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Transforming participatory budgeting through dialogic accounting in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to develop a budget participation dialogue model that enables collaboration between the government and the community in redefining their understanding of participatory budgeting (PB) activities. The approach used is a qualitative methodology that emphasizes observation of the dialogue process. Data were collected from 40 informants from five regions in South Sulawesi Province, including village communities, community leaders, and government staff, including heads of regional work units. The results of the study indicate that inequality in the PB dialogue needs to be balanced with values derived from South Sulawesi culture, such as the principle of equality. In addition, the principle of justice can also be developed in the dialogue at the musrenbang communication forum by placing stakeholders as the main party and ensuring that the budget focuses on community welfare. This study concludes that the application of the principles of equality and justice in the PB dialogue can create a government that is more responsive to community needs. The practical implication of this finding is that by integrating local values in budget planning, the government can strengthen social relations with the community.

Contribution/Originality: This research significantly contributes to public sector accounting policy, especially in developing countries, where insincere participation is still frequently encountered in the participatory budgeting process.

1. INTRODUCTION

Community participation in governance is an important issue that continues to be discussed among practitioners and academics, especially in the context of participation in the budgeting process (Aleksandrov, Bourmistrov, & Grossi, 2018; Ganuza & Francés, 2012; Jayasinghe, Adhikari, Carmel, & Sopanah, 2020; Seal & Ball, 2011). Community participation in budgeting is especially critical because the budget represents a microcosm of the government itself (Franklin, Ho, & Ebdon, 2009) as a space where government accountability is realized and where debates about the allocation of public financial resources take place (Damayanti, 2016). Participatory Budgeting (PB), as a mechanism for emancipation and social accountability, is one of the participation instruments successfully introduced and implemented in 1989 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, at the local government level.

However, several studies in Europe and the United States show that PB implementation often falls short of expectations (Aleksandrov & Timoshenko, 2018), and similar issues are also found in developing countries (Kadir & Idris, 2021; Kuruppu et al., 2016; McNulty, 2015). The primary issue identified is the insufficient and unrepresentative nature of community participation in PB processes (Jayasinghe et al., 2020). Over time, community enthusiasm to participate has decreased due to the non-conducive dialogue process in budget decision-making (Aleksandrov et al., 2018; Lassou, Hopper, Soobaroyen, & Wynne, 2018). The dialogue process that has occurred so far is often rhetorical and exclusive (Damayanti & Syarifuddin, 2020), as the government considers that this process requires certain technical and analytical skills, which, unfortunately, are not possessed by most of the community (Célérier & Cuenca Botey, 2015). This perception has created a disparity in budget discussions, which are predominantly dominated by budget technicians, who are typically public officials (Célérier & Cuenca Botey, 2015; Fung, 2015; Syarifuddin & Damayanti, 2019). Generally, previous studies have only shown the dominance of political elites over marginalized people in the budgeting process. They have not discussed in depth the interaction between the two parties, so this article addresses this gap.

Some researchers argue that the dominance of political elites in the budget discussion, which often marginalizes the community—especially in terms of gender—has failed to achieve the main goal of participatory budgeting (PB). This condition, in turn, weakens political trust and social capital at the local level and among grassroots communities (Célérier & Cuenca Botey, 2015; McNulty, 2015). Meanwhile, other researchers observe that the role of the community in the budgeting and budget decision-making process is still very minimal (Aleksandrov et al., 2018; Jayasinghe et al., 2020). These studies reveal that some local governments utilize PB merely as a consultative process, while others employ it to project an image of innovation within their governance. Unlike Krenjova and Raudla (2018), who show conditions in Estonia, the implementation of PB at the local government level is more influenced by the desire to follow the current trend, without paying attention to the substance of actual participation.

Therefore, this study adopts a dialogic approach that has not been widely applied in previous research, aiming to observe more deeply the accounting dialogue that occurs in the Participatory Budgeting (PB) process. Dialogic Accounting (DA) is defined as a form of dialogical interaction that facilitates the development of 'new accounting,' capable of advancing democratic practices and enabling more participatory forms of governance (Bebbington, Brown, Frame, & Thomson, 2007). Several previous studies have shown that community participation in PB has not been carried out optimally. For example, Franklin et al. (2009) show differences in views between public staff and communities regarding the participation mechanism in PB, especially in the use of media. Media considered appropriate by public officials to build communication turns out to be unable to create an effective participation mechanism for communities, and vice versa. These differences in views and values ultimately lead to inequality in budget decision-making (Franklin et al., 2009). Based on these issues, this study aims to analyze and develop a participatory dialogue model that can minimize differences in views between the government and the community. Efforts to minimize differences in dialogue are made by raising local values that have been accepted and embedded in the community as a shared philosophy.

So far, the previous study indicates that the current dialogue framework in Participatory Budgeting (PB) actually "limits" participation and local empowerment, which are core tenets of PB itself (Alawattage & Azure, 2021; Aleksandrov et al., 2018). This is because national projects are either predetermined by upper levels of government without stakeholder engagement, or public officials are trapped in past institutional frameworks that dominate forms of accountability. Historically, kinship rules and social capital (trust) are ways indigenous communities engage in dialogue and develop reciprocal relationships, participating voluntarily, not as a form of rhetoric (Gallhofer, Haslam, & Yonekura, 2015). In this case, participation is inherent in core cultural values and constructs community identity (Greer & Patel, 2000). Therefore, it is important to gather empirical evidence about budgeting dialogue practices from local communities because PB in certain cultures and customs can be very different (Gomez, Insua, & Alfaro, 2016).

Based on this issue, researchers are motivated to raise the basic values contained in the South Sulawesi community, which is one of the provinces in Indonesia. Historically, this area is a combination of several large kingdoms. These values have played an important role in forming social bonds that drive individuals to interact with their communities, helping them avoid alienation and dissatisfaction with the political situation. According to some researchers, local community values can open opportunities to develop political knowledge and literacy, as well as increase tolerance, trust between individuals, a sense of belonging, and psychological empowerment (Jayasinghe et al., 2020; Protik, Nichols-Barrer, Berman, & Sloan, 2018).

In addition, for centuries, the local values of the South Sulawesi community have become a unique and ingrained way of life when they defend their rights to territory and natural resources, interact in daily life, and carry out moral accountability within the scope of customs. Another important aspect that motivates this study is the previous accounting literature on culture tends to investigate the role played by accounting in oppressing local cultures, silencing and discriminating against indigenous communities (Greer & Patel, 2000; Jayasinghe et al., 2020). Accounting, according to researchers, is largely presented as a colonial or post-colonial tool to weaken colonized indigenous communities and replace their culture with neo-liberal values (Greer & Patel, 2000; Lombardi, 2016). For example, neo-liberal accounting technology has a negative or destructive impact on local communities because it brings its own cultural values such as efficiency, economy, and effectiveness (Buhr, 2011; Gallhofer et al., 2015). Therefore, the emphasis of previous work becomes important, as Buhr (2011) states that "accounting 'for' Indigenous peoples rather than accounting 'by' Indigenous people", adheres to their cultural values and participation. Much can be gained by investigating accounting that originates from indigenous communities along with their cultural values (Buhr, 2011; Lombardi, 2016).

Several studies show that the need to shift from traditional governance to democratic governance is becoming increasingly urgent, as the issue of community inclusivity is now a major concern (Almquist, Grossi, Van Helden, & Reichard, 2013; Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2014). The main agenda of this change is to encourage community empowerment and participation (Damayanti & Syarifuddin, 2020; Fung, 2015). Similar issues are also developing in the accounting literature, where there is increasing recognition of the need for "new accounting" that can promote democracy and facilitate more participatory organizations (Bebbington et al., 2007). However, the implementation of this new accounting faces significant obstacles because the existing democratic governance is still dominated by political elites, and the deliberation process often takes the form of one-way dialogue (Brown & Dillard, 2015; Kuruppu et al., 2016). Brown (2009) envisions a new democratic paradigm wherein participatory dialogue is facilitated through an agonistic approach that embraces conflict as an integral component of democratic processes, where the democratization of accounting becomes more meaningful because it recognizes pluralism, differences, conflicts, and power struggles (Brown, 2009; Brown, Dillard, & Hopper, 2015; Kühn, 2021).

Accordingly, this study seeks to formulate a budget participation dialogue model that enables the government and the community to reframe their understanding of PB activities. This research makes a significant contribution to public sector accounting policy, particularly in developing countries where pseudo-participation remains prevalent in PB processes. The contribution to the body of knowledge is the opening of insights to include local values when dialoguing and participating in budget discussions. Ultimately, through the identification of the role of local values in the PB dialogue process, it is hoped that this study can serve as a reference for evaluating inclusivity issues in PB. The rest of the paper is structured as follows. In the next section, we review the relevant literature on dialogic accounting, which will later be used to analyze accounting dialogue in the participatory budgeting process. After that, the research methods section explains the study design and analysis stages. Next is the findings and discussion section, which focuses on the structural conditions of local government budgeting in Indonesia with local community values and wisdom. The main analysis in this section is to describe the dialogue process in three stages of communication in PB, namely, information gathering, management, and reporting. The final stage is the conclusion section which explains and summarizes the responses of local communities and public staff to accounting dialogue

involving the characterization of inherent rationality and local values, followed by an explanation of the contributions and implications of this paper.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Dialogic Accounting (DA) in Promoting Participation

Dialogic accounting is a theoretical foundation that initially observed the phenomenon of community participation in social accounting studies (O'Dwyer, 2005). This theory emerged from dialogical interactions in Social, Environmental, and Sustainability (SES) reporting, which remain inadequately addressed by academics and practitioners in the literature. The quality of SES reporting and stakeholder engagement is often associated with DA, known as "polylogic accounting" (Dillard & Roslender, 2011). DA is a form of critical accounting where stakeholder engagement plays a fundamental role in every dialogue (or polylogic) (Brown & Dillard, 2015). DA plays a crucial role in shaping the public interests and mitigate the influence of instrumental rationality; thus, a better understanding of its practices is necessary to accommodate community voices.

Therefore, accounting becomes more than merely a tool to maximize shareholders' profit, it can also facilitate democratic interactions through communicative spaces, which makes DA a medium of democratic accounting (Brown, 2009; Brown et al., 2015; Dillard & Roslender, 2011). DA challenges the view of a universal narrative and instead argued that an institution is shaped by its various perspective and competing interests, and thus capital owners, investors, or rulers should not be considered as priority stakeholders. It believes that there should be space for marginalized stakeholders that are overlooked by traditional accounting framework, where these stakeholders can share their different objectives and values (Brown & Dillard, 2015).

Additionally, Bebbington et al. (2007) referred to DA as a form of engagement that allows stakeholders to improve and implement the accounting tools and techniques to collect, manage and report relevant information. This allows stakeholders to be involved in the decision-making process, which leads to a dialogue of opinions and solutions about organizational behavior issues (Bebbington et al., 2007; Bellucci, Simoni, Acuti, & Manetti, 2019; Vinnari & Dillard, 2016). Brown and Dillard (2014) also propose a DA approach of workshop scenarios and open conferences because they believe that a participatory and democratic government requires both stakeholders and the public to engage and debate their values and interests together. This allows stakeholders to assess based on diversity of opinions, competitiveness, and social learning, thus allowing different perspectives to come into play.

This concept allows DA to understand differing interests and values in society, and propose a focus on processual dimensions, where decision-making is done by various stakeholders openly instead of focusing on representational aspects that focus on the end results. A dialogue process involving various parties, in DA model is much preferred because it allows for a fair solution of not just one party. Moreover, stakeholders play a key role in DA, where they are involved in every dialogue or "polylogic" (Bebbington et al., 2007). Contrary to traditional accounting, where they prioritize the shareholders, DA embrace multiple perspectives that are involved and even involve marginalized groups in the decision-making process. DA also challenges the dominance of instrumental rationality, which focuses on economic gains instead of social and environmental welfare, to create a fair and transparent accounting framework (Brown & Dillard, 2015).

Additionally, one key benefit of implementing DA is that it can promote sustainable social learning. DA process allows stakeholders to build more inclusive space where they see value in others' perspectives and find common ground with other parties. This ensures fairer decisions for all parties and enhances problem solving capabilities and fosters trust between different groups, which creates a more transparent and responsive accounting system to handle all stakeholders' need rather than only serving specific party's interests (Brown & Dillard, 2014).

In summary, DA was created to mitigate the shortcomings of traditional accounting frameworks by addressing various perspectives and interests. Accounting becomes something more than just tools to maximize profit for shareholders, it becomes a mechanism to foster democratic interactions (Bebbington et al., 2007). DA also allows

more extensive communication space between all parties involved in the accounting decision making process and opens opportunities for marginalization groups to be involved in the process and share their interest that will be otherwise ignored in a traditional accounting system.

Based on these various literatures, this study wants to examine the dialogue process in participatory budgeting because DA can offer a different perspective in decision making and reporting process from conventional accounting by focusing more on stakeholders' participation. DA in this setting, aims to create a space that treats all stakeholders equally without any party dominating the others, and to accommodate the interest of every party more inclusively (Bebbington et al., 2007; Bellucci et al., 2019; Vinnari & Dillard, 2016).

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1. Research Design

This study uses qualitative methodology that focuses on dialogue process observations. This is conducted through three stages of communication, which are information gathering, management of information, and the reporting stage (Bebbington et al., 2007; Brown & Dillard, 2014). In this context, the study reveals the form of budget participation dialogue based on these three stages and distinguishes the dialogue perceptions between the community and public staff according to their dialogue correlation. The researcher then designed a dialogue model based on the problems that arose from the dialogue process and its construction according to the informants' views. The construction of the dialogue model is based on local values that have been ingrained in the individuals of the South Sulawesi community. Data was collected from informants in five regions in South Sulawesi Province, totaling 40 people, consisting of village communities, community leaders, and public staff, including heads of local government work units. Informants were purposively selected to obtain more accurate information based on their experience with the budget or their direct involvement in the budgeting process. Structured interviews were conducted to gather informants' responses regarding the dialogue process in PB through three stages of communication and interaction among them.

The regions studied are former kingdoms in the past where traditional values are embedded and ingrained in their communities, namely Takalar, Jeneponto, Pangkep, Maros, and Gowa Regencies. Interviews with village communities aimed to capture their understanding of current issues, particularly issues of inclusivity and the dialogue process during PB. Meanwhile, interviews with public staff aimed to uncover their habits and capacities, as well as their roles in the dialogue process. Heads of work units (i.e., finance and planning) were also interviewed because their views as policymakers are very important, especially regarding the dialogue process, inclusivity, and community involvement.

3.2. Analysis Stages

The dialogue analysis at the three stages of communication—information gathering, management, and reporting—is outlined as follows:

1. Information Gathering: This stage is crucial as it ensures that the data obtained represents and is relevant to the community's needs. In information gathering, accounting dialogue is conducted through public discussion forums. These forums provide space for the community to directly dialogue with policymakers, express opinions, and make budget priority proposals.

2. Information Management: After data is collected, the next stage involves observing the dialogue between public staff and the community during information management. This stage aims to ensure that data is processed effectively and efficiently and that the dialogue from the previous stages becomes a priority in budget decision-making. Data obtained from various sources will be categorized into relevant topics at this stage. Researchers then observe community responses to budget allocations for education, health, infrastructure, and social protection. The analysis is conducted by identifying and measuring the extent to which community

aspirations align with the government's desired development priorities. Qualitative thematic analysis from discussion forums is used simultaneously to identify the most urgent and profound needs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3. Information Reporting: The final stage in the analysis process is information reporting, which includes presenting the analysis results to the public and related parties clearly, transparently, and accountably. The reports generated not only inform about budget decisions but also explain how community aspirations have been accommodated in budget planning. This analysis includes detailed information on how the results of community aspiration collection are reflected in the budget decisions made.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Findings

4.1.1. Information Gathering: Reflection of Leadership Rituals

Based on observations, village communities generally complain about the dialogue process when public staff collects information about development planning. One primary issue is the lack of clarity regarding the priority programs funded through the annual budget plan. This lack of clarity causes community proposals to often not align with priority programs, resulting in proposals not being accommodated in government activity plans. The musrenbang forum ultimately becomes dominated by public staff presenting a list of programs or activities, most of which are directives from higher levels of government (sub-district or district). The community does not get adequate space to contribute, either by making proposals or questioning the existing list of activities, especially in determining priority activities that suit their needs.

At the information-gathering stage, the community tends to be passive. If dialogue occurs, it is only to confirm or clarify the planned activities and fund allocations listed in the prepared budget. As stated by a village community leader in Takalar Regency.

"Actually, we do participate, but the proposals we submit are sometimes not in line with village priorities, so they are ignored… This ignorance is exploited by village officials to smooth the musrenbang process, and in the end, we only become listeners in the forum. Sometimes we also question this, and the village officials' answer is time efficiency because the musrenbang schedule is very limited."

This phenomenon shows that the information-gathering process adopts a one-way communication paradigm. Public staff, in this case, village and sub-district officials, seem to view dialogue as a formality with minimal interaction with the community, often citing time efficiency and the community's inability as reasons. This view reflects a particular challenge in the village development process, especially in the implementation of musrenbang. The village head, as the administrative leader at the village level, should manage the musrenbang process more inclusively, transparently, and participatively. However, in reality, they often lack the capacity or understanding to facilitate dialogue effectively. These limitations, whether in terms of formal education, managerial experience, or resources, have hindered them from optimally managing the musrenbang process. This is consistent with the findings of Kadir and Idris (2021) which show that the low capacity of village officials causes community participation to not run well.

4.1.2. Budget Information Management: Illustration of Elite Domination Negotiations

In the process of managing information, we observed the community's views on the budget negotiation process—a continuation of the previous process—that occurs between the community and public staff. The observed negotiations involve discussions about the activities/programs to be implemented and their costs. Within this context, information management serves as a process of organizing and categorizing data gathered during prior stages to identify and finalize activities for implementation. At this stage, negotiations occur between the community's proposals, synchronized with the government's priority plans. Ideally, public officials should no longer act as sole providers and implementers of decisions but should function as facilitators and catalysts for development dynamics.

As Kühn (2021) highlights, contemporary development paradigms emphasize the community's role as primary actors in the development process, fostering democratization through discussions that embrace conflict. Ultimately, accounting discussions become more meaningful because they recognize pluralism, differences, conflicts, and power struggles (Brown et al., 2015). This means that the community has the right to negotiate and question activities or programs in the budget during the PB process (Musrenbang).

According to Jabri (2015) negotiations should be conducted in an atmosphere of equality, where dialogue is not dominated by any particular party, allowing each party to express their views and interests fairly. Decisions made in negotiations should reflect the results of a joint agreement among all stakeholders, including village delegates, the government, and the community. However, in practice, this ideal is often not achieved. For example, a village community leader in Maros Regency stated.

Negotiations are conducted unilaterally… a group of people with specific interests dominates negotiations. For instance, we wanted to build bathing and toilet facilities, but what was decided was road construction. Road construction is the government's interest, not the community's need… so, in my opinion, there is no negotiation between the community and public staff… the community's voice is sidelined, while the government tends to prioritize its agenda, far from the principle of justice.

This statement indicates that the budget information management process does not run transparently and inclusively but is trapped in practices that ignore the broader community's participation. This condition creates deep disappointment in the community because the budget negotiation process often does not consider their views and needs fairly. Brown and Dillard (2014) state that the "decision moment" is a forum for democratic discussion and debate, a space that can maintain a pluralistic ethos, focused in such a way that it leads to the selection and implementation of democratic action.

4.1.3. Information Reporting: Unilateral Budget Decision-Making

This stage involves reporting on the programs that have been approved and included in the budget plan. The list of activities approved by public staff—the result of unilateral decisions—is presented to the community in the village *musrenbang* forum. This list is then forwarded for further deliberation at higher levels of government, including sub-district, district, provincial, and ultimately national discussions. In the context of information reporting, the community and public staff engage in dialogue to seek approval for the decisions made. However, in reality, participants often lack enthusiasm, as they hold no veto power over decisions considered "joint decisions." As a community leader in Gowa Regency commented.

"In reality, our role does not exist. The community only accepts the already decided budget… the opportunity to challenge budget decisions should still be possible because the scope of discussion is small, namely around the 'village budget.' The opportunity for equality and justice at the village level is also very significant. But all that is just a dream…"

The findings show that the government needs to increase the intensity of public dialogue when budget decisions are conveyed. In this context, providing opportunities for the community to "question" decisions and understand the "reasons" behind the chosen options becomes essential.

The study's findings show that village heads voice personal interests. For the community, dialogue in budget decision-making is merely a project distribution to village officials, not reflecting any bias towards the people. Kadir and Idris (2021) also found that the village head's role is very dominant in managing village funds, sidelining the role of village government supervisory institutions. This ultimately leads to corruption involving village heads.

PB, as one of the accounting technologies that disseminates dialogue emancipation, becomes marginalized. Based on observations, the form of accounting dialogue in the PB process at each communication stage can be summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Forms of accounting dialogue in three aspects of budget participation communication.

Process	Facilities	Participant	Dialogue	Problems
Information gathering	Village development planning meeting (*Musrenbang* village)	Community - government	Mono	Ineffective, unequal, and unfair
Information management	*Musrenbang* village	Community - government	Mono	Has not been functioning well because not all stakeholders are involved
Information reporting	*Musrenbang* village	Community - government	Mono	Not inclusive, as the community is not involved in challenging or questioning decisions

The process at each stage has not shown a dialogue, as Table 1 indicates that the process continues. Still, the dialogue between the community and village officials does not run as expected. Each process is hegemonized by public staff in various ways. Bebbington et al. (2007) state that dialogic accounting aims to involve various constituents in developing accounting tools and techniques to create relevant and timely communication and information delivery. The stages in the *musrenbang* process should implement dialogic accounting techniques to allow all parties to participate. Decision-making and community involvement in back-and-forth dialogue build a common foundation for addressing perceived problems, as noted by Brown and Dillard (2015).

4.2. Discussions

The research findings show that accounting dialogue that advocates for the emancipation of justice and equality for all parties has not been realized in every aspect of communication, from information gathering, and management, to reporting. The communication aspect has not reflected dialogue as a narrative, philosophy, or symbol of dedication as found in ancient Greek and Indian literature, especially in ancient art. According to the literature, dialogue is a communication process between two or more agents that considers meaning in dialogue to meet semantic and pragmatic rules (Kerveillant & Lorino, 2021).

Accounting dialogue in budgeting has not been understood as a form of confrontation between two different views leading to negotiation or struggle to reach a new compromise, as stated by Brown et al. (2015). Thus, budgeting dialogue in Indonesia has not emphasized the process of building a new response to different situations. Therefore, the creativity of dialogue, which is a relational perspective and prioritizes human relationships, has not been realized, as proposed by Brown (2009) that dialogue should be a discursive exchange between two independent, pragmatic, and integrated parties. The greater vision of viewing the village as a unified entity that protects the interests of all parties has been overlooked. According to a community leader informant (Gowa Regency).

"Dialogue that is built should be a form of mutual respect relationship between individuals… but in reality, *musrenbang* dialogue is an interaction that creates a barrier between the community and public staff."

This phenomenon shows that human awareness in dialogue has been lost, as it ignores many interests. This means that the altruistic attitude born from a sincere and selfless spirit for the common good has been neglected. Therefore, a concept is needed that can bridge the interests of various parties and transform them into common interests with altruistic values. The analysis process in managing data to reach conclusions is outlined in Figure 1.

Based on thematic analysis (Figure 1), the researchers then formulated two local community principles that can be brought to the surface, namely equality and justice. These two principles are local cultures internalized in the daily lives of the community when they handle customary affairs. These principles can be used as a basis for building a dialogue mechanism during village budget discussions in *musrenbang*.
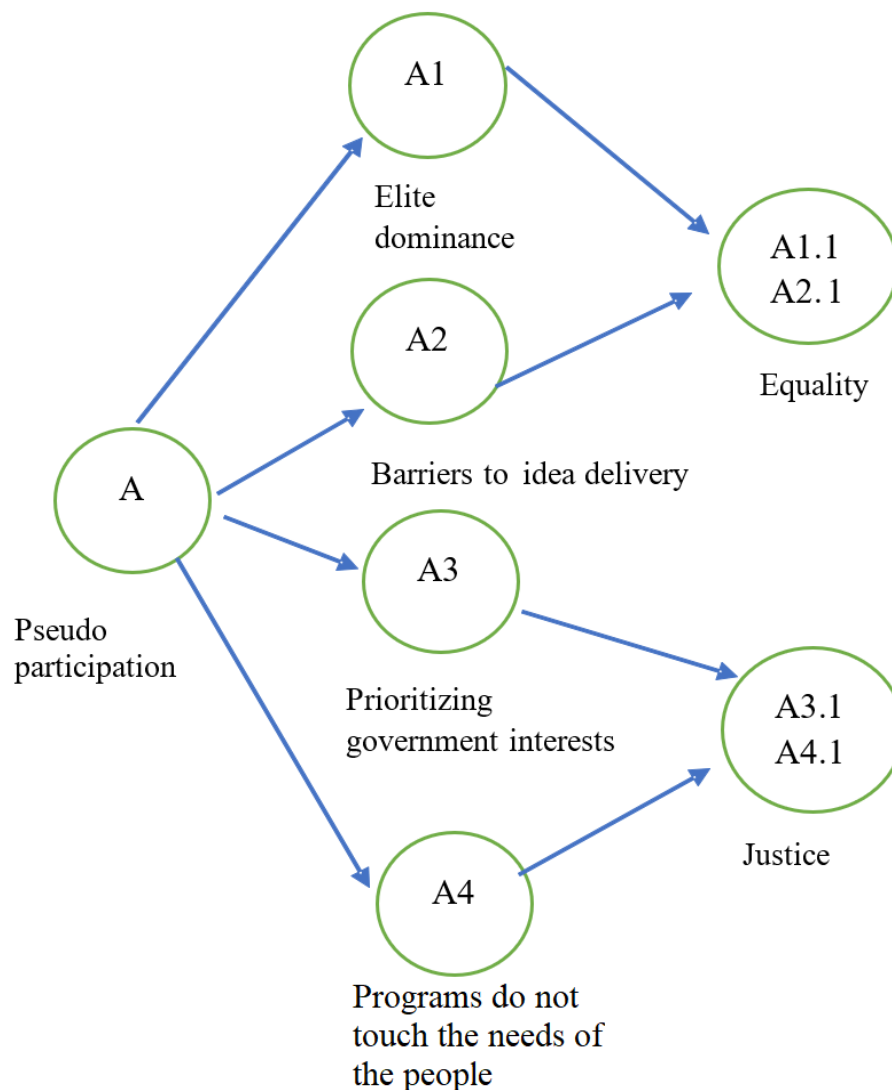
Figure 1. Thematic analysis of main issues.

4.2.1. Equality Principle: Reflection of Local Community Dialogue

The inequality that occurs in the context of PB dialogue needs to be complemented by values that are products of South Sulawesi's civilization, namely the principle of equality. According to Kerveillant and Lorino (2021) the principle of equality acknowledges collective problem-solving, collaboration, and the pursuit of common interests, as expressed by a village community informant,

"… Equality needs to be applied in solving a problem to maintain the sense of togetherness in a community. For example, when deciding on a budget plan for village activities, it is necessary to foster the feeling of each resident that they have the same and equal freedom in dialogue…"

This shows that local values appreciate dialogue. Local values respect the potential differences between the interests of the traditional leader and the needs of the community. The local community adheres to dynamic dialogue, recognizing several objective preferences to identify an issue. This view aligns with the thinking of Jayasinghe et al. (2020) and the relational dialogue perspective of Baker and Schaltegger (2015). These scholars argue that a representational perspective is insufficient and must be replaced with an emphasis on process dynamics and active stakeholder responses during dialogue.

The principle of equality has the meaning of peace. This principle means maintaining dignity and honor to achieve lasting peace (Sudaryanti, Sukoharsono, Baridwan, & Mulawarman, 2015). In the context of *musrenbang*, the government has an obligation to maintain the equality of every citizen. The principle of equality in local philosophy

allows the dialogue mechanism to end by considering all ideas and opinions in decision-making. A good philosophy is one that allows every problem to be solved through the dialogue process, bringing satisfaction to stakeholders (Kühn, 2021).

This research finds enthusiasm when reconstructing dialogue in PB because, through the local community's philosophy, the dialogical process ends with a resolution that strengthens trust in the government system. As Brown et al. (2015) state, stakeholders will eventually feel satisfied with institutions when dialogical processes are implemented, increasing trust in leaders and the government, while affirming their ideas and existence.

4.2.2. Justice Principle as a Dialogue Marker

Another local value from the South Sulawesi community is justice. The principle of justice is an element that can be developed in dialogue in the *musrenbang* communication forum by placing stakeholders as the main element and the benefit of the budget is for the community's welfare. According to Unerman (2014) every citizen and democratic institution must ensure that accounting dialogue activities, in this case, budget dialogue, are carried out and managed without damaging the ecological and social interaction situation of the community. Similarly, researchers assert that government organizations and stakeholders must deliberate on the social, environmental, and economic impacts of budget decisions (Baker & Schaltegger, 2015; Bellucci et al., 2019).

Therefore, the principle of justice needs to be translated accurately, both in meaning and purpose, into budget dialogue. This means the ability to uphold the substance of fair principles in the PB dialogue aspect is required. Regarding this, an informant stated, " ... actually, factual budget dialogue needs to consider the quality of decisions because the ideals of the state are reflected in the dialogue process itself...". This perspective emphasizes that the interaction between an organization, its systems, and its environment is both a reflection and an integral part of the organization. In essence, organizations engage with their environment through their creations; conversely, the environment becomes an extension of the organization.

So far, based on the classic principles of deliberation theory, participatory budgeting has experienced a shift in communication meaning, from being dominated by the government to the inclusion of the community in both ideas and emotions (Syarifuddin & Damayanti, 2019). Researchers are now incorporating dialogic elements into PB to define public policies and create more structured governance models (Brown & Dillard, 2015; Ganuza & Francés, 2012). PB, as a democratic process, advocates for two-way dialogue between the community and public staff. This aligns with Franklin et al. (2009) assertion that when public staff listen to community voices and involve them in decision-making, outcomes tend to be more effective. PB also gives better understanding of the issue at hand and what should be done to solve it to improve the community's quality of life. Moreover, democracy means that everyone is able to have rational discourses free of any domination to reach a common consensus (Kühn, 2021).

In summary, PB process in Indonesia should be implemented along with principle of equality and justice, especially in its application in the South Sulawesi district. This principle should be the moral foundation and key element in PB dialogue process that involves all stakeholders, both in government and its community, which shows the significant role of justice, and how it should be implemented in an inclusive, fair and sustainable budget decision-making.

5. CONCLUDING MARKS
5.1. Conclusion

This study highlights the significance of the principle of equality and justice in PB dialogue, which is based on the local values of inclusiveness and fairness to create a government that responds to its community's needs. This principle believes that all parties have equal significance during a dialogue, which means that they are both free of any dominance and will work together to achieve a common goal. An inclusive and fair dialogue such as this will then bridge the horizontal and vertical conflicts between government and its community, which then promotes fairer and

sustainable policies. Fung (2015) noted that involving the community in a dialogue is essential to overcome various challenges in governance.

The findings in this study contribute to the ongoing discourse by emphasizing the significant role of equality and justice in a PB dialogue. In this context, the community becomes an active party and promotes inclusiveness in dialogue process, which then shows an equal relationship with the government as an active participant in decision-making process. Protik et al. (2018) states that local values are instrumental in strengthening social bonds, tolerance, trust and sense of belonging in a community. Therefore, implementing this principle into budget planning creates a space that is more democratic and inclusive while also increasing the engagement between government and community. Additionally, this study provides further insights into how to create a responsive government that are dialogue-based and rooted in local value, which focuses on community needs at every stage of the budget dialogue process.

5.2. Practical Implications

The practical implications of this article show that equality and justice can strengthen the budget dialogue and policy planning process. These local values are an important element in improving relations between society and government, as well as creating a more responsive and responsible government. In practice, this leads to more inclusive, equitable and sustainable policies. By integrating local values in budget planning, governments can create stronger social ties with communities, increase mutual trust, and strengthen the sense of belonging among community members. This supports the creation of a more transparent and accountable government, as well as improving the quality of interaction between government and society.

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