The Communication Process in the Empowerment of Female Headed Household Program

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Abstract—**In the interaction of empowerment program for female headed household (Pekka), these women of course took the communication process. The observation conducted by the researcher described that the communication process conducted by the female headed household occurred in the time of personal interaction or in group. The research was aimed to show hoe the female headed household interacted during the empowerment program conducted in the Pekka Group Kabupaten Bandung, West Java Province. The method used in this research was Phenomenology, where the researcher wished to understand the internalization and motives of the members of Pekka group about the programs given. This would be very useful to construct the model of communication process occurred. The researcher used an in depth interview and participant observation to collect the data. From the observation, it was found that the communication process in the empowerment program occurred in: 1) the initiation process when the woman having the status of female headed household firstly joined the program, 2) the process when the women became the members of Pekka Group and participated in the programs offered regularly, and (3) the communication process when they interacted with the community outside of the Pekka group. Based on the analysis of data obtained, it can be concluded that the communication patterns of the female headed household in the empowerment program in Pekka Group were as follows; a) the initiation process of the Pekka group forming created a model of communication process that can be called as Interactive Persuasive Model; b) the communication process occurred in the routine activity of the empowerment program where they had become the members and participated in all the programs can be named as Star Model Communication; and c) the communication process occurred in the process of interaction with the community outside of Pekka which created the Communication Partnership Model.**

Keywords—communication proccess; participation; communication model

I. INTRODUCTION

Julia Cleves termed female heads of household as women headed or women maintained, namely women who bear the sole responsibility of supporting their families [1]. This understanding is in line with the understanding of the head of the family itself, namely the person who has both economic and social responsibilities to the family. According to Law No. 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage and KHI, the head of the family is identical to the breadwinner who fulfills all the living needs of the family members. Female headed household according to Ernawati is a woman who has the sole responsibility to support her family, so that she is the main breadwinner and must also fulfill all the needs of her family members [2].

Departing from the above definition, if in reality a family is supported by a woman or wife, then of course the concept is that the woman becomes the head of the family. Based on the survey results in the field carried out by PEKKA in real terms, the women who became heads of the family included: widows whose husbands died, divorced widows, women who were left by their husbands for a long time and were not given a living, single women from families unable and women whose husbands are sick or disabled [3].

The women whose husbands were unemployed, either because they were laid off, lazy to work or difficult to find work, also assumed sole responsibility for their families [4]. The female headed household on average come from poor and low-educated families. The work they do is informal sector jobs, such as housemaids, customer workers, small traders and other jobs that certainly do not need skill. This is the reality that poor women do experience dimerization, where they suffer the most from the heavy burden of poverty in their families.

In Kabupaten Bandung, the number of female headed household tends to increase every year. This can be seen from the number of divorce cases handled by the Bandung Regency Religion Court that continues to increase every year. Throughout 2014, the number of divorce cases reached around 7,000 cases, an increase from the previous year which reached 5,000 cases. "Indeed, this divorce struck various circles and ages. The number continues to increase every year. Per month, it can reach 800 cases," said Dedeng, Deputy Registrar of PA in Bandung Regency, Wednesday (03/25/2015). This condition will trigger to the increase number of empowered women. This needs some effort, and that is an empowerment program. The program is empowerment for female headed household.

In the empowerment programs for the female headed household, where all the members need to take part in the regular meeting, these women of course will interact with: (a) the facilator; (b) with other their colleagues, and (c) with the

communities outside the Pekka Gorup. These interactions are continuously and repeatedly conducted that will compose some patterns. The patterns of the interaction process that can be interpreted as continuous changes carried out by female headed household in Pekka Group are certainly the actions taken when they communicate the messages in the empowerment activities in their group.

In a communication process, humans create mutual meaning from one another. Verbal and nonverbal behavior is not just a neutral expression of the mind but it also implies values and judgments, meaning how we express ourselves will affect how we and others feel what we communicate, therefore we can say that communication is symbolic activity implying that communication requires reflection and that meaning is variable and constructed, rather than inherent in the symbol itself. In the interaction within the empowerment program for female headed household in the Pekka group in Kabupaten Bandung, the women of course did the communication process. The observation results conducted by the researcher illustrate that the communication process carried out by the female headed household occurred both when interacting personally, and in groups.

The personal and in-group interaction is a social action. According to Weber a social action is a behavior given a subjective meaning by the individual who does it [5]. Thus the social action of women carried out in the empowerment program in PEKKA group are intentional actions (actions that contain certain intentions and meanings) according to their own views. Women in the study of social action theory will thus display behaviors considered as subjective behaviors that are meaningful with orientation to the behavior of others and based on certain considerations. The role and involvement of a person in community empowerment, of course based on the results of meaning that involves interpretation and thinking. In turn the role shown is intentional behavior as a result of consideration of other people's behavior.

In their interaction women as the female headed household make the interpretation regarding empowerment at Pekka group which is basically the result of their inter subjective meaning through their awareness. This is in line with the understanding of Phenomenology on human behavior which explains "people actively interpret their experience and come to understand the world by personal experience with it" [6]. Phenomenology is a theory developed and introduced by Alfred Schutz. The theory is contributed to phenomenological ideas, especially about meaning and how meaning forms social structures, is "meaning" and "formation of meaning". Society according to Schutz is the everyday world, while the basic meaning of human understanding is common sense. Phenomenology understands that social actors (humans) interpret the nature of reality that is relevant to their interests. Schutz views that humans are basically social beings, consequently the awareness of daily life is perceived as the social awareness [7]. Women thus become social beings who will construct about community empowerment based on the meaning of the social reality they meet. This social awareness will ultimately become the basis for women's involvement or participation in the empowerment program displayed by a person to achieve their goals.

Social action and phenomenological theory used by researchers as the thinking direction in analyzing the research are interrelated theories, as revealed above that social action theory views meaning as a reflection of some human behavior with the term social facts, Phenomenology theory also tries to uncover latent functions hidden in every social action. Phenomenology views every social phenomenon as the result of interaction between subjects, as well as social action theory that sees an action according to Weber as socially meaningful to the extent that the action is subjective meaning given by the individual, and the desired subjective meaning is a causal component of the human's action or behavior [5].

Basically individuals create society and society creates individuals. Dialectic relations between individuals and society are expressed by Berger and Luckman as externalization, objectivation, and internalization. Externalization refers to human creative activities. Objectivation refers to the process by which the results of creative activities confront an individual as an objective reality While internalization refers to the process by which external reality becomes part of an individual's intersubjective awareness [8].

The study about the communication process in the empowerment program for Pekka group in Kabupaten Bandung used the social construction theory of reality considering that the women as the member of Pekka group will intensively interact and involve in all the activities given. In their involvement they will adjust to their social-cultural word they meet, and this is called externalization. Then after involving deeper they will internalize anything they have already taken, and finally they will come the awareness that can lead to the motivate themselves to be self- empowered.

Empowerment means enhancing the capacity of poor people to influence the state institutions that affect their lives, by strengthening their participation in political processes and local decision-making" [9]. Robert Adam points out that Empowerment is the capacity of individuals, groups and/or communities to take control of their circumstances, exercise power and achieve their own goals, and the process by which, individually and collectively, they are able to help themselves and others to maximize the quality of their lives.

In academic literature, the word empowerment first came onto the scene with regards to civil rights. In 1983 the Women's Studies International Forum discussed empowerment of women in "Power and Empowerment" [10]. From then until now, the literature has increasingly been focused on these issues. In 2010, articles were published entitled "Power and empowerment: Fostering effective collaboration in meeting the needs of orphans and vulnerable children and Women empowerment through the SHG approach" [11], that demonstrate just a few ways how empowerment is being discussed in the academic community. The term empowerment refers to measures designed to increase the degree of autonomy and self-determination in people and in communities in order to enable them to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way, acting on their own authority. It is the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights. Empowerment as action refers both to the process of self-empowerment and to

professional support of people, which enables them to overcome their sense of powerlessness and lack of influence, and to recognize and use their resources. To do work with power. Meanwhile Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland, define empowerment as the process of enhancing an individual's capacity to make choices and then transforming those choices into the sought after outcome [12]. Similarly, in an article written in 2002 entitled "Empowerment and Poverty Reduction" by Narayan, the definition of empowerment is seen as increasing poor people's freedom of choice and action to shape their own lives [13]. All these authors demonstrate their definition of empowerment as the relationship between agency and structure. From some definition mentioned, it can be concluded that empowerment is very multidimensional that can be exercised on many different levels and domains. Empowerment is also relational, for it occurs in relation to whom a person interacts with. Empowerment is not a zero-sum game, but it is the types of power, such as power over, power to, power with, and power within. Empowerment is also extremely culturally specific which is related to the norms, values and beliefs of a society (such as Islam); therefore, empowerment can be revealed differently in different societies.

II. METHODOLOGY

To get the research subject or informants in this study, the researchers used the random sampling method among the women who became activists in PEKKA group. Informants are people who are directly involved in empowering female headed household in Pekka group.

The research method used to find the communication patterns of female headed household in empowerment programs in PEKKA group is the Phenomenology method. Phenomenology seeks to describe the reality experienced by individuals based on the individual's awareness or view [14]. Besides, phenomenology tries to find "meaning construction" that reconstruct the reality of human behavior like seeing the meaning understood by women regarding empowerment of PEKKA.

To see the communication process taking place in the empowerment program at the Pekka group, researchers used an in-depth interview technique, which accoring to Marshall "through observation, the researcher learns about behavior and meaning attached to those behavior" [15]. The observed behavior is of course the communication behavior carried out by members of female headed household in the activities of Pekka group in Ciwidey Districts, Kabupaten Bandung. Besides participant observation, the researchers used the In-depth interview to obtain key data. Cresswell states that "for a phenomenological study, the process of collecting information involves in-depth interviews" [14].

The Sources of data in this study are derived from expressions both verbally and in writing, as well as nonverbal (actions) conducted by women in their involvement in empowerment programs of PEKKA Kecamatan Ciwidey Kabupaten Bandung in interpreting each program they follow so that they obtain thorough awareness of concepts of empowerment through in-depth interviews to with 15 women as the members of Pekka in Kecamatan Ciwidey, in Kabupaten

Bandung. The researcher recorded all conversations using a tape recorder. Recording during interviews is also often done.

From the results of interviews and observations made, it was found that the communication process that took place in the empowerment program of female headed household in the Pekka group in Kabupaten Bandung, can be divided into three stages, namely:

- The process when women with status as female headed household began to join the Pekka Group.

- The process when they are already the members of PEKKA Groups and have participated in the activities carried out (when they conduct activities in regular meetings in Pekka groups).

- The Process when they also interact with communities outside Pekka.

As is known that in qualitative research that uses abstractive inductive logic that starts from "specific to the public", then conceptualization, categorization and description are developed on the events obtained when the field activities take place. As said by Huberman and Miles [16], that data collection and data analysis activities cannot be separated from each other, both take place simultaneously or simultaneously. The process is in the form of a cycle as in figure 1:
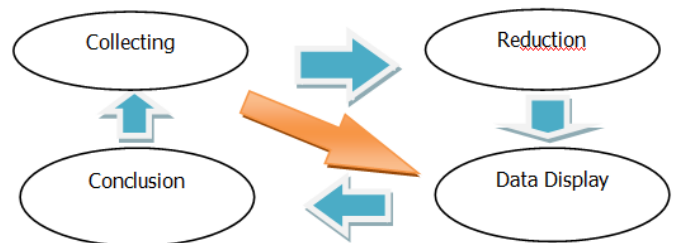
Source: elaboration of Huberman and Miles in Bungin [16]

Fig. 1.   Interactive model data analysis components.

III. DISCUSSION

As obtained from the data from the participat observation and the in-depth interview, the communication process that occurs in the empowerment program for female headed household in the Pekka Group of Kabupaten Bandung can be divided into three stages, namely:

- The process at which women with widow status began to join the Pekka Group.

- The process when they have become members of PEKKA Group and have participated in the activity programs carried out (when they conduct activities in regular meetings in Pekka groups).

- Process when they also interact with communities outside Pekka.

A. *The Communication Process in the Initial Stage*

The initial phase of forming PEKKA group is the stage of introducing PEKKA programs (program socialization). The approach taken by the field facilitator in forming PEKKA groups was to visit the hamlet head and convince him to be able to gather women who were widows to be grouped for guidance. A personal approach to the hamlet head is a communication strategy that is quite effective, considering the hamlet head is a person who has a strong influence and power in his village. To develop the Pekka group, a door to door effort was also made to go around the houses of the female headed household to explain the Pekka program. The Personal communication conducted persuasively by the field facilitator gave very significant results, because it turned out that through direct interaction the widowed women felt more confident to join the Pekka group.

The widowed women got information from friends who had previously joined the Pekka Group. The information dissemination conducted through word of mouth had a very positive impact on the interest of widows to join the Pekka group. The desire of these women to join PEKKA groups is far greater because the information they got is from friends who to a certain extent far more trusted than the hamlet head or field facilitator. The initial process of forming PEKKA groups above produced a model of the communication process that researchers called the persuasive interactive model.

The Persuasive Model of communication process was named by the researcher knowing that in the beginning of teh empowerment program for the female headed houses, they had to be persuaded continuouslt to join the Pekka group.

B. *The Communication Process as the Member of Pekka Gorup*

The women who had joined the Pekka Group then followed programs and activities designed by the field facilitator. The female headed household are called regular members consisting of women who are widows and single women who are the backbone of the family. As PEKKA group members, the female headed household must attend regular meetings held once or twice a week. Determination of the day is based on the agreement of the members, because they also have to make a living. The female heads of household felt confident of being members of the PEKKA group for several reasons: (1) because of the guidance, coaching, and motivation; (2) the high involvement in the programs given; and (3) because of the group members.

Guidance, coaching, and motivation obtained by female headed household in came from: Facilitators (field facilitators), Cadres, and Group Chairmen, as well as from fellow members. The female headed household never left regular meetings held. Even though they had to come late, they would be present at the meeting. For them the meeting was a very valuable time, because in the meeting they could do many activities that could motivate them. The activities in meetings that are always attended by female heads of household based on the results of observation and verification of data can be categorized as follows: (1) listen to guidance and direction and field facilitators; (2) learning reading, writing and calculating; (3)

supporting and sharing to each other; and (4) discussion. These activities were led by a good communicator according to Cangara is a communicator who has credibility, attractiveness and power or strength [17].

The communication process that occurs when the female headed household do their activities is done repeatedly which forms a pattern. The communication pattern that occurs in the activities of the group of female headed household in Kabupaten Bandung in their routine activities in accordance with the conditions and communication situation presented above is similar to *all channel* Pattern, therefore researchers also named communication patterns in this Pekka group activity Bintang Pattern (All Channel Pattern)**.** This model shows the the communication process occured in the interaction action during the regular meeting can be from the facilitator to the members, from facilitator to the grouo coordinator, fron the group coordinator to the member, or among teh members. It can be said the all round communication process.

C. *Communication Procces with the Group Outside Pekka*

The empowerment process carried out in groups in every routine meeting involves the Facilitator, Cadre, and Group Chair as communicators, and the female headed household who are PEKKA members, act as communicants who actively participate in empowerment activities. By joining the programs given in groups the female headed household now has broad knowledge, they are no more illiterate, besides they also have the ability to speak Indonesian that make them confident.

The female headed household have been able to build relationships with outside communities, both with the community of female headed household in other villages, with communities widow who are not widow, with the government, such as village officials, with hose of representative members, Head of the Bureau of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, or with community organizations especially those who care for women.

To provide a sense of belonging to the Pekka group, the female headed household were given the opportunity to get to know each other with the female headed household from other sub-districts. This hospitality activity was eagerly awaited by those women. According to them, with this relationship, they feel stronger, and not alone. The female headed households in Kabupaten Bandung have confidence to communicate with communities outside Pekka: with other Pekka groups, community organization, ggovernment officers, and also members of House Representative. The communication process conducted by PEKKA group with ccommunities'ooutside the PEKKA group was done continuously, and it formed a certain pattern that can be called as Partnership Communication Patterns, because all parties involved in union activities PEKKA is a PEKKA working partner.

IV. CONCLUSION

The female headed household in Kabupaten Bandung who became the members of Pekka Gorup have shown some pattern when interacting. The interaction can be taken when they first

joined Pekka gorup, and when they participated in the empowerment programs as the members, and when they tried to communicated with the members outside the Pekka gorup.

The female headed household in Kecamatan Ciwidey Kabupaten Bandung, decided to join Pekka groupafter a long process. This process created a communication process model which the researcher called an Interactive Persuasive Model. It consists of a) debriefing phase for Field Assistants, b. PEKKA Socialization stage, and c. Recruitment process of hamlet heads to women candidates for PEKKA members. After they became the members of Pekka, they partcipated in the regular meeting for some empowerment activities. The communication process that occurs when the female headed household group activities occur repeatedly that composed a Model of Bintang Pattern (all channel), to show the success of the empowerment program, these women interacted with the communities outside their group. This was very important to show the existence and identity of female headed household in Kecamatan Ciwidey. This communication process produces a communication model called the Partnership Communication Model. The parties that are made partners are: PEKKA Unions in Other Sub-districts even in Other Districts, Community Institutions/Organizations, Government officers, and house of representatives members.

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