

The Application of Persuasive Communication by the Village Head in Improving the Work Ethic of Fishermen in Balantang Village, Malili District East Luwu Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the application of persuasive communication of village heads in improving the work ethic of fishermen in Baltang Village, Malili District, East Luwu Regency, and identify the challenges faced in the process. This study uses a qualitative approach with a qualitative descriptive method. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation, while data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study showed that village heads implemented persuasive communication through interpersonal communication, group communication, and public communication. The communication approach used refers to the values of qaulan hasanan, qaulan baligha, and qaulan layyinan, which are manifested in the form of motivation, direction, counseling, and example to fishermen. The application of communication plays a role in building awareness, work morale, and positive attitudes of fishermen towards their economic activities. However, the effectiveness of persuasive communication still faces various challenges, including low levels of education and understanding of fishermen, dependence on weather and seasonal conditions, limited capital and access to technology, and weak collective awareness and cooperation between fishermen. This study concludes that persuasive communication by village heads has an important role in improving fishermen's work ethic, but needs to be supported by increasing leadership communication capacity, strengthening community cooperation, and sustainable structural support.

Keywords: persuasive communication, village head, fishermen's work ethic, local leadership, fishing community.

INTRODUCTION

Human life depends on communication. Communication is at the core of all human activities. Depending on the involvement of various parties or individuals, communication can be simple or complicated. Communication also serves as a way to receive information, influence, and help people achieve their goals (Ali, 2020; Fitria et al., 2024; Kholil et al., 2024; Kusuma, 2024; Lukas, 2016; Rijali, 2018). Therefore, according to Onong Uchjana Effendi, communication science has a very wide scope. The process of relaying messages from one person to another, either verbally or indirectly through the media, can change a person's behavior, attitudes, or opinions (Alhidayatullah et al., 2022; Hadiansyah & Yanwar, 2015; Harahap, 2020; Maya, 2023; Nata et al., 2025; Pohan & Fitria, 2021; Wibisono et al., 2021).

Communication is a basic human activity. By communicating, humans can relate to each other both in daily life in the household, at work, in the market, in society or wherever humans are. There is no human being who will not be involved in communication (Arisetiana et al., 2023; Effendy, 2009; Siregar et al., 2022; Widaningsih, 2019; Yuliarti et al., 2022). Communication is essential to human life. The development of human knowledge from day to day is due to communication. Communication also forms a social system that needs each other, therefore

communication and society cannot be separated (H. Anam & Kusumawati, 2023; Hakimah, 2016; Heru, 2017; Mirawati, 2021; Retnowati, 2011).

The pervasiveness of social media in today's digital environment has revolutionized the way people connect, develop views, and various information. Understanding the intricacies of persuasive communication becomes crucial as we negotiate this complex virtual network of contacts to fully appreciate the significant impact it has on people individually, in society, and in larger cultural discourse (K. Anam & Rifqi, 2019; Khairi, 2021; Khosiah et al., 2017). Persuasive communication has a number of advantages that make it effective in conveying messages and influencing others. One of the advantages of persuasive communication is that it helps the audience understand the topic or issue being conveyed in depth. With the right technique, messages can be more easily received and understood (Come on, 2010; Imron, 2003; Mahdi & Masdudi, 2019; Wariwu, 2023).

In the ever-evolving social media, the power of persuasive communication has emerged as an important force shaping public opinion, behavior and decision-making. (Ardiansyah & Wardani, 2019; Mession et al., 2021; Mulyana, 2017; Rosaliza, 2015; Yusuf et al., 2024) Persuasive communication, a form of discourse that aims to influence the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of audiences, has been a subject of fascination for scholars and practitioners alike. With the advent of social media, this form of communication has gained unprecedented reach and influence, allowing individuals, organizations, and institutions to shape public discourse in ways previously unimaginable (Astuti, 2018; Azizah & Nugraha, 2024; Nurjanah, 2021; Suhartanti et al., 2022; Zulfirman, 2022).

The Indonesian Sea is one of the most important geographical elements, because Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country in the world with about 70% of its territory in the form of oceans. Fishermen are not a single entity (Indara et al., 2017; Rasyid & Amir, 2022; Sapriadi, 2018; Sumarjo, 2011; Tyas et al., 2024). They consist of several groups, which in terms of ownership of fishing gear can be divided into three groups, namely: labor fishermen, juragan fishermen, and individual fishermen (Kusumawati, 2016; Nasrudin et al., 2024; Nurjanah, 2022). Labor fishermen are fishermen who work with fishing gear belonging to others. On the other hand, juragan fishermen are fishermen who have fishing gear operated by other people. Individual fishermen are fishermen who have their own fishing equipment, and in their operation do not involve other people.

Persuasive communication has an important role in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of individuals and groups. One form of communication that is very relevant in this context is the communication that is applied by local leaders, such as village heads, in driving social and economic change. According to research conducted by Fatimah and Tarmizi (2023), persuasive communication in leadership has been shown to be effective in improving organizational performance by strengthening relationships between members and motivating them to achieve Common goals (Apriyanti et al., 2019; Aziz & Muthohir, 2020; Nurhadi & Kurniawan, 2017; Windasai et al., 2021).

Likewise, research by Rizki and Hadi (2022) found that persuasive communication used in

community empowerment programs can increase community participation and social awareness. These studies show that persuasive communication is very useful in the context of local leadership, but there has not been much research exploring how village heads can apply persuasive communication in improving the work ethic of fishermen, especially in the context of coastal villages.

This research is different from previous research because it focuses on the application of persuasive communication by village heads in Baltang Village, Malili District, East Luwu Regency, to improve the work ethic of fishermen. The novelty of this research lies in its approach that incorporates Islamic values in persuasive communication, such as the concepts of qaulan hasanan, qaulan baligha, and qaulan layyinan, which not only focus on motivational aspects but also pay attention to the moral and ethical values that are relevant in coastal communities. The study also highlights the challenges faced by village heads in implementing persuasive communication, including low levels of education for fishermen, dependence on weather and seasonal conditions, and limited access to capital and technology.

This study aims to analyze the application of persuasive communication by village heads in improving the work ethic of fishermen in Balantang Village, Malili District, East Luwu Regency, with a focus on the forms of communication applied, such as interpersonal, group, and public communication. In addition, this study also aims to identify the challenges faced by village heads in implementing persuasive communication, including education, weather, access to capital, and technology, and explain how Islamic values, such as qaulan hasanan, qaulan baligha, and qaulan layyinan, strengthen the effectiveness of persuasive communication in fishing communities.

This research is expected to provide benefits for academics by providing new insights into the application of persuasive communication in the context of local leadership and the contribution of Islamic values in increasing the effectiveness of communication. For village heads and local governments, the study provides useful information to improve their persuasive communication skills to strengthen fishermen's work ethic, which in turn can improve the well-being and productivity of coastal communities. In addition, this research is also beneficial for fishermen by helping them understand the importance of a good work ethic as well as how persuasive communication can motivate them to work more productively and collaborate in the face of economic and environmental challenges. Finally, this research is expected to provide a reference for other researchers interested in further exploring persuasive communication in the context of local communities and how village heads can leverage communication to advance their communities.

RESEARCH METHODS

The Application of Persuasive Communication by the Village Head in Improving the Work Ethic of Fishermen in Balantang Village, Malili District, East Luwu Regency. The type of research to be used is qualitative research. Qualitative Research is descriptive and analytical research. Descriptive in qualitative research means describing and describing the events, phenomena and social situations being studied. Analysis means interpreting and interpreting and comparing

research data.

Thus, it can be concluded that qualitative research is a research technique that uses narratives or words in explaining and describing the meaning of each particular social phenomenon, symptoms, and situation. In qualitative research, researchers are the key instruments to interpret and interpret each particular social phenomenon, symptom, and situation. Therefore, researchers need to master theory to analyze the gap that occurs between theoretical concepts and the facts that occur.

Data Collection Methods:

Data collection techniques are the most important technique in a research. In this data collection method, there are several techniques, which are as follows:

Observations:

Observation or observation is a data collection technique by conducting direct observations in the field of the object being studied.

Interview:

Interviews are one of the most commonly used methods of data collection in social research. Interviews are used to obtain information related to facts, beliefs, feelings, desires, and so on that are necessary for research purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A Form of Persuasive Communication by the Village Head in Improving the Work Ethic of Fishermen in Balantang Village, Malili District, East Luwu Regency

Persuasive communication has several main forms, including verbal and nonverbal communication, as well as various techniques and strategies for conveying messages. These forms can be found in a variety of contexts, such as advertising, speech, social campaigns, and everyday interactions. Based on the results of field observations through interviews, observations, and documentation, it was found that the form of persuasive communication carried out by the village head in improving the work ethic of fishermen is interpersonal communication (face-to-face), group communication, public communication and symbolic communication.

Interpersonal communication (face-to-face)

In providing information about government assistance or village rules, the village head speaks honestly and clearly. This openness fosters trust from fishermen in village leadership. The results of the interview with the village head showed the practice of qaulan in interpersonal communication. For example, when some fishermen do not want to go to sea due to bad weather factors.

As Mas'ang said as the village head:

I know that these gentlemen are tired, but if we keep trying, the seafood that you get can be a great blessing for your family at home. Let's set a strategy together so that your job can feel easier. This speech reflects qaulan layyinan (gentleness) because it is delivered with empathy, as well as qaulan balighan (effective) because it provides encouragement and solutions.

The relationship between qaulan and interpersonal communication in the context of village head leadership in Balantang Village shows that effective persuasive communication is inseparable from Islamic values. The village head combines interpersonal communication with the principle of qaulan so that the message conveyed is not only persuasive, but also full of ethics, gentleness, and honesty.

This has been proven to be able to increase fishermen's confidence, foster motivation, and strengthen work ethic in facing various challenges. Thus, qaulan serves as a moral foundation as well as a practical strategy for village heads in building effective persuasive communication in the fishing community.

In this kind of interpersonal communication, the village head combines qaulan with a face-to-face approach, so that fishermen are more motivated without feeling pressured. So, qaulan from an Islamic perspective enriches the interpersonal communication practice of the village head, because in addition to being oriented towards persuasive effectiveness, it also contains moral, ethical, and spiritual values that are relevant to the context of the fishing community in Baltang Village.

Another statement from the results of the interview with Mas'ang as the head. The village says that:

I usually invite the fishermen to gather at the village hall, then I invite them to have a casual discussion. I conveyed about the great potential of our ocean if managed properly, the importance of cooperation and work discipline. Sometimes I go directly to the fish auction place and talk to them directly.

From the above statement, it can be seen that the interpersonal communication established between the village head and fishermen has a strategic role in improving the quality of life of the fishing community in Baltang Village, both in terms of economic welfare and village social development.

As stated by Aco as one of the fishermen that:

The village head is usually friendly and easy to talk to. He also often gives motivation so that we don't get lazy to go to sea, because now there is equipment assistance. During the village meeting, he also said that we should be more enthusiastic about working so that the family's income increases.

The fishermen's statement above shows that the persuasive communication of the village head is well received because it uses a friendly, open and participatory approach, so that fishermen feel valued and supported to improve their work ethic.

Group communication

Group communication is a form of communication that is also carried out by the head of Balantang village in improving the work ethic of fishermen. This form of communication is usually carried out through fishermen's group meetings, village deliberations, and regular meetings held at village halls. In the forum, the village head played the role of the main communicator who conveyed information, motivation, and invitations to the fishermen.

Group communication allows the village head to convey persuasive messages more effectively to many people at once. In this context, the values of qaulan in the Qur'an can also be applied to maintain harmony, effectiveness, and the ability of the village head to communicate with fishermen groups.

In the results of an interview with Mas'ang as the village head, he said:

Ladies and gentlemen, we know that it is now the season of big waves that can make the catch all decrease. But don't despair, let's find a solution together, maybe by setting a schedule to go to sea or temporarily switching to a pond business. The village government is ready to help provide training. 58

This saying reflects qaulan balighan (effective) because it offers real solutions, as well as qaulan sadida (true) kartena is delivered based on actual conditions. With group communication like this, the village head is able to arouse the spirit of fishermen collectively.

The relationship between qaulan and group communication shows that the village head not only conveys a persuasive message to individuals, but is also able to mobilize the community collectively. By implementing qaulan, group communication becomes more ethical, persuasive, and effective in improving fishermen's work ethic.

This proves that Islamic communication values are very relevant to village leadership practices, especially in building work motivation and solidarity of fishermen groups in Baltang Village.

In addition, the Head of Balantang Village also revealed that the group forum provides a more effective space to convey persuasive messages, because fishermen can listen together, discuss, and give each other feedback.

This is as explained in an interview with Mas'ang as the head of Balantang village:

If I go through group deliberation, I can convey a message more effectively. For example, I explained the importance of going to sea early and maintaining cohesiveness. I also usually give examples of successful fishermen, so that other fishermen are also motivated.

This statement was reinforced by one of the fishermen, Muhammad:

We usually gather at the village hall when there is a meeting or socialization. The village head gave instructions to us not to be lazy to go to sea. He also told us to cooperate, for example, if there are incomplete tools, we can borrow from each other.

In the group forum, the village head also used inspirational stories to encourage the work motivation of fishermen.

As conveyed by Ridwan Maudu as one of the fishermen:

During the fishermen's meeting, the village head once told a story about his fisherman friend who was able to buy a house from his catch because he was diligent in going to sea and frugal. That is also an example for us, if you want to succeed, you have to work hard and not be wasteful.

In addition, community leaders of Balantang Village also assessed that group communication provides more space for fishermen to express their aspirations.

As conveyed by Marhaya as a community leader:

The group meeting is very important because it is where the village head can motivate and also listen to the complaints of fishermen. Fishermen are usually more courageous when they are in crowds, than when they are alone.

From the excerpt of the interview, it can be seen that group communication functions not only as a means of conveying one-way messages, but also creates a space for dialogue between village heads and fishermen.

Challenges faced by village heads in improving the work ethic of fishermen in Balantang Village, Malili District, East Luwu Regency

The head of Balantang village faces a number of challenges in an effort to improve the work ethic of fishermen in his village. This challenge arises from various aspects, both internal from the fishermen themselves and external from the environment and government policies. The challenges faced by the village head in improving the work ethic of fishermen in Balantang village, Malili district are as follows:

Low Education and Understanding Levels

Fishermen in Balantang Village may have limited educational backgrounds, such as only elementary school or not even graduating from formal school. This condition can lead to limitations in accessing new information, understanding complex messages, and applying new knowledge or techniques in their work. Low education is also usually related to low literacy skills, both reading and writing. When the level of education and understanding is low, the village head's efforts in implementing persuasive communication to improve the work ethic of fishermen are hampered. Motivational messages, work instructions, or changes in work patterns are not absorbed properly, so fishermen are less motivated to improve their discipline, productivity, or work quality. Village heads must be able to adjust their communication style to the conditions of their community's education level. The use of simple language, concrete examples, a personal and interactive approach, and the use of easy-to-understand media are very important so that persuasive messages can be received and understood well.

Dependence on Weather and Seasons

Fishermen are a group of people who are highly dependent on seasonal and weather conditions in carrying out their activities. In Balantang Village, this dependence is one of the main factors that directly affect the work ethic of fishermen. Fishermen's seagoing activities are largely determined by the season. In the fish season or shady season (a season with good weather), fishermen tend to work more actively because the catch is abundant and the risk is smaller. However, during the famine season or strong wind season such as the western season, fishermen cannot go to sea due to dangerous sea conditions. This causes them to be forced to quit their jobs or switch to other jobs. Bad weather such as heavy rain, high waves, and strong winds pose a real threat to the safety of fishermen. This condition lowers work motivation because they have to consider the safety of their lives. When the weather is not supportive, fishermen tend not to go to

sea, so work ethic seems to decline even though it is caused by external factors.

Lack of Capital and Access to Technology

Most of the fishermen in Balantang Village are classified as small fishermen who only have makeshift fishing gear and a limited business scale. They have difficulty obtaining capital to buy more modern equipment, such as boat engines, navigation tools, more efficient nets, or fish storage technology. This lack of capital also makes them unable to expand their fishing area or increase the frequency of going to sea, which ultimately has an impact on low income and work ethic.

Fisheries technologies that can help improve catches and work efficiency are often unavailable or unknown to local fishermen. Lack of training, limited information, and low level of education make it difficult for fishermen to understand or operate existing technology. Even when technology is available, they are often hesitant to use it because they are worried that they will not be able to maintain or finance their operations. Limitations in equipment and technology make catches uncertain and fishermen's efforts feel less effective. This causes mental and physical fatigue, which leads to a decrease in motivation and morale. When hard work is not worth the results obtained, the work ethic of fishermen slowly declines.

As stated by Mas'ang as the village head:

Not all fishermen have adequate equipment, such as boat engines or their more modern fishing gear. This condition also makes them lose competition with fishermen from other regions. In addition, the sometimes unstable selling price of fish also makes fishermen less enthusiastic. If the price drops, they feel that their efforts to go to sea are not proportional to the results they get.

In conditions like this, the village head has an important role to motivate fishermen not to give up with the existing limitations. Through a persuasive approach, village heads can encourage fishermen to take advantage of capital assistance programs from the government or microfinance institutions. In addition, the village head can also facilitate simple trainings related to fishing technology that are in accordance with the conditions of local fishermen. Messages that build hope, evoke collective spirit, and offer concrete solutions will be more easily accepted by the community.

Lack of Collective Awareness and Cooperation

In the fishing community in Baltang Village, collective awareness and cooperation are important factors that support success in improving work ethic and productivity. However, it is often found that the level of collective awareness and spirit of cooperation among fishermen is still low, which negatively impacts the overall work results. Fishermen tend to work individually without a sense of shared responsibility for the success of the group. The low level of collective awareness causes every fisherman to focus more on personal interests and less concerned about the condition and progress of the fishing community as a whole. This can arise due to a lack of effective communication and a lack of activities that foster a sense of togetherness.

Minimal cooperation can be seen from the lack of coordination between fishermen, both in terms of time at sea, the use of fishing gear, and in managing catches. This lack of cooperation leads to low work efficiency and the potential for conflict or competition which actually weakens work morale. When collective awareness and cooperation are low, fishermen tend to lose

motivation to improve their work ethic in a sustainable manner. A sense of isolation and uncertainty about group support makes it easy to lose morale, especially when facing difficulties such as bad seasons or limited capital.

Village heads can play a strategic role in building and raising collective awareness through effective persuasive communication. With an inclusive approach, building trust, and facilitating dialogue and joint activities, village heads can motivate fishermen to work together, share information, and foster a sense of solidarity. Communication that emphasizes the importance of togetherness and common goals will help strengthen the work ethic of fishermen collectively.

The village head admitted that the level of collective awareness among fishermen is still relatively low. Many fishermen prioritize personal interests over common interests. This causes coordination between fishermen to be less effective and often leads to competition, especially in terms of fishing areas and revenue sharing.

As Mas'ang said as the village head:

Most of the fishermen here still think for themselves. They are more focused on how to get as many results as possible for their respective families, making it difficult to build strong cooperation.

The village head said that one of the causes of the low cooperation was the lack of intense and effective communication between fishermen. In addition, the difference in education level and understanding makes the message conveyed sometimes not well absorbed, so that the collective spirit is not formed optimally.

To overcome this, the village head seeks to implement persuasive communication by using simple language and a more personal approach. The village head also took the initiative to form a fishermen's group and hold joint activities such as training and mutual cooperation, so that a sense of solidarity and cooperation can grow.

Another statement of Mas'ang as the village chief:

I often invite them to participate in activities together, so that they feel that they have a shared responsibility. However, it does take extra time and effort to change the mindset that has been formed for a long time.

Thus, the persuasive communication role of village heads is very important in fostering collective awareness and strengthening cooperation among fishermen, so as to improve their overall work ethic.

CONCLUSION

The form of persuasive communication of the village head in improving the work ethic of fishermen in Balantang Village, Malili District, East Luwu Regency includes; interpersonal communication, group communication, and public communication. The challenges faced by the village head in improving the work ethic of fishermen in Balantang Village, Malili District, East Luwu Regency include; low levels of education and understanding, dependence on weather and seasons, lack of capital and access to technology, and lack of collective awareness and cooperation.

Based on the results of this study, it is suggested that village heads improve their persuasive

communication capacity through training and development of more effective communication skills, in order to be more professional in overcoming existing challenges and strengthening relationships with fishermen. In addition, to overcome the low level of education of fishermen, it is important for the government and village heads to carry out regular counseling and training programs with an approach that is easy to understand and relevant to the local conditions of fishermen. In addition, collective awareness and cooperation between fishermen need to continue to be built by facilitating communication forums that encourage the spirit of mutual cooperation and mutual support in improving catches and mutual welfare. Finally, support from governments and financial institutions is needed to provide better access to capital and technology that can increase fishermen's productivity, while reducing their dependence on unpredictable weather conditions. With the implementation of these recommendations, it is hoped that persuasive communication from the village head can be more effective in improving the work ethic of fishermen and accelerating economic development in Baltangang Village.

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