Fund Monitoring

Community participation in village fund monitoring is vital in ensuring transparency, accountability, and the efficient use of public resources. Active community involvement in supervising budgetary processes has enhanced transparency and reduced the risk of fund misappropriation and corruption (de Siqueira et al., 2023; Maryunani, 2023; Putrasamedja, 2010). Increasing public awareness and education about the importance and mechanisms of monitoring village funds has significantly boosted participation (Hernandez, 2017; Hilmawan et al., 2023; Shewade et al., 2023). Participatory platforms such as community meetings, open forums, and digital applications have also facilitated more direct citizen engagement in overseeing village budgets (OECD, 2019).

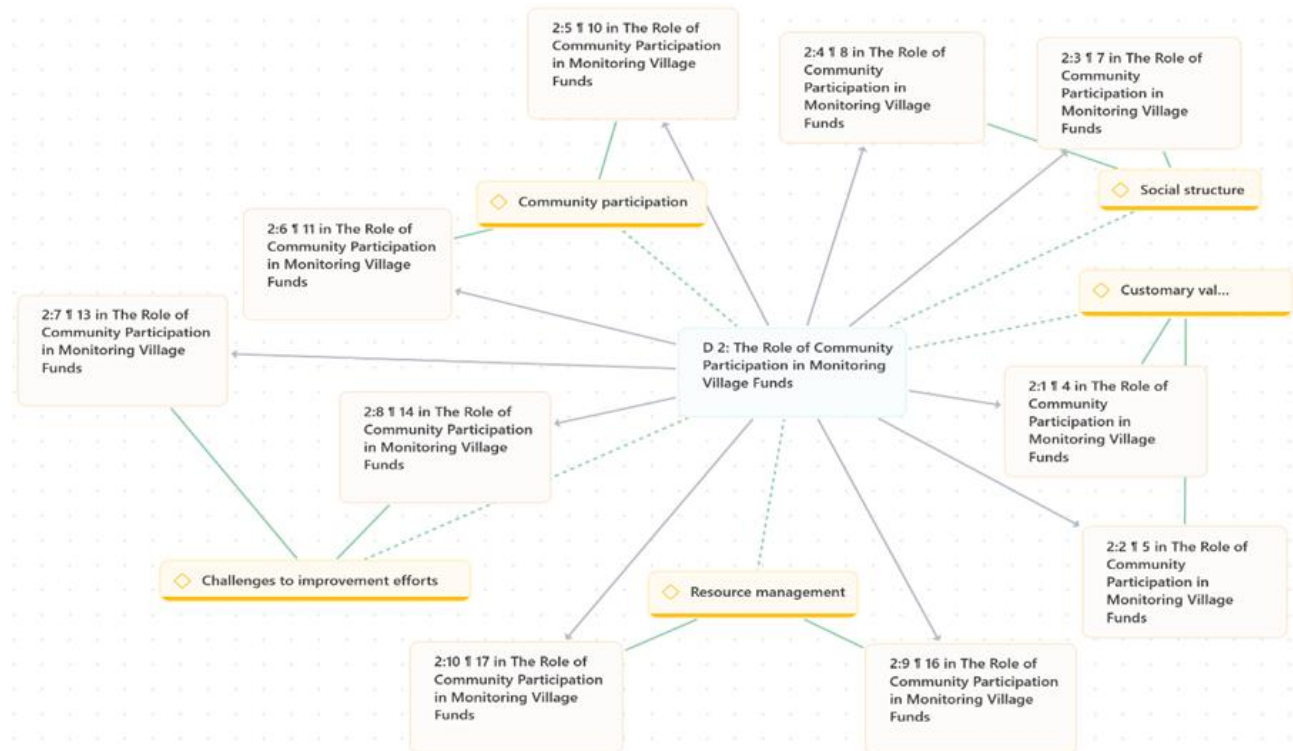


Figure 1. Community Participation Factors in Village Fund Monitoring (Processed with ATLAS.ti)

Qualitative data analyzed using ATLAS.ti indicates that Indigenous communities possess deeply rooted social structures and cohesive value systems centered on principles of cooperation, solidarity, and moral integrity. Within the Dayak Deah community, customary norms such as the *simpan siur* cooperation system reflect enduring commitments to mutual assistance. These values foster high levels of social capital, facilitating effective collective action in public affairs.

Despite these strengths, several challenges hinder the full realization of participatory governance. Cases of corruption and the limited capacity of village officials remain critical issues that undermine the effectiveness of community oversight. Indigenous knowledge systems have proven instrumental in maintaining environmental sustainability and balancing ecosystem preservation with community needs, particularly in areas such as natural resource governance. Nonetheless, financial transparency and civic education gaps persist, highlighting the need for ongoing training and empowerment initiatives for officials and community members.

An official from Pengelak Village emphasized this point, stating:

"Our traditions emphasize cooperation and mutual respect, which builds our solidarity. Corruption and a lack of skills among village officials hinder transparency and participation. We need more training and education about our rights and responsibilities. We use traditional knowledge for the sustainability of the ecosystem, and we try to balance needs and environmental preservation."

The Dayak Deah community's participation is anchored in a robust customary system, exemplified by the *simpan siur* model of collective work. However, recurring challenges such as corruption among village leaders and the limited professional capacity of local officials continue to impede transparency efforts (Puspita et al., 2022). In response, the government has introduced regulatory frameworks to strengthen community involvement in village fund oversight,

including guidelines for supervision and equitable fund distribution. These frameworks are expected to be further expanded in 2024. Nevertheless, their effectiveness depends mainly on the capacity-building of Indigenous communities through education and participatory training.

The active involvement of the Dayak Deah community is crucial for monitoring village funds and preserving cultural values and local governance systems amid ongoing modernization and socio-political transformation. Prior studies have also highlighted the essential role Indigenous communities play in natural resource management by leveraging traditional ecological knowledge to ensure sustainability (Rahmawanti & UB, 2024).

Although the broader literature on community involvement in village fund management has acknowledged its potential and limitations (Ragasa et al., 2024), challenges remain. While administrative compliance with planning and reporting procedures has generally improved, genuine community participation remains inconsistent. Research has shown that in many cases, village fund planning is dominated by technocratic approaches, with minimal inclusion of marginalized groups such as low-income residents and women (Wang et al., 2024; Zhang, 2024). The lack of institutionalized citizen engagement often weakens community ownership of development outcomes during implementation. Similarly, the monitoring phase tends to be top-down, lacking meaningful input from community stakeholders (Hambali & Niode, 2018; Niesche & Haase, 2012; Sulila, 2022).

Nevertheless, there are documented cases of successful participatory governance. For instance, some villages have demonstrated the capacity to conduct transparent and accountable planning and implementation processes despite limited administrative resources (Nurwulandari, 2023). These findings suggest meaningful participation is attainable when communities are adequately supported through empowerment strategies and inclusive governance mechanisms (Ismail & Soleiman, 2020).

This study addresses a critical gap in the literature by focusing on the specific mechanisms and social constructs that shape participation within the Dayak Deah Indigenous community. By analyzing how this community navigates formal state structures while drawing on customary institutions, the research offers new insights into culturally grounded strategies for inclusive rural development (Ragasa et al., 2024).

The findings align with earlier research indicating that direct community supervision enhances transparency, accountability, and development effectiveness (Wahyudi et al., 2022). Such participation strengthens project implementation and reinforces social trust and local empowerment. It supports more responsive, transparent, and inclusive governance structures. In Pengelak Village, the active involvement of the Dayak Deah community in monitoring village fund usage has ensured that development projects are implemented as planned, that financial resources are appropriately allocated, and that social cohesion and collective responsibility are maintained throughout the process.

4.2. Dayak Deah in Village Fund Supervision

The involvement of the Dayak Deah Indigenous community in village fund supervision represents a localized practice of good governance, where citizen engagement in decision-making and oversight is fundamental. Their participation enhances transparency and accountability within village administrations and safeguards against misappropriation and corruption (Manurung et al., 2024; Mardhian et al., 2023; Sujarwoto & Maharani, 2022). Empirical evidence suggests that Indigenous community involvement in budget monitoring can improve development outcomes through effective community-based control mechanisms (Olaopa, 2022).

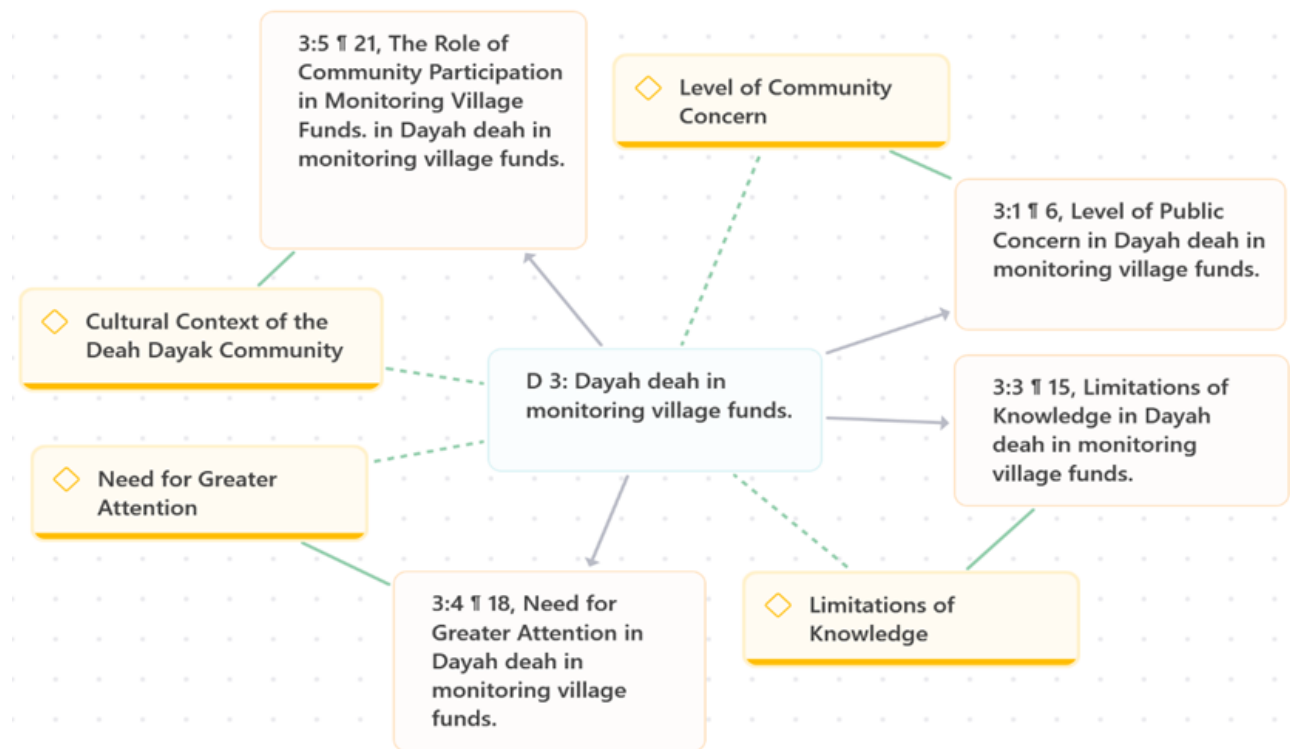


Figure 2. Dayak Deah Involvement Factors in Village Fund Supervision (Processed using ATLAS.ti)

The ATLAS.ti-based analysis of interview data highlights several central issues regarding village fund supervision in Pengelak Village. First, community concern about fund management exists, but low public understanding about their role in the development process limits meaningful engagement. This is compounded by insufficient access to information, a lack of technical knowledge on monitoring mechanisms, minimal involvement by village officials, and constraints related to human resources.

While the Dayak Deah community acknowledges the importance of village fund oversight, their participation capacity remains constrained. These limitations reflect broader structural challenges rather than a lack of interest, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to strengthen participatory competencies.

The cultural context of the Dayak Deah plays a central role in shaping their engagement with governance. Values such as cooperation, respect for customary leadership, and harmony with nature are fundamental to their social organization and influence their approach to fund monitoring. Customary institutions, including village deliberations (*musyawarah adat*), ritual-based consultations, and informal learning systems, foster accountability and transparency in managing public resources. Leveraging these structures can ensure that governance strategies remain culturally resonant and community-oriented.

This was reinforced by a statement from the Head of the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD):

"The level of community participation in village fund supervision still needs to be improved. The community does not fully understand its role, and we recognize the need for education and training programs to address this issue. Additionally, the involvement of village officials is crucial to ensure that supervision is carried out

properly. We also need to pay attention to the local cultural context so that the supervision process can be accepted and effective in the community."

Village fund supervision among the Dayak Deah is not merely a procedural activity but is deeply embedded within the community's social construction. The foundational values of cooperation, respect for elders, and ecological balance frame how oversight functions are interpreted and enacted. Through community deliberations, customary rituals, and informal mentorship, the community engages in meaningful supervision, aligned with accountability goals and cultural preservation.

Field data confirm that while awareness of the importance of village fund oversight exists, participation is still limited due to several factors. The Village Head of Pengelak emphasized this:

"Community involvement in village fund supervision is still less than optimal. The main obstacle was the lack of knowledge and information on appropriate supervision techniques. Therefore, we prioritize increasing education and training for the community. Additionally, there is a need for greater support from village officials to facilitate active community participation. The local cultural context must also be considered in every supervision effort so that this process is more effective and aligned with the values adopted by the community."

This study investigates the social construction of participation within the Dayak Deah Indigenous community, offering critical insights into how culturally grounded participation influences village fund governance (Diatmika et al., 2022). It addresses an existing research gap by examining how marginalized Indigenous groups engage with local governance processes (Ison et al., 2024).

Most existing studies have focused on procedural aspects of village fund management, such as planning, administration, and reporting, but have paid insufficient attention to the perspectives and agency of Indigenous communities like the Dayak Deah (Boadu et al., 2020; Ragasa et al., 2024). This study, therefore, explores how the Dayak Deah perceive, interpret, and operationalize their role in managing village funds, offering a more nuanced understanding of the social, political, and cultural dynamics that shape their engagement.

The findings confirm community participation in village fund monitoring enhances transparency and accountability (Putnam, 1993). Moreover, Indigenous involvement contributes to the quality of village development through mechanisms of effective social control (Gaventa & Barrett, 2012). These outcomes underline the importance of community education and empowerment, particularly in contexts where local culture and customs significantly shape governance practices. Supporting studies similarly emphasize the positive impact of sustained community training on increasing participation in village fund management.

4.3. Social Construction in Village Funding

Social construction, comprising a community's cultural values, norms, and customary practices, is critical in shaping village fund supervision mechanisms. These culturally embedded frameworks enable communities to develop oversight systems aligned with local contexts. Core values such as cooperation and consensus-based decision-making, which are deeply rooted in Indigenous cultures, can serve as foundational elements for building participatory and transparent supervision structures (Hilmawan et al., 2023; Kartika, 2012; Putra & Larasdiputra, 2023).

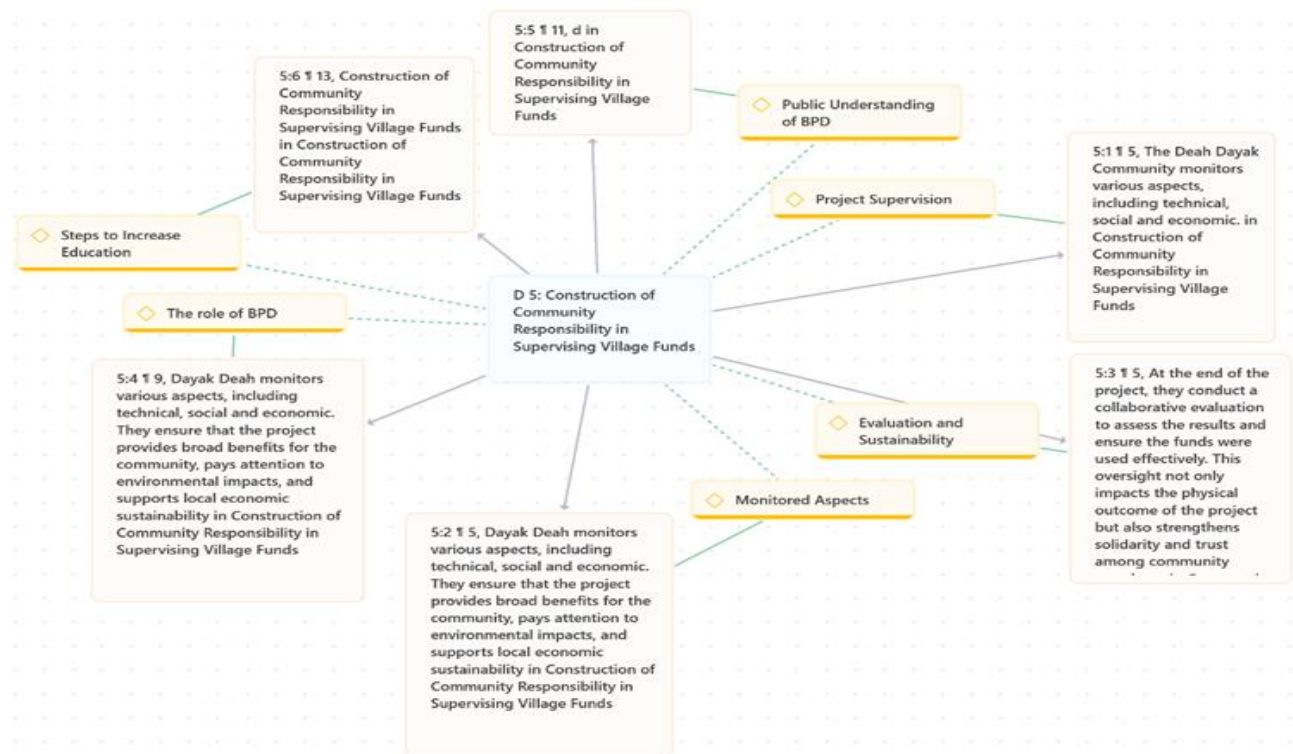


Figure 3. Monitoring Factors of Road Project Work by the Community (Processed using ATLAS.ti)

Interviews conducted with members of the Dayak Deah community highlight the centrality of interdependence in sustaining social constructions. Economic interdependence, expressed through collective agricultural practices and shared natural resource management, fosters a resilient social network, reinforcing community bonds. The data reveal that collective farming supports economic sustainability while promoting values of equity and solidarity. Moreover, natural resource governance grounded in cultural heritage sustains ecological balance and cultivates community members' shared sense of responsibility.

This analysis, supported by ATLAS.ti, demonstrates the interconnections between economic practices, environmental stewardship, and community well-being. Social interdependence is further manifested through everyday cooperation and traditional ceremonies, which enhance mutual trust and social cohesion. Conflict resolution, typically facilitated through deliberative forums led by customary leaders, reflects the community's reliance on established social norms to maintain harmony and justice.

Thus, interdependence across economic, ecological, and social domains contributes significantly to both the sustainability of livelihoods and the cohesion of the Dayak Deah community. These findings are reinforced by the testimony of a member of the Village Consultative Body (Badan Permusyawaratan Desa/BPD):

"The Dayak Deah community is important in forming and maintaining social construction. This dependence is visible in various aspects of life, such as the economy and collective agriculture, where cooperation between members ensures economic sustainability and strengthens social ties and solidarity among them."

The findings of this study are consistent with international literature on citizen participation in the oversight of public funds. Effective participation enhances transparency and accountability

by ensuring adequate access to information and civic education (Aguayo et al., 2021; Puspita et al., 2022; Watts et al., 2019). When citizens are included in decision-making processes, social control mechanisms are strengthened, improving public service quality (Rahmawati, 2021). Transparency alone, however, is insufficient; it must be complemented by meaningful participation to ensure effective oversight (Olaopa, 2022; Puspita et al., 2022). Studies have shown that direct citizen involvement in project planning and monitoring enhances the effectiveness and impact of development interventions (Maden et al., 2018; Mansuri & Rao, 2013). Moreover, social and collaborative learning, facilitated through training programs and improved access to information, has increased participation, promoted transparency, and reduced corruption (Gaventa & Barrett, 2012).

4.4. Construction of Community Responsibility in Village Fund Supervision

Understanding how community responsibility is socially constructed in the supervision of village funds is essential for identifying the factors that influence meaningful citizen participation (OECD, 2019). This understanding also informs strategies for strengthening effective, community-based monitoring mechanisms. Robust oversight ensures that village funds are used per regulatory guidelines, enhancing governmental accountability and fostering public trust in the development process (Hilmawan et al., 2023). Empirical research in various village contexts indicates that a heightened sense of community responsibility in overseeing village funds leads to more targeted, efficient, and transparent fund utilization (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2006; Scott, 2001). Conversely, insufficient community participation often correlates with mismanagement and inequitable distribution of benefits (Maden et al., 2018; Manurung et al., 2024).

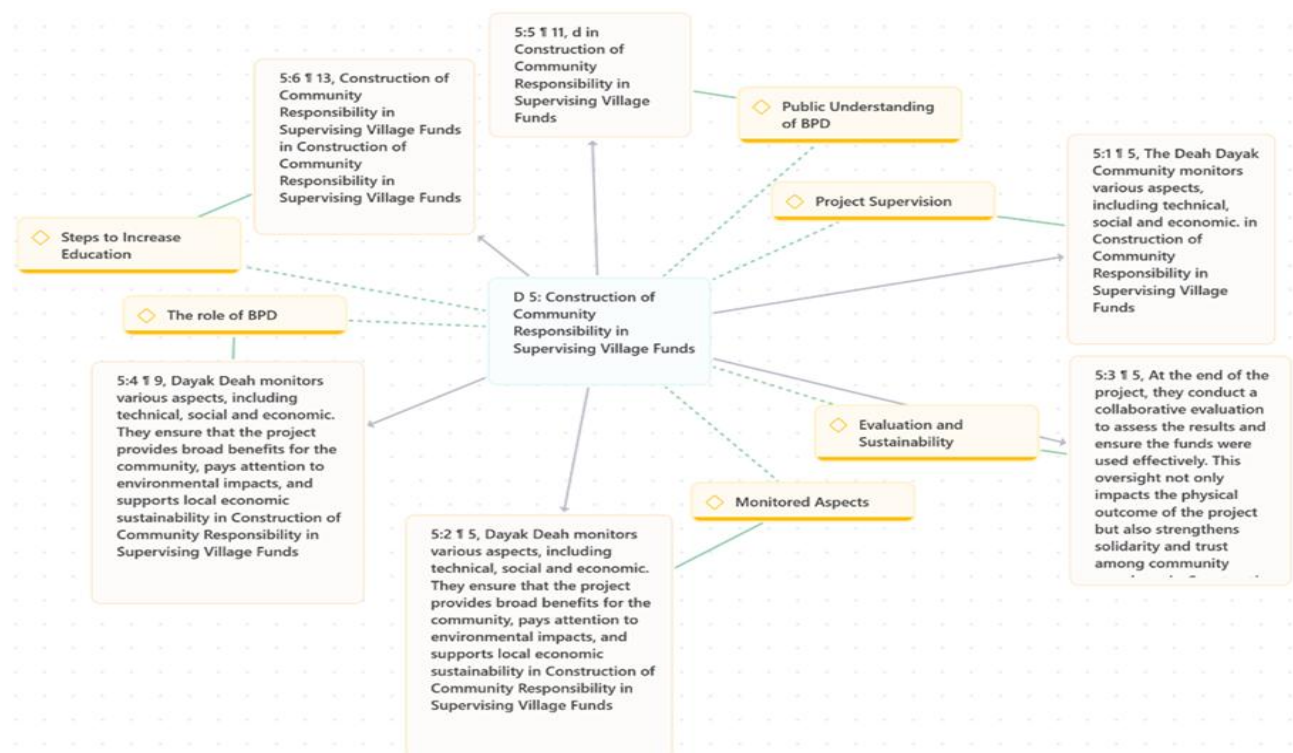


Figure 4. Community Responsibility Construction Factors in Village Fund Supervision (Processed using ATLAS.ti)

Interview data processed through ATLAS.ti reveal that the Dayak Deah community actively supervises infrastructure development projects, adopting a holistic and participatory approach.

Their involvement spans all phases of project implementation, from planning to final evaluation, reflecting a governance model that is closely aligned with international best practices emphasizing transparency, accountability, and sustainability through community participation.

The data highlight a strong relational dynamic between the Village Consultative Body (Badan Permasyarakatan Desa/BPD) and Indigenous community members. This relationship has facilitated the cultural adaptation of development initiatives to local priorities and values. Efforts to improve public education and outreach regarding the BPD's role have proven effective in increasing public awareness, strengthening participation, and fostering trust in the village development process. The testimony of a local environmental activist supported these findings:

“The Dayak Deah community is actively involved in every stage of monitoring infrastructure development projects, from planning to final evaluation. Their involvement is not limited to technical aspects but also encompasses social and economic dimensions to ensure that projects meet local needs and support environmental sustainability. Members of the Village Consultative Body (BPD), drawn from the Indigenous community, play a crucial role in maintaining ties to tradition and ensuring accountability. However, there is variation in community understanding of the role of the BPD, which emphasizes the need for increased education and socialization to strengthen community involvement and trust in the development process.”

These findings are consistent with international studies. For instance, research conducted in Kenya found that community engagement in monitoring village development projects, particularly through “community data management” systems, contributed significantly to project sustainability, including improvements in water resource access (Wahyudi et al., 2022). Similarly, a UNESCO study reported that participation in project oversight enhances transparency and accountability, especially when accompanied by training programs that build capacity in fund monitoring and community rights (Mansuri & Rao, 2013). Findings from Sharp et al. indicate that community-led monitoring delivers interventions that are more contextually relevant, locally accepted, and sustainable (Sharp et al., 2024).

Community involvement in supervising village development initiatives promotes transparency, strengthens accountability mechanisms, and contributes to long-term sustainability. Ensuring such efforts' success requires providing ongoing training, inclusive communication, and participatory planning processes that align with the cultural and institutional realities of the community.

5. Conclusion

The participation of the Dayak Deah Indigenous community in village fund supervision is profoundly shaped by their strong cultural identity, in which collective responsibility for environmental stewardship and village development serves as a foundational value. Local traditions, including customary norms and practices of cooperation, significantly influence how the community engages in oversight processes. These cultural elements are complemented by existing social structures and customary institutions, which can either enable or constrain their participation. The presence of respected local leadership and functioning customary governance mechanisms strengthens the community's capacity to engage meaningfully in village fund management.

In addition to cultural and structural dimensions, effective communication, education, and access to relevant knowledge are critical factors. The ability of the Dayak Deah community to

carry out supervision effectively increases when there is constructive interaction with village authorities and a shared understanding of the procedures and objectives of village fund allocation. Furthermore, the community's historical experience with governmental programs and socioeconomic realities shapes its perspectives and motivations regarding participation in governance.

Understanding these interrelated factors is essential for designing context-sensitive empowerment strategies. Such strategies should aim not only to enhance the technical capacity of the community but also to reinforce the cultural and institutional foundations of participation. Strengthening the engagement of the Dayak Deah community in village fund supervision is not only key to ensuring transparency and accountability but also to fostering sustainable and inclusive village development.

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7. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest regarding this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

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