

## Organizational Communication Model for Local Government Agencies Implementing the Foster Parent Movement (Genting) to Prevent Stunting

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### ABSTRACT

Stunting remains a major public health challenge that requires effective collaboration among government institutions, the private sector, and communities. To strengthen stunting prevention, the Indonesian government introduced the Foster Parent Movement for Stunting Prevention (Genting), which encourages cross-sector stakeholder participation in supporting families at risk of stunting. This study aims to analyze the organizational communication model employed by local government agencies in implementing the Genting Program in Pringsewu Regency. This study adopted a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation involving five key informants, including Family Planning Counselors, local government officials, sub-district and village representatives, and program stakeholders. Data were analyzed using an interactive qualitative analysis model. The findings indicate that the implementation of the Genting Program relies on both formal and informal communication operating vertically and horizontally across organizational levels. Family Planning Counselors act as key communicators linking local government agencies, village administrations, private-sector partners, and communities. Informal communication proved more effective than formal coordination in fostering mutual understanding, building trust, and encouraging stakeholder participation as foster parents. However, communication barriers remain due to different perceptions regarding funding responsibilities and forms of stakeholder involvement. This study contributes to organizational communication literature by demonstrating that informal communication functions as an adaptive feedback mechanism that strengthens inter-organizational collaboration, thereby extending Katz and Kahn's Open Systems Theory. The findings also provide practical recommendations for integrating formal coordination with interpersonal communication strategies to enhance stakeholder engagement and improve local stunting prevention programs.



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## Introduction

Stunting remains a multidimensional and urgent human development problem in Indonesia, including in Pringsewu Regency. Based on the results of the 2024 National Nutrition Status Survey, the stunting rate in Pringsewu Regency stood at 19.5 percent, an increase of 3.7 percent from 2023 which was 15.8 percent. Although various interventions have been carried out by the government, stunting rates have not yet shown a significant and evenly distributed decline. This condition is influenced by multidimensional factors, ranging from poverty, low nutritional literacy, limited access to health services, to weak social involvement of the community. Recognizing this complexity, the government, in this case the Ministry of Population and Family Development/National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN), launched the Foster Parent Movement for Stunting Prevention (Genting) as a form of cross-sector mutual cooperation involving the government, private sector, and community.

The Foster Parent Movement for Stunting Prevention (Genting) is a manifestation of cross-sector mutual cooperation. This program is strategically designed to connect resources from various actors, such as state-owned enterprises (BUMN), regional-owned enterprises (BUMD), the private sector, non-governmental organizations, universities, media, and individuals, in supporting poor families at risk of stunting. In accordance with the directive of Presidential Instruction Number 8 of 2025 concerning Optimization of Poverty Alleviation and Extreme Poverty Elimination, this involves BUMN, BUMD, individuals, NGOs/communities, the private sector, universities/academics, and the media to address stunting problems comprehensively and sustainably during the first 1000 days of life (Susanti et al., 2025).

Pringsewu Regency, as one of the regions in Lampung Province, has implemented various stunting reduction acceleration programs, including the Genting Program which involves various stakeholders. The implementation of this program requires effective coordination and communication among the actors involved. In the implementation of cross-sector programs such as the Genting Program, communication becomes a key factor determining the program's success. Communication not only functions as a means of conveying information but also as a mechanism for coordination, collaboration, and joint decision-making among stakeholders (Dharma et al., 2025).

However, in practice, program implementation often faces various communication challenges, such as differences in perception between institutions, limited coordination, and lack of information integration across sectors. This condition can affect the effectiveness of program implementation in the field. This can be seen from the participation of stakeholders who could act as foster parents and community elements that have not yet fully and sustainably actively engaged.

In recent years, studies on organizational communication and collaborative governance have increasingly emphasized the importance of communication as a key mechanism for integrating the various actors involved in public policy implementation. Research shows that the success of public health programs is determined not only by the availability of resources or policy design, but also by the organization's ability to build effective communication among stakeholders (Berg et al., 2021; Revere et al., 2015). In the context of collaborative governance, communication plays a role in building trust, creating shared understanding, reducing conflicts of interest, and fostering collective commitment to

program objectives.

Numerous studies on stunting prevention and public health programs have highlighted the importance of cross-sector collaboration in addressing complex health issues. Recent studies have shown that the involvement of local governments, the private sector, civil society organizations, and communities is a crucial factor in increasing the effectiveness of public health interventions (Alderwick et al., 2021; Dam et al., 2023). However, most research still focuses on aspects of policy implementation, institutional coordination, and community participation, while studies specifically examining how organizational communication occurs among actors in collaborative programs are relatively limited.

In the field of organizational communication, recent research emphasizes that formal communication alone is often insufficient to support complex collaboration. Informal communication networks, interpersonal relationships, and information exchange that occur outside of formal bureaucratic mechanisms are often crucial factors in the success of inter-organizational coordination (Begemann et al., 2024; Denner et al., 2025). However, research examining how formal and informal communication interact in the implementation of stunting prevention programs, particularly through the Foster Parents Movement to Prevent Stunting (Genting) scheme, remains very limited, particularly in the context of local government in Indonesia.

Based on this literature review, there is a research gap in understanding the organizational communication models used in the implementation of cross-sectoral collaboration-based public health programs. Previous research generally highlights aspects of governance, program coordination, and stakeholder participation, but has not yet fully explained how formal and informal communication processes shape stakeholder engagement in program implementation. Therefore, this study is crucial to understand how organizational communication functions as a mechanism connecting various actors in the implementation of the Genting Program in Pringsewu Regency.

This research is novelty in its analytical focus, which places organizational communication as the primary unit of analysis in the implementation of the Genting Program. Unlike previous studies that focused more on stunting policy aspects or institutional collaboration in general, this study examines how formal communication, informal communication, horizontal communication networks, and feedback mechanisms between stakeholders shape the success of program implementation. Furthermore, this study utilizes the perspective of Katz and Kahn's Organizational Systems Theory to explain how communication functions as an adaptation mechanism in an open organizational system involving various actors across sectors (Katz & Kahn, 1978).

Based on the results of pre-research conducted in January 2026, it was found that stakeholder involvement in supporting the Genting Program in Pringsewu Regency is still not optimal. Several stakeholders at the sub-district level, such as sub-district heads and village chiefs, have not been fully motivated to participate directly as foster parents for children at risk of stunting. This condition indicates that the personal commitment of some local government officials to the program still needs to be strengthened.

The results of observations and initial interviews indicate that one factor influencing this low participation is a difference in understanding of the basic concept of the Genting Program. Some stakeholders still assume that the implementation of this program is supported by a local government budget allocation, so the participation provided does not

need to be personal or based on individual contributions. This perception leads to a tendency to wait for support from formal government budget mechanisms rather than through direct involvement as foster parents.

Whereas conceptually, the Genteng Program is designed as a social movement that emphasizes voluntary participation from various elements of society, including government officials, the private sector, community organizations, and individuals who care about stunting prevention efforts. Through the foster parent scheme, each party is expected to provide direct support to families with children at risk of stunting, whether in the form of nutritional assistance, mentoring, or other social support.

This difference in understanding of the program mechanism has resulted in the target number of foster parents set for the Genteng Program in Pringsewu Regency not being achieved. This condition indicates that program communication to stakeholders still needs to be strengthened, particularly in explaining the objectives, mechanisms, and forms of participation expected from each party involved. With more effective and targeted communication, it is hoped that stakeholders can understand that the Genteng Program is a collaborative movement based on social concern that requires active contributions from various parties.

Based on this background, the author aims to understand the organizational communication model of local government agencies in the implementation of the Genteng Program in Pringsewu Regency. Analysis of this communication model is expected to provide an overview of coordination patterns, communication flows, and obstacles encountered during program implementation.

### **Organizational Communication (Katz and Kahn's Organizational System)**

Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn developed a social system theory which is considered one of the representative transitional theories of social systems in organizational communication. They applied the concept of open systems to organizations. They argued that organizations are seen as open systems that emphasize relationships between individuals within the organization who communicate with each other, each receiving messages and storing information (Nainggolan, 2021).

Organizational system theory views organizations as open social systems that continuously interact with their environment. Organizations do not stand alone; rather, they receive inputs from the environment, process them through internal processes, and then produce outputs that in turn affect the environment. Katz and Kahn rejected the view of organizations as closed machines and emphasized that humans, communication, values, and social relationships are the core of organizational sustainability.

As a social system based on human cooperation, organizations can be formed for various purposes. Therefore, organizations do not have to follow a natural cycle of birth, growth, and death like living organisms. Katz & Kahn (1978) explained the special features of human social systems compared to biological organism systems as follows: Social structures are essentially cooperation. People discover the complexity of behavior patterns we call social structure, and they create social structures by demonstrating those behavior patterns.

Many characteristics of social systems arise from these essential facts. As human creations, social systems are imperfect. They can fall apart overnight, but they can also last for

centuries, longer than the biological organism systems that originally created them. The glue that unites them is essentially psychological, not biological. Social systems are rooted in human attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, motivations, habits, and expectations (Hardjana, 2016).

Goldhaber (1993) also suggests that organizational communication can be defined and perceived from various perspectives, as outlined below:

- a. Organizational communication occurs within a complex, open system influenced by its environment, both internal (called culture) and external.
- b. Organizational communication involves messages and channels, goals, direction, and media.
- c. Organizational communication involves people and their attitudes, feelings, relationships, and skills.
- d. Organizational communication is the process of creating and exchanging messages within a network of interdependent relationships to address an uncertain or constantly changing environment.

From Goldhaber's definition, there are seven key concepts contained within it:

1. **Process:** An organization is a dynamic, open system that creates and exchanges messages among its members. Because this phenomenon of creation and exchange is continuous and uninterrupted, it is considered a process.
2. **Message:** A message is a meaningful arrangement of symbols about people, objects, and events produced by interactions with others. To communicate, a person must be able to construct a mental image and convey that image.
3. **Network:** An organization consists of individuals who occupy specific positions or roles within the organization. The creation and exchange of messages between these individuals occurs through a set of pathways called communication networks.
4. **Interdependence:** Another key concept in organizational communication is the interdependence of one part on another. This is the nature of an organization, which is an open system.
5. **Relationship:** An organization is an open system, a social system, so the functioning of its parts lies in the hands of humans. Therefore, human relationships within the organization are crucial.
6. **Environment:** The environment is the totality of all physical and social factors taken into account when making decisions regarding individuals within a system.
7. **Uncertainty:** Uncertainty is the difference between available information and expected information. For example, an organization requires information regarding government regulations that affect its production.

### **Models Of Organizational Communication**

An organizational communication model is a conceptual framework used to understand and analyze how communication takes place within an organization. One model often used in this context is the system-based organizational communication model. This model describes the organization as a complex system in which communication plays a central role in transmitting information, managing relationships, and driving work processes (Larisu, 2023)

According to McShane & Glinow (2018), the system-based organizational communication model consists of several key components:

- a. **Sender:** In the organizational context, the sender is an individual or group that has a



message or information to convey. Senders in an organization can come from various levels, from top managers to lower-level employees. Each sender has an important role in communicating goals, instructions, or information to receivers. It is important for the sender to convey the message clearly and effectively so that it can be understood by the receiver.

- b. **Message:** The message is the core of organizational communication. It includes information or content that the sender wishes to convey to the receiver. Messages in the organizational context can include instructions, project information, performance reports, company policies, or larger strategic messages. The quality of the message is very important, and the message composer must ensure that the message is relevant, accurate, and appropriate to the organizational context.
- c. **Channel:** The channel is the medium or way in which the message is delivered from sender to receiver. In an organizational environment, communication channels can vary greatly. These can include face-to-face meetings, email, letters, telephone, online meetings, online collaboration platforms, and even internal social media. Choosing the right channel is important so that the message can be effectively delivered to the receiver. For example, a very important message might be better delivered directly in a meeting than via email.
- d. **Receiver:** The receiver is the individual or group that receives the message delivered by the sender. The receiver has an important role in the communication process because they are responsible for decoding the message, processing the information conveyed, and providing a response or feedback to the message. The receiver must be active in listening to or reading the message, interpreting its meaning, and ensuring they correctly understand what the sender intended.
- e. **Feedback:** Feedback is the response given by the receiver to the sender after receiving the message. Feedback is very important in organizational communication because it allows the sender to evaluate whether the message has been successfully delivered and well understood by the receiver. Feedback can take the form of questions, verbal or written responses, or actions taken by the receiver in response to the message. The sender can use this feedback to improve or clarify the message if necessary.
- f. **Noise:** Noise in communication refers to factors that can disrupt or hinder the communication process. Noise can be physical, such as loud sounds in the work environment, or semantic noise, such as confusion in the use of terminology or unclear language. In the organizational context, noise can come from various sources, and it is important to identify and address this noise so that communication runs smoothly.
- g. **Context:** Context is the physical, social, cultural, and situational environment in which communication takes place. Context affects how the message is received and understood by the receiver. In organizations, context can change depending on the particular situation. For example, communication in a formal meeting room has a different context than communication occurring between coworkers in an open office space.

In applying the system-based organizational communication model, organizations can improve their communication effectiveness by paying attention to each key component. This includes choosing the appropriate channel for the message to be delivered, ensuring the message is composed clearly and accurately, and listening to feedback from receivers for subsequent improvement. Additionally, understanding the organizational context and handling potential noise are also important factors in ensuring successful communication within the organization.

## **Formal and Informal Communication**

When messages flow through official channels determined by the organization's official hierarchy or job function, they fall within the formal communication channel. According to [Liliweri \(1997\)](#), the important functions of the formal communication system are as follows:

- a. Formal communication is established as a means of coordinating activities and dividing labor within the organization.
- b. Direct formal relationships only encompass the relationship between superiors and subordinates. This direct communication allows both parties to participate and provide rapid feedback.
- c. Formal communication allows members to reduce or minimize wasted time or production saturation, eliminate uncertainty in work operations, including overlapping tasks and functions, and facilitate comprehensive reforms that impact effectiveness and efficiency.
- d. Formal communication emphasizes the full and strong support of authority through structure and hierarchy.

[Silviani \(2020\)](#) identified at least three forms of formal communication: direction (vertical/horizontal); nature; the type of communication network tailored to the task, such as reporting, ordering, directing, or providing protection and advice; and formality (the formal aspect), the extent to which communication flows are limited by authority. In terms of direction, messages in formal communication typically flow from top to bottom or bottom to top, vertically, from the same level, or horizontally, and across channels.

According to [Pace & Faules \(1994\)](#), when organizational members communicate with each other without regard to their position within the organization, the direction of information flow is personal, referred to as an informal communication network. This definition implies two factors within an informal communication network: the nature of the relationship or format of interaction and the direction of information flow. The nature of the relationship refers to personal relationships, including interpersonal relationships, while the direction of information flow is personal, arising from interactions between people and flowing throughout the organization unpredictably, known as rumors or hearsay.

One of the most obvious characteristics of organizational communication is the concept of relationships. [Goldhaber \(1993\)](#) defines an organization as "a network of interdependent relationships". When things are interdependent, it means that they influence each other. The pattern and nature of relationships within an organization can be determined by the structure or positional relationships and interpersonal relationships where individuals within the organization act outside the role structure, thus creating informal communication networks ([Silviani, 2020](#)).

## **Method**

The research method used in this study is descriptive qualitative, with the aim of clearly describing the phenomenon under investigation. Qualitative research method is a research procedure that produces descriptive data such as written or spoken words from individuals or observed behavior ([Sugiyono, 2016](#)).

Qualitative research method is a perspective in research that emphasizes problems in

social life based on a holistic, complex, and detailed reality (Pujileksono, 2016). In this study, the researcher is placed directly as the primary research instrument, carrying out the research process directly and collecting various materials related to the research. Of course, this research does not depend on population size or sample, but rather on data depth or the quality of the data produced.

The location of this research is Pringsewu Regency, Lampung Province. This location was chosen because Pringsewu Regency is one of the areas implementing the Genting Program to accelerate stunting reduction. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement, experience, and authority in the implementation of the program. The study involved 5 informants consisting of Family Planning Counselors (PKB), officials from local government agencies responsible for stunting prevention, sub-district and village government representatives, and stakeholders participating as foster parents in the Genting Program. The selection criteria included: (1) active involvement in program implementation; (2) direct knowledge of communication and coordination processes; and (3) willingness to participate in the study.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted between January and March 2026. Each interview lasted approximately 45–90 minutes and was conducted face-to-face at locations agreed upon by the participants. Interviews focused on communication processes, stakeholder engagement, coordination mechanisms, communication barriers, and strategies used in advocacy programs.

Observations were carried out during coordination meetings, socialization activities, stakeholder advocacy sessions, and field visits related to the implementation of the Genting Program. Through observation, the researcher examined communication patterns, stakeholder interactions, and the dynamics of formal and informal communication occurring during program implementation.

Documentation data were obtained from various sources, including Genting Program implementation guidelines, policy documents, meeting minutes, activity reports, official correspondence, program monitoring reports, and supporting statistical data related to stunting prevention efforts in Pringsewu Regency.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles et al. (2014), consisting of three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data condensation involved selecting, focusing, simplifying, and categorizing interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary materials. The categorized data were then organized into thematic matrices to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying recurring patterns, relationships among categories, and their relevance to organizational communication theory and the implementation of the Genting Program.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, several validation strategies were employed. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different categories of informants. The triangulation method was achieved through the use of interviews, observations, and document analysis. Member checking was also conducted by confirming key findings with selected informants to ensure the accuracy of interpretations. In addition, prolonged engagement in the field and continuous review of research notes were undertaken to enhance data credibility and dependability.

## **Findings**

### **General Overview**

The Foster Parent Movement for Stunting Prevention (Genting) is a manifestation of cross-sector mutual cooperation. Through Genting, assistance from foster parents is expected to support poor families at risk of stunting, in accordance with the directive of Presidential Instruction Number 8 of 2025 concerning Optimization of Poverty Alleviation and Extreme Poverty Elimination, involving state-owned enterprises (BUMN), regional-owned enterprises (BUMD), individuals, NGOs/communities, the private sector, universities/academics, and the media to address stunting problems comprehensively and sustainably during the first 1000 days of life (Susanti et al., 2025).

The Genting Program is designed to contribute to the realization of the Vision "Bersama Indonesia Maju Indonesia Emas 2045," particularly in line with the 4th Asta Cita mission: strengthening human resource development, science, technology, education, health, sports achievements, gender equality, and strengthening the roles of women, youth, and persons with disabilities. A nationally proclaimed program must be able to run in all regions through the support of various forms of resources, one of which is the concern and participation of foster parents through the Genting platform (Susanti et al., 2025).

The target recipients of Genting are called Families at Risk of Stunting (KRS). Families at Risk of Stunting are target families who have risk factors for giving birth to stunted children, with target families consisting of: couples of childbearing age, pregnant women, families with children aged 0-23 months, and families with children aged 24-59 months, as well as screening for easily observable risk factors that significantly influence the occurrence of stunting, namely sanitation, access to clean water, and the conditions of the 4 Ts (too young, too old, too close, too many) and modern family planning participation. Genting recipients are families at risk of stunting who have family members in the first 1000 days of life, including pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and children under two years old (0-23 months). The Genting Control Team is the team that implements Genting operations at the central, provincial, and regency/city levels (Susanti et al., 2025).

### **Organizational Communication Model of Local Government Agencies in the Implementation of the Genting Program**

This research shows that the implementation of the Genting Program in Pringsewu Regency involves various local government agencies and stakeholders who interact with each other through formal and informal organizational communication processes. Communication becomes the main instrument in socializing program objectives, building shared understanding, and mobilizing community and stakeholder participation to become foster parents for families at risk of stunting.

Based on field findings, the communication model formed in the implementation of the Genting Program not only takes place vertically from the central government to local governments down to the village level, but also horizontally through communication among stakeholders. In this process, informal communication emerges as the most effective form of communication in supporting program success.

The results show that Family Planning Counselors have a central role as communicators who bridge program information from the government to the community and potential stakeholders. Family Planning Counselors not only convey information through official

forums such as coordination meetings, socialization events, and cross-sector meetings, but also through interpersonal communication that takes place in informal situations. This approach is considered more effective because it allows for two-way dialogue that is more open and flexible.

From the perspective of the organizational communication model, Family Planning Counselors act as senders who convey messages about the objectives, mechanisms, and benefits of the Genteng Program to message receivers consisting of heads of local government agencies, sub-district heads, village chiefs, community leaders, the business community, and individuals with the potential to become foster parents. The messages conveyed contain invitations to participate in stunting prevention efforts through providing nutritional or non-nutritional assistance and mentoring to target families.

The communication channels used include interpersonal communication through direct conversation, field visits, discussions, as well as communication through digital media such as WhatsApp and social media like Instagram. This variety of communication channels allows information to reach targets more broadly and quickly.

### **The Role of Communication in Genteng Program Advocacy**

This research shows that the implementation of the Genteng Program in Pringsewu Regency involves various local government agencies and stakeholders who interact with each other through formal and informal organizational communication processes. Communication becomes the main instrument in socializing program objectives, building shared understanding, and mobilizing community and stakeholder participation to become foster parents for families at risk of stunting.

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### **Horizontal Communication Networks Among Stakeholders**

The results show that the success of Genting Program implementation is not only influenced by communication conducted by Family Planning Counselors, but also by the formation of horizontal communication networks among stakeholders.

Village chiefs who have understood and implemented the Genting Program tend to invite other village chiefs to also participate in the program. This process creates an information dissemination effect through social networks that develop naturally among stakeholders.

This horizontal communication enables the exchange of experiences, sharing of best practices, and provision of motivation among involved actors. Information conveyed by fellow village chiefs often has a high level of credibility because it comes from real experiences in program implementation.

This phenomenon shows that the communication process in the implementation of the Genting Program does not run one-way, but rather develops into a participatory communication network. The more parties who understand the benefits of the program, the wider the advocacy process that occurs independently without always having to depend on formal communication from the government.

### **Analysis of the Organizational Communication Model Based on Katz and Kahn's System Theory**

Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn developed a social system theory. Organizational system theory views organizations as open social systems that continuously interact with their environment. Organizations do not stand alone; rather, they receive inputs from the environment, process them through internal processes, and then produce outputs that in turn affect the environment. Katz and Kahn rejected the view of organizations as closed machines and emphasized that humans, communication, values, and social relationships are the core of organizational sustainability (Hardjana, 2016).

The findings of this study support Katz and Kahn's Open Systems Theory, which conceptualizes organizations as open social systems that continuously interact with their environment through processes of input, transformation, output, and feedback (Katz & Kahn, 1978). In the implementation of the Genting Program, organizational communication functions as the primary mechanism that enables interaction among multiple actors, including local government agencies, Family Planning Counselors, village governments, community leaders, private sector actors, and potential foster parents. These actors collectively form an interconnected system that contributes to the achievement of stunting prevention goals.

The study demonstrates that the Genting Program itself serves as an organizational input in the form of policy directives, program objectives, and operational guidelines. These inputs are transformed through communication activities such as coordination meetings, socialization, advocacy, interpersonal interactions, and stakeholder engagement. The resulting outputs are reflected in increased stakeholder participation, the formation of foster parent networks, and support for families at risk of stunting. Consistent with Katz and Kahn's perspective, organizational effectiveness is achieved not merely through formal structures but through continuous interaction among organizational subsystems.



More importantly, the findings extend Katz and Kahn's theory by revealing the strategic role of informal communication as an adaptive mechanism within an open organizational system. While the original theory emphasizes the importance of feedback in maintaining organizational adaptation, this study shows that informal communication acts as a practical channel through which feedback is generated, exchanged, and utilized among stakeholders. Through informal conversations, personal approaches, and interpersonal networks, stakeholders are able to clarify misunderstandings, negotiate meanings, and adapt their responses to program objectives more effectively than through formal communication channels alone.

The findings also expand the theory by demonstrating that organizational adaptation in collaborative public health programs is not solely dependent on hierarchical communication structures. Instead, adaptation emerges through horizontal communication networks among stakeholders. Village heads, community leaders, and participating foster parents actively disseminate information and encourage broader participation through peer-to-peer communication. This process creates a self-reinforcing communication network that enables the system to sustain itself and respond dynamically to environmental challenges.

Another contribution of this study is the identification of communication barriers as a form of organizational noise within the open system. Misunderstandings regarding funding mechanisms and stakeholder responsibilities initially hindered participation in the Genting Program. However, the presence of informal communication channels allowed these barriers to be addressed through continuous dialogue and clarification. This finding reinforces Katz and Kahn's argument that organizational survival depends on the ability to process environmental feedback and continuously adapt communication strategies to changing conditions (Katz & Kahn, 1978).

Therefore, this study not only confirms the relevance of Open Systems Theory in explaining organizational communication within collaborative governance settings but also contributes a new perspective by highlighting informal communication as a critical adaptive feedback mechanism that strengthens stakeholder collaboration in public health interventions. This finding provides an empirical extension of Katz and Kahn's theory in the context of contemporary multi-stakeholder governance and stunting prevention programs.

### **Communication Barriers in the Implementation of the Genting Program**

In socializing the Genting Program, this research found several communication barriers in its implementation. One of the main barriers is the difference in perception regarding the basic concept of the program. Some stakeholders initially understood that the Genting Program is a program supported by the government budget so their participation did not need to be personal. This difference in understanding caused some stakeholders not to be motivated to get actively involved as foster parents. From the perspective of the organizational communication model, this condition is a form of noise that hinders message delivery.

In addition, the limited intensity of formal socialization also means that program information has not been evenly received by all stakeholders. Therefore, informal communication becomes a strategy used to overcome these barriers by providing more personal and sustainable explanations. The results show that after intensive interpersonal

communication by Family Planning Counselors and stakeholders who have participated, understanding of the Genteng Program increased and encouraged an increase in the number of foster parents involved in the program.

### **Organizational Communication Model of the Genteng Program in Pringsewu Regency**

The research results indicate that the organizational communication model for the implementation of the Genteng Program in Pringsewu Regency is an open system, involving ongoing interaction between government organizations and their external environment. Communication occurs not only formally through official letters, coordination meetings, socialization forums, and program reporting, but also through informal interpersonal communication between Family Planning Extension Workers (PKB), local government, village government, community leaders, and prospective foster parents.

In this model, Family Planning Extension Workers play a central role, connecting various stakeholders through information dissemination, advocacy, coordination, and facilitation of participation. Communication flows vertically from the central and local governments to program implementers at the field level, as well as horizontally between organizations and stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Genteng Program. Through this process, information regarding program objectives, target beneficiaries, and participation mechanisms can be disseminated to various parties who have the potential to become foster parents.

The research findings also indicate that informal communication plays a crucial role in supporting program effectiveness. The personal approach taken by the PKB and other stakeholders builds trust, reduces misunderstandings regarding the program, and increases stakeholder willingness to participate. Informal communication serves as a feedback mechanism, enabling the organization to obtain direct responses from the external environment and adjust its communication strategy according to stakeholder needs.

Based on the perspective of Katz and Kahn's Organizational Systems Theory, the Genteng Program organizational communication model consists of input, throughput, output, and feedback components. Inputs include Genteng Program policies, implementation guidelines, and program resources. Throughput is realized through communication, coordination, outreach, and advocacy processes carried out by various actors. Outputs are reflected in increased stakeholder involvement as foster parents and support for families at risk of stunting. Meanwhile, feedback is obtained through formal and informal communication, allowing the organization to evaluate obstacles, refine communication strategies, and maintain program sustainability. Thus, the Genteng Program organizational communication model in Pringsewu Regency can be categorized as an open-system-based collaborative communication model, which places informal communication as a crucial adaptation mechanism in building stakeholder participation.

## **Discussion**

### **Genteng Program as an Open Organizational System**

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of the Foster Parent Movement for Stunting Prevention (Genteng) in Pringsewu Regency reflects the characteristics of an open organizational system as proposed by Katz and Kahn. According

to Organizational Systems Theory, organizations continuously interact with their external environment through the processes of input, transformation, output, and feedback. In the context of the Genting Program, national policies and guidelines issued by the Ministry of Population and Family Development/BKKBN serve as organizational inputs that are received by local government agencies and other stakeholders. These inputs are subsequently transformed through coordination meetings, socialization activities, advocacy efforts, and communication among Family Planning Counselors, local government officials, village leaders, private sector representatives, and community members. The outputs of this process are reflected in the increased participation of stakeholders as foster parents and the strengthened collaborative efforts to support families at risk of stunting.

Furthermore, the study reveals that communication functions as the primary mechanism that connects the various subsystems involved in the Genting Program. Family Planning Counselors play a strategic role in facilitating information exchange between organizational actors and ensuring that program objectives are understood by stakeholders at different levels. This finding supports Katz and Kahn's argument that communication is a critical element that enables organizational systems to maintain coordination and achieve their goals. The interaction among government agencies, village administrations, community leaders, and the private sector illustrates the interdependence of organizational subsystems working toward a shared objective of stunting prevention.

Another important characteristic of an open system identified in this study is the existence of feedback mechanisms. The findings indicate that informal communication channels provide opportunities for stakeholders to express concerns, clarify misunderstandings, and share experiences regarding program implementation. Feedback obtained through interpersonal interactions enables Family Planning Counselors and local government agencies to adjust communication strategies and improve program advocacy. This process is particularly important in addressing misconceptions related to funding sources and stakeholder responsibilities within the Genting Program. Therefore, the effectiveness of the program is not solely determined by formal organizational structures but also by the organization's capacity to adapt to environmental responses through continuous communication and feedback processes.

Overall, the Genting Program illustrates how an open organizational system operates within a collaborative governance framework. The continuous exchange of information, resources, and feedback among stakeholders allows the program to adapt to local conditions and encourages broader community participation. These findings reinforce Katz and Kahn's perspective that organizational sustainability and effectiveness depend on the ability of organizations to maintain dynamic interactions with their environment and to develop adaptive communication networks that support collective action toward organizational goals.

### **Informal Communication as a Driver of Stakeholder Participation**

The findings of this study indicate that informal communication plays a significant role in encouraging stakeholder participation in the implementation of the Foster Parent Movement for Stunting Prevention (Genting) in Pringsewu Regency. Although formal communication channels such as coordination meetings, socialization forums, and official directives are utilized to disseminate program information, stakeholders demonstrated a stronger understanding and commitment when information was delivered through

informal interpersonal interactions. Family Planning Counselors frequently engaged stakeholders through direct conversations, personal visits, and informal discussions, allowing program messages to be communicated in a more flexible and accessible manner. As a result, stakeholders felt more comfortable expressing concerns, asking questions, and discussing potential challenges related to their involvement in the program (Kasrah et al., 2023).

This finding supports DeVito (2011) perspective that informal communication is primarily oriented toward interpersonal relationships rather than organizational structures. Through informal communication, Family Planning Counselors were able to establish trust and reduce psychological barriers between communicators and stakeholders. The interpersonal closeness created through these interactions facilitated a more effective exchange of information and strengthened stakeholders' willingness to participate as foster parents. In several cases, misconceptions regarding the Genteng Program, particularly the assumption that the program was fully funded through government budgets, were successfully clarified through informal communication. Consequently, stakeholders became more aware of their expected role as voluntary contributors in supporting families at risk of stunting.

Furthermore, the study demonstrates that informal communication functions not only as a channel for information dissemination but also as a persuasive mechanism that stimulates collective action. The flexibility of informal interactions enabled Family Planning Counselors to tailor messages according to the characteristics and needs of different stakeholders, thereby increasing message acceptance and engagement. This finding is consistent with Mulyana (2005) argument that informal communication allows for more spontaneous, open, and adaptive interactions compared to formal communication structures. In the context of the Genteng Program, such adaptability proved crucial in fostering stakeholder commitment and mobilizing community participation in stunting prevention efforts.

Moreover, informal communication contributed to the development of broader social networks among stakeholders. Village heads, government officials, and community leaders who had already participated in the program actively shared their experiences and encouraged others to become involved. This peer-to-peer communication strengthened the diffusion of information and enhanced the credibility of program advocacy because messages originated from trusted individuals with direct implementation experience. Therefore, the success of the Genteng Program in Pringsewu Regency highlights the strategic importance of informal communication as a catalyst for stakeholder participation, collaboration, and collective responsibility in addressing stunting prevention.

## **Conclusion**

This study concludes that the organizational communication model supporting the implementation of the Genteng Program in Pringsewu Regency is collaborative, integrating both formal and informal communication. While formal communication occurs through coordination meetings, socialization activities, and cross-sector forums, informal communication plays a more influential role in strengthening stakeholder understanding, commitment, and participation.

Family Planning Counselors act as the primary communicators, with sub-district



and village governments, the private sector, and the community serving as key stakeholders. Beyond formal coordination, interpersonal interactions facilitate program understanding, while horizontal communication broadens advocacy and stakeholder engagement. Although differing perceptions regarding the program's concept, funding, and forms of participation remain challenges, these barriers can be reduced through continuous informal interaction.

The findings demonstrate that successful implementation of the Genting Program depends not only on formal organizational structures but also on effective informal communication that fosters collaboration in stunting prevention. Accordingly, local governments should strengthen the integration of formal and informal communication, enhance the advocacy capacity of Family Planning Counselors, and engage community leaders and committed stakeholders as communication agents. Future studies should examine communication strategies for stunting reduction programs across different regional and institutional contexts. This study contributes to organizational communication literature by highlighting the strategic role of informal communication in enhancing stakeholder understanding, commitment, and participation within collaborative public programs.

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