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Powers on Community-Level Deliberation: A Power Cube Approach

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Abstract. There is a limited understanding of the power relations between the actors in village-level planning deliberation. Various powers influence the planning result, and asymmetrical power can distort the consensus. The actors involved in planning deliberation have different power characteristics. This study attempted to explain the different actors' positions and power sources through the power cube approach. Village planning deliberation in Pematang Jaya, Langkat district, Indonesia, was used as a case study. Ethnography and autoethnography were used as research methods. Primary data were obtained from interviews with twenty-one respondents, document analysis, and observation from 2018 to 2020, analyzed through data reduction, initial interpretation, and focused interpretation. The result showed that the specific power characteristics of the different actors drive their influence on the planning result. It reveals the way power holders create domination of the deliberation process. It is suggested that deliberation is not a space for transferring knowledge or information but for power domination.

1. Introduction

In many countries, especially the third world and the Global South, village planning is essential in implementing regional development strategies. In village planning, communities are given the right to decide on local development projects through communicative forums. This practice is called deliberative planning. All stakeholders sit together and have a dialogue on possible planning policies. In the Indonesian context, deliberative village planning aims to decide the development projects that will be implemented (Taufiq, 2021).

In the current era of communicative planning, regional development is mainly done through bottom-up schemes. Deliberation is a way to conduct communicative planning. However, it seems that deliberation cannot escape the influence of power relations among the actors involved at every level. Both in urban and rural communities, the latter is usually considered more conducive for dialogue.

The notion of community-based planning in the context of village planning became popular in the twenty-first century. It is done through deliberation involving local planners and communities. Its implementation benefits by creating plans that align with local conditions and have more legitimacy within the local community (Beza, 2016; Dandekar, 2018; Legacy, 2012). However, community-level deliberation faces governance conflicts based on power-based argumentation (Sager, 2013, pp. 42–252), difficulties in building operational consensus (Voogd, 2001; Voogd & Woltjer, 1999), and the presence of unequal deliberative abilities resulting from power imbalances (Huxley, 2000; Mäntysalo & Jarenko, 2014).

The actors involved in community-based planning have different power characteristics. Unbalanced power among these actors can cause the inappropriate implementation of development plans and waste of state funds. Thus, the existence of power inequalities in deliberation at the community level is a critical issue that needs attention in planning theory. They can distort the consensus during policy formulation. Power is a non-communicative element of the deliberation process that can direct other elements, intervene in arguments of involved actors, and influence deliberative abilities (i.e., abilities to communicate, debate, and apply rhetoric) (Forester, 1982; Mäntysalo & Jarenko, 2014). The practice of deliberation at the community level confirms this (Antlöv, 2003; Beard & Dasgupta, 2006; Bebbington et al., 2004; Guijt & Shah, 1998).

Generally, this analysis is derived from the context of western urban environments where planning is very thick with dialogue in the decision-making arena, leading to mutual learning and power being distributed more evenly (Booher & Innes, 2002; Fischer, 1993; Flyvbjerg, 1998; Forester, 1987, 1999; Healey, 1992). On the other hand, it is utopian for non-western and Global South contexts, where individual community leaders heavily influence local planning, and a large knowledge gap exists between the planners and the community.

Planning research still seems to lack the proper approach to investigate the fundamental elements of power that are at play here. Filling this gap in the literature requires research on power in community-level deliberation, especially in non-western and Global South rural contexts.

Therefore, this study asked: What are the actors' positions? What sources of power do they have? What kind of power capabilities do they have? Furthermore, what implications does this have for the formulated planning policies? Generally, these questions can be asked at all levels of planning, but we focused specifically on deliberation at the local level.

In order to answer these questions, this study used the power cube model (Gaventa, 2006) to analyze the fundamental elements of power active in village planning deliberation. The model was tested in a case study on deliberative planning in Pematang Tengah village, Indonesia. In elevating the development of its rural areas, Indonesia uses a community-level deliberation approach to formulate planning policies. The community has the right to decide what plans and activities will be carried out, including the budget allocations. The case study analysis investigated the elements of power active in planning deliberation by looking at the actors involved. This study attempted to explain their specific power characteristics, which influence the planning formulation. It reveals how power holders create domination of the deliberation process.

This study confirmed that there is a relation between power and knowledge. Knowledge and power are integrated – power continuously creates knowledge and vice versa (Foucault & Gordon, 1980). Foucault (1988, 2002, 2017) offered the example of the treatment of mad people as scapegoats in every age and civilization. In some societies, madness is ignored. In some societies, it is treated, while in others, it is respected. Foucault explained that knowledge about madness in various civilizations depends on how people define mental illness, and what defines it is not psychology but power. It reveals the relationship between power and knowledge in the community. Power uses the knowledge that supports its purpose while ignoring or suppressing knowledge that does not serve it (Flyvbjerg, 1998b, pp. 319–320). The present study adds that invisible forms of power and the exercise of power through closed spaces (Gaventa, 2006, 2019) do not fully explain how power works at the community level. These forms of power obstruct the transfer of knowledge required in deliberation because learning can only occur when the knowledge being transferred is explicit.

Studying power in planning deliberation at the community level is essential to see all actors' positions. Analyzing power relations in the knowledge transfer process between the planners and the community can help us understand their interaction. The actors in village planning each have their background and degree of influence (weight of opinion), from the village head to members of the village apparatus, the village representative body, the village community empowerment agency, district representatives, subdistrict representatives, local elites, women's representatives, and village residents. In other words, the power analysis explains how deliberation at the village community level occurs between actors who are not equal in power and authority. As this research focused on the deliberation process related to agreeing upon village development planning, the conclusions are mostly applicable to deliberative planning at the local level. However, they can also be used as a reference when studying other contexts that experience similar issues when power inequalities influence development planning.

Deliberation and Power in the Planning Literature

Deliberation is a term from the deliberative democracy discourse and refers to discussion or negotiation among parties involved in formulating policies. The basic ideological approach is democratic (equal rights for all citizens), giving the community a stake in the process. This discourse emerged in the 1960s from the communicative reason theory proposed by Jürgen Habermas. Generally speaking, this theory was used to solve community problems caused by societal heterogeneity.

Much debate has been about what prerequisites must be fulfilled to bring deliberation under ideal conditions. Habermas proposed logical-semantic, procedural, and processual rules (Habermas, 1990, pp. 87–89). The primary assumption is that ideal conditions occur when no argument is intervened. In Habermas's communicative action theory, the consensus is reached through dialogue.

However, power always plays a role in deliberation. It is a non-communicative element that can direct other elements of the deliberation process and intervene in the arguments of the actors involved. Deliberation at the community level occurs among actors who do not have equal power, which means that the prerequisites for ideal communication from the theory of communicative action are not fulfilled in village planning deliberation. The actors are diverse in their institutional backgrounds, the groups they belong to, their level of knowledge, and their gender. According to Flyvbjerg, Habermas himself has admitted that his analysis did not cover gender, ethnicity, class, and culture (Flyvbjerg, 1998a, p. 225).

John Friedmann (1973, p. 187), who introduced the idea of transactive planning, identified that interaction between planners and clients creates mutual learning based on knowledge transfer (transaction of information). Although using the same approach as Habermas (communication), Friedmann did not refer to his work in constructing transactive planning but adopted the concept of substantial rationality of Karl Mannheim (Sager, 1993, p. 91). However, both Friedmann and Habermas see ideal deliberation occurring under symmetrical power. In deliberation at the community level, the planners contribute expert knowledge, while the community contributes experiential knowledge.

The concept of network dynamics related to the diversity of interests proposed by Innes & Booher (2003, p. 39) presumes the existence of authentic dialogue to equalize the different perceptions of the actors involved in deliberation, which are based on their interests. Their model identifies opportunities for the dominance of ideas of certain actors. Innes and Booher assume that authentic dialogue can only occur under symmetrical power.

However, power is never symmetrical in practice, especially at the village level. As mentioned above, Flyvbjerg has argued that "power acquires knowledge that supports its purpose, while it ignores or suppresses the knowledge that does not serve it ... power blurs the dividing line between rationality and rationalization ... rationality is utopian because power always overshadows modern politics, administration, and planning, even modernity itself" (Flyvbjerg, 1998b, pp. 319–320). In essence, he argues that rationality assumes the absence of power. When power is present, what happens is rationalization. Forester has argued that planners can never rule out asymmetrical power

because planning always interacts with various forms of power. He stated that power inequalities could work to thwart the efforts of knowledgeable planners and citizens who want to participate in a democratic planning process (Forester, 1982, p. 76).

Deliberation under symmetrical power conditions is considered ideal and a prerequisite for producing rationality-based planning based on consensus. In asymmetrical power conditions, deliberation becomes a vehicle of rationalization, where dominant actors influence knowledge transfer. Although an understanding of deliberation that takes place under symmetrical power relations can be achieved through this general framework, it is not sufficient to explain the different elements of power that work in community-level deliberation under asymmetrical power relations.

The Asymmetrical Power Dilemma

Power is generally defined as the ability to rule in terms of influencing the behavior of others. Elements of power are involved in most planning practices, especially in the dialogue and negotiation between stakeholders to formulate planning policies. Kamete (2012, p. 68) has argued that planning negotiates power, conflict, and powerlessness. Power produces planning due to social processes (Metzger et al., 2017, p. 203). If planners ignore those in power, it means they ensure their powerlessness. Conversely, if planners understand how power relations shape the planning process, they can improve the quality of their analysis (Forester, 1989, p. 27).

Booher & Innes (2002, p. 221) have argued that network power can be considered a flow of power that all participants share. In planning deliberation, consensus-building should be isolated from ideology, power inequalities, and structural political-economic forces (Forester, 1999; Innes, 1996). Power acting in planning deliberation is problematic because it negatively impacts the ability of the community to set the direction of the deliberation according to their wishes and can result in policies that conflict with substantive techniques. As a result, the planners and the community can both trigger the emergence of power imbalances. Grooms & Frimpong Boamah (2018, p. 8) have argued that potential power can become actual power by dominating, persuading, and blocking individuals or groups when making decisions.

Furthermore, Uitermark & Nicholls (2017, p. 32) have argued that a 'power of representation dilemma' arises because the beliefs, knowledge, and skills of academics (the planners) make them powerful agents of social justice, while at the same time they can use their position to become more potent than the community they should represent and serve. Power imbalances in planning deliberation can arise from contradictions in gender participation (Antlöv, 2003; Guijt & Shah, 1998), social inequality (Beard & Dasgupta, 2006), and the influence of local elites and their status and authority (Bebbington et al., 2004). Such power imbalances in the planning system do not seem to be noticed by those who emphasize the importance of impartiality in the decision-making process. The present study found that the practice of deliberation at the community level is characterized by power imbalances, which will be analyzed below.

The Power Cube Model

According to Lukes (1974), power is exercised in three dimensions: (1) governing people, (2) mobilizing consensus, and (3) giving decision options. Gaventa (2006, p. 23) argues that citizen involvement in making public policy increases from local to global but creating new institutional arrangements alone will not result in a change in favor of the poor or greater inclusion. Instead, it depends greatly on the nature of the power relations that surround and inspire new spaces that are potentially more democratic. Based on his observations of emancipatory rural politics, Gaventa proposed the notion of the power cube (Gaventa, 2006, 2019). Power has formed (visible, hidden, and invisible), spaces (closed, invited, and created), and levels (local, national, and global). The forms, spaces, and power levels continuously interact with each other in determining whether to act or not. In this study, we used the power cube model (Gaventa, 2006) to evaluate power in planning deliberation at the community level.

2. The Methods

This study used ethnography and autoethnography (Butz & Besio, 2009) as research methods. As a case study, we used the annual discussion forum for village development in Pematang Tengah village, Pematang Jaya subdistrict, Langkat District, Indonesia. The analysis was supported by the practical experience of one of the authors when acting as a deliberative bureaucrat (Puustinen et al., 2017) in facilitating rural area planning for the Pematang Jaya subdistrict as a subdistrict secretary from 2014 to 2017 and as a temporary village head of Pematang Tengah village from 2015 to 2016. Therefore, this study acknowledges the author's subjectivity in the interpretation and analysis of data.

Using a simple qualitative procedure (Creswell, 2014), this study went through three phases of data analysis, i.e., data reduction, initial interpretation, and focused interpretation. Field research was conducted from July to August 2018, June to July 2019, and July to August 2020. Primary data were collected through interviews with open-ended questions, document analysis, and observation. Secondary data used were scientific literature and internet sources.

The interviews were conducted with twenty-one respondents: one person from the district government, three persons from the subdistrict government, six persons from the village government, and eleven persons from the village community. The observation was done during the annual village planning meetings using field notes, while government documents and reports were consulted for additional knowledge.

The village planning deliberation in Pematang Tengah in three years (2018, 2019, and 2020) was analyzed based on observations. First, the needs of the respondents were purposively determined. In qualitative research, the accuracy of the data depends on saturation. Data collection on a focused question continues until the information obtained reaches a saturation point or accuracy, i.e., achieving an unambiguous accumulation of responses justified by most informants. Initially, there were fifteen respondents. However, as data collection progressed and saturation was reached, the number of respondents from

the village government and villagers increased to twenty-one. They were trusted informants who knew how village planning deliberation occurs precisely. One requirement for the selection of the informants was having played a role in village planning deliberation in Pematang Tengah for at least two years.

Furthermore, the data was divided into several categories: the actors involved, the sources of their power, their capabilities, their power characteristics, the types of power, and the power outcomes. In this phase, an initial analysis was carried out by interpreting the data and creating categories. Data analysis was then done using the NVIVO12 program to structure the computerized data in the form of interview transcriptions and field notes. Finally, focused interpretation was made to obtain a more profound synthesis, including implications for planning.

Indonesia's Rural Planning Culture and the Case Study

An outline of village governance in Indonesia is given in Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages. Villagers have the right to autonomy, which allows them to regulate their territory with oversight from the next government level. Village planning is carried out in stages, from a consultation at the hamlet level to the village, subdistrict, and district levels. Some development projects are funded by the village budget, while those involving higher costs receive funding from the district, provincial, and national governments. This article discusses development projects that are funded by the village budget. Planning policy formulation was carried out unilaterally by the community with the assistance of bureaucrat planners.

Since 2015, the Indonesian government has ambitiously attempted to improve the welfare of people who live in villages and balance rural and urban development by allocating ten percent of the national budget to village development. As a result, all implementations of village development fall under village fund management (per fiscal year). Technically, village planning goes through several stages: (1) village planning: determining development projects and budgets (July to October before the fiscal year); (2) administration and financial management (April to October of the budget year); (3) implementation of activities using local labor and materials (April to December of the budget year); and (4) reporting and accountability (July of the budget year and January after the fiscal year).

This article discusses the village planning stage, which consists of formal and informal village-level deliberations. Village planning is carried out with deliberation involving the village community and bureaucratic planners, i.e., the village companion and subdistrict, district, and village representatives. When interpreted according to the transactive planning concept (Friedmann, 1973), there are two groups: the planners and the clients (the community). In the deliberation, the community has the right to define problems, goals, and decision-making about budget allocations. On the other hand, the planners play a role as (technical) facilitators, whose job is to provide technical knowledge to the community so that the created policies achieve better and more substantive development and accommodate the guidelines provided by the central government.

Based on the available literature, most of the research about deliberative planning concerns urban planning practices in Western countries, while studies on village planning in the Global South are scarce. The present study aimed to fill this research gap by selecting a village in Indonesia, Pematang Tengah village, as the case study. It meets the prerequisites for a case study related to this research, i.e., (1) it illustrates the practice of deliberative planning at the village level, where this process is characterized by diversity and dependence on the interests of the actors participating in the village planning forum; (2) it represents what is happening in the Global South; (3) it fulfills the prerequisites of the methodology used, namely autoethnography, which requires experience of the researcher with the research object; and (4) it has specific characteristics that make it important to research, being a remote village located at a large distance from its district center. Knowledge of these characteristics can help development in other regions in Indonesia. During the presidency of Joko Widodo, seeking to develop Indonesia from the periphery has been a policy priority.

Pematang Tengah is located in a rural area of Pematang Jaya subdistrict, Langkat district, Indonesia (Figure 1). It is located along the Aru Bay, a development area in Langkat district on the east coast of Sumatra, facing the Malacca Strait. The area is part of the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle area for regional cooperation. In ancient times, this region benefited from its strategic location on the Silk Road, connecting western and eastern trade routes. However, its current condition requires attention to developing public facilities such as village roads, social facilities, and educational facilities.

The village is inhabited by 2,260 people spread across six hamlets and has a total area of 2,400 hectares. Generally, people make a living as planters, farmers, and fishers. Most of the area consists of palm plantations (66%), forests (13%), rice fields (10%), and coastal areas. The village uses the annual village planning meeting to formulate development projects through a deliberative process, which is the subject of this article.

"In 2020, residents agreed to carry out several development projects, such as the construction of early childhood education buildings, religious festivals, the construction and hardening of village roads and agricultural business roads, the construction of concrete rebates and trenches, the fostering of youth and women's groups, providing assistance in the form of seeds and animal feed, providing trainings for farmers and fishers groups, the establishment of an integrated healthcare post, livestock procurement and assistance in the form of facilities and infrastructure for economic groups". (Field notes, July 2020).

3. Results and Discussion
From Background to Contribution: Actor's Positions, Power Sources, and Capabilities

According to the Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, the disbursement of village funds has reached 187 trillion Rupiah to date. This budget has been used to construct facilities and infrastructure, including 1.14 million bridges, 191,600 kilometers of village roads, 8,983 village market units, 37,830 activities of village-owned enterprises,

and 4,175 village reservoirs, 58,931 irrigation facilities, and other supporting infrastructure. In addition, the funds also financed infrastructure to support the quality of life of rural communities through the construction of 959,569 units of clean water facilities, 240,587 units of public bathing, washing, and toilet facilities, 9,692 units of village maternity posts, 50,854 units of early childhood education programs, 24,820 units of integrated healthcare facilities, 29.5 million drainage units, and 45,169 borehole units (Okezone.com, 2019).

On the other hand, errors in village planning occur because of mistakes made during planning policy deliberation at the village level, such as the formulation of development projects outside the priority area; planning that is dominated by the interests of certain actors; development projects overlapping with programs/activities of the central/provincial/district government; mismatches in the priority allocation of development projects (between physical development, economy, and empowerment); unbalanced budget allocations; inappropriate targets; and village funds allocated for private interests. It results in badly targeted implementation, waste of state funds, and disregard of guidelines set by the state (Ministry of Finance, 2017).

We identified ten positions involved in the village planning deliberations: (1) district representatives, (2) subdistrict representatives, (3) village companions, (4) village head, (5) neighborhood leaders, (6) members of the village apparatus, (7) members of the village representative

body, (8) members of the village community empowerment agency, (9) local elites (community figures, religious figures, heads of organizations and groups), (10) women's representatives (family welfare empowerment), (11) members of workgroups, and (12) village community representatives. We sorted these according to their power, based on the function and authority of each actor in the deliberation. The position, power source, and power capabilities of each actor are listed in Table 1.

Local Regulators

Local regulators are responsible for managing the village fund distribution for all villages in a district. District representatives fill this position. Aside from being local regulators, they also act as companions to implementing village deliberations and help resolve problems encountered. In addition, they provide socialization about the ideal use of the village budget for village planning in general, usually through formal deliberations held in one of the villages in the subdistrict area and attended by all village heads from the subdistrict, subdistrict representatives, and village companions. These formal deliberations mark the start of village planning for the current fiscal year and occur simultaneously in all district villages.

Companion

During the implementation of this revolving process, there is continuous assistance from the subdistrict representative and the village companion. The subdistrict representative and the village companion provide technical support, transfer expert knowledge, and explain the guidelines for implementation. On the other hand, assistance in village planning is given by knowledge transfer to provide the village community with more contextual insight related to village planning, for example, concerning the suitability of a development project to fulfill local needs and stimulate the village economy, the construction of village facilities, and infrastructure, and good governance. Although knowledge transfer happens in both directions, the main direction in village planning is from the facilitators to the community. Hierarchically, the subdistrict is above the village, which allows it to act as a supervisor and assist the village community.

> "Our assistance plays a role in the assessment of suggested development projects. We look for projects that are based on an improper understanding of the community. In order to increase their knowledge, we continue to socialize and assist in annual planning." (Interview with a subdistrict government officer, August 2018).

Contract Agreement

The village head is responsible for drawing up work contracts and work orders allocated to the village budget. The community chooses the village head by the majority of votes. Besides having political power, the village head also has high authority and is responsible for administering the village funds. This position gives the village head significant influence on the spending of the village funds. In addition, the village head acts on behalf of the government and the local community by contributing experiential knowledge. Thus, the village head significantly influences the village
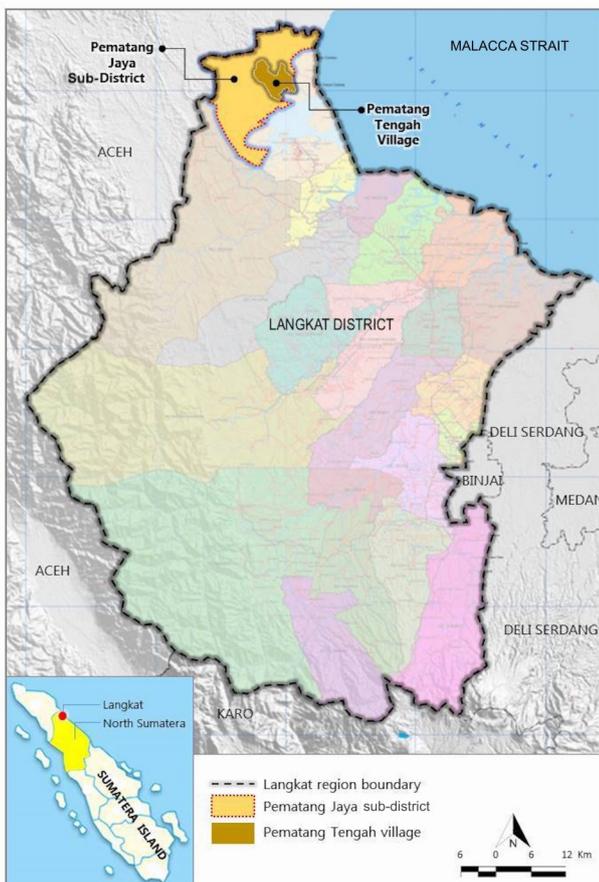

Figure 1. Map of Pematang Tengah Village
Source: Modified from Development Planning Agency of Langkat Regency (2021)

planning deliberation. As a result, he has prestige, and his followers form a large part of the village community. On the other hand, the village head also has supervisors, such as the subdistrict representative and the village representative body. These actors see that the village head does not exert undue influence on the deliberation.

Participants in Planning Activities

Several actors propose development projects in the name of the community. They may be neighborhood leaders or community leaders, but in principle, all community members have this capability. They use their experiential knowledge related to problems that may be faced and need to be fulfilled and local conditions. They can participate in planning activities. This group can be divided into several classifications, i.e., the village head and members of the village community empowerment agency, local elites (community figures, religious figures, heads of organizations and groups), women's representatives, and village community representatives. Local elites are a concern from a power perspective because, after the village head, they are the most important community leaders. They have substantial resources such as property and prestige that help them create influence on the deliberations.

Activity Supervisors

Members of the village representative body are responsible for activity supervision. They lead the annual village fund deliberation and are the ones who invite residents to the meetings, i.e., a certain number of residents

to represent each neighborhood. In village government organizations, they act as community representatives. It makes their power in the deliberations quite strong. Besides, they can also have followers, such as village heads and local elites. They contribute experiential knowledge. They work before, during, and after the village planning deliberation. They discuss the proposed projects and the policy outcomes that will become regulations (related to the village budget and revenues) in their function as members of the village legislative body.

Administrators

The village apparatus is responsible for the administration. They play a role in village fund management, technical budgeting, and reporting. This position is filled by the village secretary, the head of affairs, and village office staff. Their appointment is the result of the village head's recommendations, so their activities in the deliberation support the village head. The administration is also an essential part of village fund management, especially at the stage of administration, reporting, and accountability, but this is beyond the discussion of this paper.

Executors

The executors play a role in managing the village fund after the village planning stage. Members of the village community empowerment agency and the implementation team fill this position. The executors are essential in the implementation phase of village planning, but this is beyond the discussion of this article. In the planning deliberation,

Table 1. Summary of Actors' Position, Power Source, and Power Capabilities
in Local Community Deliberation

Actors	Position	Power Sources	Power Capabilities
1. District representative	Supervisor & facilitator	Budget intermediary & expert knowledge	Local regulator & companion
2. Subdistrict representative	Supervisor & facilitator	Hierarchy & expert knowledge	Companion
3. Village companion	Facilitator	Expert knowledge	Companion
4. Village head	Responsible person	Influence expert and experiential knowledge	Contract agreement
5. Neighborhood leader	Proposer of activity	Experiential knowledge	Participant in activities
6. Member of the village apparatus	Administrator	Experiential knowledge	Administrator
7. Member of the village representative body	Discussant	Influence and experiential knowledge	Activity supervisor
8. Member of the village community empowerment agency	Proposer of activity	Experiential knowledge	Participant in activities
9. Local elite	Proposer of activity	Prestige, property, and experiential knowledge	Participant in activities
10. Women's representative	Proposer of activity	Experiential knowledge	Participant in activities
11. Member of workgroups	Administrator	Experiential knowledge	Executor
12. Village community representative	Proposer of activity	Experiential knowledge	Participant in activities

Source: Authors' summaries of a series of village planning deliberations (2018, 2019, 2020)

they contribute experiential knowledge related to budgeting, such as the costs of wages, building materials, and other expenditures based on local prices. Usually, villages use the services of consultants with civil or architectural engineering expertise to assist the executors.

A Tool to Create Influence: Power Characteristics, Types, and Outcomes

The power cube approach distinguishes the fundamental elements of power. We analyzed planning deliberation at the community level according to power elements: power character, power type, and power outcome (Table 2).

Level

The power cube level of village planning is local. The community is given the right to decide local planning policies. It is common in bottom-up planning through participatory budgeting (Fung & Wright, 2003). The case study in Pematang Tengah village describes the local participatory planning practice through community-based deliberation. In this case, local is defined as the scope of the planning policies. The stakeholders come from within the village's boundaries, and their planning activities have no direct impact on the national or global arenas. Village planning links community mobilization and local knowledge. Deliberation is a tool to create the influence of the community. The local government mobilizes the community's desires so that the resulting planning accommodates local needs and has legitimacy (Beza, 2016; Legacy, 2012).

> "Village planning is an effort to develop a local scale area. The community is involved in deliberations discussing the mutual issues for village development. It results in planning product following their wishes and can be accounted for." (Interview with a district government officer, July 2018).

Forms

According to the power cube approach, power in planning takes several forms: visible, invisible, and hidden. Visible power appears in written policies, communications, and formal actions. These conform to formal regulations and are final, i.e., they can only be changed by new regulations or limits on their validity period. This form of power can also be seen in the behavior of each actor during the village planning deliberation. When actors express their attitude towards the choice of development projects and the direction of village development, they display formal behavior. Visible forms of power are aimed at soliciting support from others in the deliberation. Conflicts of interest between actors in formal deliberation are explicit. Plurality stimulates the exploration of ideas from various parties.

The different interests of the actors involved can also give birth to invisible power. Proposals and emerging arguments can echo what power holders want to hear (Gaventa, 2006, p. 29). It supports Flyvbjerg's statement about the authority of power, which promotes or limits certain knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 1998b, pp. 319–320). The debate about the priorities of village development projects and the direction of village planning is also limited by references to substantive knowledge of village planning.

Expert knowledge from the planner is a consideration that cannot be ignored.

> "We can see the visible power in the open deliberation taking place at the annual meeting. However, it is also possible that informal arenas shaping what is presented in the decision-making arena. Because we carried out various informal deliberations to make the annual meeting run successfully." (Interview with a villager, July 2019).

Neighborhood representatives follow the planning deliberation. They can be ordinary people or local elites. The determination of the participating actors is a separate phenomenon where power can play a role. It can occur organically, but it can also be arranged through power of attorney by actors who have the power to do this, such as the village head, neighborhood leaders, local elites, or members of the village representative body. It is a form of hidden power, i.e., influence is exerted by giving certain people access to the planning deliberation who will support the interests of the giver of access. It is an action that accommodates the interests of a specific individual or group and results in an informal direction. When this has been intentionally arranged beforehand, it is a manipulative practice that distorts the deliberation.

> "Which villagers are invited by the organizing committee for the annual meeting is always an issue. Some villagers report not knowing about the annual village meeting for village development." (Interview with a village government officer, August 2020).

Hidden power also emerges when certain actors hold informal meetings before the formal deliberation, where they communicate to their followers the things to be conveyed in the annual village planning meeting. It is appropriate if it supports legitimate village planning. However, if the things discussed are specifically in the interest of certain actors, then it will be a form of ideologization. It is hidden when certain power holders utilize private forums. Actors who use hidden power can instill strong principles and ideology in their followers. These are tricks behind the scenes to steer the course of the deliberation. Other actors involved in the formal deliberation are unaware of certain conflicts of interest because the fight for ideological domination plays out behind the scenes.

Theoretically, internalization occurs when the participants are involved in knowledge transfer through formal deliberation (Beza, 2016; Friedmann, 1973). In practice, however, internalization is largely formed by invisible or hidden power before deliberation occurs. It disputes the statement of Flyvbjerg (1998b) that power regulates what knowledge is promoted in shaping the internalization of the participants. In reality, the internalization had already taken place before the deliberation started. Invisible power can raise the priority of development projects that are most appropriate according to the power holders, also when this conflicts with expert knowledge.

> "Before the annual village planning meeting, usually, several internal meetings are held to refine the draft

that will be offered. It is hard to know which actors will be involved, but at least they are attended by representatives of the village government and particular residents." (Interview with a villager, July 2020).

Spaces

Power in invited space occurs yearly in the formal discussion forum to produce a formal consensus (Figure 2) and is called the annual village planning meeting. The participants are invited to propose development project priorities, and all participating actors are listed in Table 1. It is the only form of deliberation that can be monitored by all parties involved. It displays visible power and opens public communication.

Invited space deliberation not only occurs at the village level but also at the neighborhood level, facilitated by the neighborhood head. The scope of the deliberation here is more micro because it only addresses the interests of one hamlet. The results of the deliberation at the hamlet level are put forward in the deliberation at the village level.

Ideally, invited space deliberation is a medium for knowledge transfer between the planners and the community. However, this process can be distorted by invisible power when power holders put forward representatives who serve their interests.Power in a closed space occurs when private meetings are held to reach an consensus among certain actors, for example, pre-deliberation and post-deliberation drafting, which can include draft beta plans. Closed space deliberations do not require the involvement of comprehensive public consultations. Closed space deliberation in village planning can occur in neighborhood meetings and consultations with planning bureaucrats. It is a medium of coordination to optimize the management and implementation of planning activities. In Pematang Tengah Village, closed space forums influence village planning more in preparing five-year plans than annual plans.

Closed space deliberation is a medium for power holders to preserve their power. Invisible power based on personal interests influences what is discussed, such as the nominal budget used, the parties who will do the work, the location and the size of the construction, and planning activities. Gaventa has argued that closed space deliberation can lead to abuse of power (Gaventa, 2006, p. 30).

Power in created space occurs in response to invited space deliberation. After formal village-level deliberation, some individuals or groups take the initiative to carry out further discussions. These are carried out in created spaces by actors with common perceptions. Usually, this perception is a counter-formal consensus. Created space deliberations are organized by certain community groups, who collect the aspirations of residents for a continued formal deliberation. Some community groups hold closed meetings to air and discuss complaints about the results of the planning deliberation. It can be input to re-discuss the formal deliberation to refine the policy draft before passing the village planning document. Created space deliberation is based on mutual concerns over the possible negative impact of some policies formulated based on formal deliberation. It is most likely spearheaded by community leaders such as local elites, religious leaders, organization leaders, and group leaders. These influential parties in the community use their resources, such as property, wealth, influence, or organizational position, to create a space.

4. Conclusion

The implementation of the village fund policy in Indonesia since 2015 has brought many benefits for villages through their development. However, behind-the-scenes agreements about development projects can distort this practice. One of the obstacles in community-based planning is the domination of private interests. Under an asymmetric power structure in planning deliberations, efforts to influence the planning process can produce policies that benefit specific interests.

This study attempted to describe and analyze this situation by focusing on the power holders' behavioral patterns to help policymakers become more sensitive to informal practices in village planning and guide them toward potential transgressions. At the same time, it encourages planners to be more critical and reflective during the planning process. The planners play an important role by acting strategically to ensure that both the powerful and the

Table 2. A Summary of Power Cube Approach to Rural Deliberation

Power cube dimensions	Power characteristics	Power type	Power outcome
Level	Local	Community-based	Local regulation
Form	Visible	Written policy, formal communication, and act	Formal regulation
	Hidden	Accommodate the interests of a specific individual or group	Informal direction
	Invisible	Informal communication	Ideologization
Space	Closed	Private meeting	Informal consensus
	Invited	Village discussion forum	Formal consensus
	Created	Social movements and community associations	Contra-formal consensus

Source: Authors' summaries (2021)

weak have a say. As deliberative practitioners, they must manage power practices that create decision-making irregularities. Also, strict supervision and control from the organizers of the planning deliberation can minimize these.

Deliberation at the community level is influenced by the capacities of the participants, who contribute to the knowledge being transferred, either experiential knowledge or expert knowledge. This study confirmed that these capacities vary greatly. Each actor displays specific power characteristics that influence the planning deliberation. The results of this study suggest that planning deliberation is not a space for knowledge transfer but rather a space for power domination (Forester, 2013; Taufiq et al., 2021, 2022). It reveals how power holders create domination in the deliberation process. They do this in closed spaces, invited spaces, and created spaces. It can potentially disturb the knowledge transfer between the planners and the community, delegitimizing the consensus reached.

The result of this study confirms that there is a strong relationship between power and knowledge. Foucault argued that knowledge and power are integrated, where power continuously creates knowledge and vice versa. (Foucault, 2017). Power uses the knowledge that supports its purpose while it ignores or suppresses knowledge that does not serve it (Flyvbjerg, 1998a). This study revealed that invisible power and closed space deliberation do not fully explain power acting at the community level. We emphasize that formal deliberation can only involve explicit knowledge transferred openly. Transfer of tacit knowledge is found in closed space deliberation, such as spreading ideology to supporters of power holders. It is an abuse of authority that can cause problems in planning.

Consensus is the basis for decision-making in planning deliberation. At the community level, this is utopian if it is not accompanied by the transfer of knowledge undisturbed by power inequalities. Under certain conditions, the outcomes can result from bargaining to resolve conflicts of interest. Mäntysalo & Jarenko see inequality in deliberative abilities caused by power imbalances, resulting in conflicts of interest (Mäntysalo & Jarenko, 2014, p. 42). On the other hand, the exercise of power creates and causes new knowledge by accumulating new forms of information (Foucault, 2017, p. 67). Further research is needed to empirically determine how knowledge and power specifically relate to deliberation at the community level.

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