

## Public Participation in Local Governance: A Case Study of Development Planning in East Jakarta Administration

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### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji dinamika partisipasi publik dalam tata kelola pemerintahan daerah melalui kasus mekanisme perencanaan pembangunan di Pemerintah Kota Administrasi Jakarta Timur. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, penelitian ini menganalisis pelaksanaan Musyawarah Perencanaan Pembangunan (Musrenbang) sebagai wadah keterlibatan masyarakat dalam pengambilan keputusan. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun terdapat saluran formal untuk partisipasi, tantangan tetap ada dalam hal inklusivitas, responsivitas umpan balik, dan keberlanjutan keterlibatan di luar tahap konsultasi. Penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya dukungan kelembagaan, pendidikan kewarganegaraan, dan budaya partisipatif dalam memperkuat keterlibatan warga negara.

**Kunci Kunci:** kebijakan pendidikan, implementasi kebijakan, Tangerang Selatan, sekolah negeri, program bebas biaya sekolah.

### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the dynamics of public participation in local governance through the case of development planning mechanisms in East Jakarta Administration. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research analyzes the implementation of Musyawarah Perencanaan Pembangunan (Musrenbang) as a platform for community involvement in decision-making. Findings reveal that although formal channels for participation exist, challenges persist in terms of inclusiveness, feedback responsiveness, and continuity of involvement beyond consultation stages. The study highlights the importance of institutional support, civic education, and participatory culture in strengthening citizen engagement.*

**Kunci Kunci :** education policy; policy implementation; South Tangerang; public schools; tuition-free program.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Public participation is widely recognized as a cornerstone of democratic governance and accountable public administration. In the Indonesian context, efforts to involve citizens in planning and decision-making processes have been institutionalized through mechanisms such as Musyawarah Perencanaan Pembangunan

(Musrenbang), which serves as a deliberative forum from the village to city level (Bappenas, 2015). However, the quality and impact of such participatory mechanisms remain uneven across regions.

East Jakarta Administration, as part of the capital's decentralized structure under DKI Jakarta Province, holds an important role in delivering

responsive public services and facilitating participatory development. With a population exceeding 3 million people and a diverse socioeconomic landscape, East Jakarta faces complex governance challenges that require community input to address localized needs effectively.

Despite legal mandates, including Law No. 25 of 2004 on National Development Planning and Law No. 23 of 2014 on Regional Government, public participation often encounters limitations. These include procedural formalism, limited public awareness, elite domination, and lack of follow-up on citizens' inputs. In many cases, participation is symbolic rather than substantive (Widianingsih & Morrell, 2007).

This study aims to explore how public participation is practiced in East Jakarta, focusing on:

1. The structure and implementation of Musrenbang at the district and sub-district levels,
2. The perceptions of community members and local officials on its effectiveness, and
3. The challenges and enabling factors that influence participatory governance.

Theoretically, the research is grounded in Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969), which categorizes levels of participation from manipulation to citizen control, and in the concept of deliberative democracy that emphasizes communication,

inclusion, and reasoned debate (Habermas, 1996).

By analyzing the real-world application of participatory mechanisms in East Jakarta, the study contributes to the discourse on civic engagement and local governance in urban Indonesia. It offers recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness, inclusiveness, and impact of participatory development planning.

## 2. METHOD

This study uses a **qualitative case study approach** to examine public participation in development planning in East Jakarta. The qualitative method is appropriate for understanding complex social phenomena and capturing the perspectives of diverse stakeholders. **Data collection** was conducted through in-depth interviews, document analysis, and direct observation. Key informants included:

- Community leaders (RT/RW heads, neighborhood activists)
- Local government officials at the sub-district (kecamatan) and district (walikota) levels
- Participants of recent Musrenbang forums in 2021

A total of **12 semi-structured interviews** were conducted with purposively selected individuals who had experience or involvement in Musrenbang activities. These informants represented a mix of genders, ages, and backgrounds to ensure diversity of viewpoints.

**Documents analyzed** included the official Musrenbang reports from

2020 and 2021, city development planning documents (RPJMD Jakarta Timur), and guidelines issued by Bappeda DKI Jakarta. Observations were conducted during a virtual public consultation forum and coordination meeting in early 2021. Data were analyzed using a **thematic analysis** approach following the Miles and Huberman (1994) model: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Themes such as access to participation, responsiveness, inclusiveness, communication flow, and institutional follow-up were identified.

**Triangulation** was used to strengthen the validity of the findings by comparing data from interviews, documents, and observations. Ethical clearance was obtained from the university, and informed consent was secured from all participants. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process. This methodology allows the researcher to examine the implementation and impact of participatory mechanisms in a real-world urban administrative setting, while identifying both structural and cultural dimensions that affect citizen engagement.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1 Formal Mechanism of Participation**

The study found that Musrenbang in East Jakarta is conducted annually in accordance with regional planning cycles, beginning at the kelurahan (urban village) level and moving upward to kecamatan (sub-district) and city levels. The procedures are well-documented, and government units generally adhere to the timeline and stages set by Bappeda DKI Jakarta.

However, despite the procedural clarity, community involvement is often limited to attendance rather than active contribution. Many community members view the process as symbolic.

#### **3.2 Inclusiveness and Representation**

Interviews revealed that participation is frequently dominated by RT/RW leaders and representatives of formal community organizations. Marginalized groups such as youth, women, informal workers, and people with disabilities are rarely involved unless specially invited. This reflects a gap between normative goals of inclusive participation and practical realities of elite-centered consultation.

#### **3.3 Perceptions of Participation Impact**

Perceptions of Musrenbang's effectiveness vary. Some respondents appreciate the opportunity to voice opinions and gain access to information. Others, however, see it as a routine with minimal impact. A community leader stated, "Setiap tahun kita diundang, tapi hasilnya tidak terasa," highlighting the perception gap between process and tangible outcomes.

#### **3.4 Enabling and Inhibiting Factors**

Factors that support meaningful participation include active facilitation by local government staff, prior dissemination of information, and follow-up mechanisms. Inhibiting factors include lack of civic education, limited digital access (especially in online forums during the pandemic), and a general sense of powerlessness among citizens.

By analyzing the real-world application of participatory mechanisms in East Jakarta, the study contributes to the discourse on civic engagement and local governance in urban Indonesia. It offers recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness, inclusiveness, and impact of participatory development planning. Overall, these findings suggest that while institutional frameworks for participation exist, they are not fully effective in fostering inclusive, responsive, and empowered citizen engagement. Structural reforms and cultural shifts are needed to move beyond formalism toward substantive participatory governance.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

This study reveals that while formal participatory mechanisms such as Musrenbang are in place within East Jakarta's administrative system, they are yet to realize their full potential in delivering inclusive and impactful citizen engagement. Participation remains largely symbolic in many cases, and challenges persist in ensuring representation, responsiveness, and clarity of follow-up actions.

Inclusiveness remains limited due to the dominance of formal community elites, while marginalized voices are often underrepresented. Although government actors facilitate the process, they often lack sufficient tools or mandates to translate community proposals into concrete planning outcomes. To enhance the quality of public participation, there is a

need for capacity building among both officials and citizens, particularly in civic education, participatory planning skills, and policy communication. Furthermore, integrating citizen feedback mechanisms and monitoring systems can bridge the gap between participation and policy responsiveness.

This research recommends a reorientation of Musrenbang from a compliance-based activity to a substantive platform for dialogue and collaborative decision-making. By strengthening institutional support and promoting a culture of participation, East Jakarta can advance toward a more inclusive, democratic, and citizen-centered model of governance. Future studies may explore digital participation platforms and their potential to expand access and engagement among younger and tech-savvy demographics.

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