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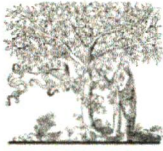
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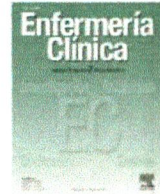
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## The role of women in developing a friendly village for Health: Study of local wisdom *marsirimpa* in North Sumatera Province ☆



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### KEYWORDS

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### Abstract

**Objective:** This research aimed at studying the role of women in developing friendly village by describing the occupational sharing between women and men, identifying the socio-cultural handicap of women in conducting their roles and the potentially communicative role of women in developing the friendly village.

**Methods:** The research method employed was a qualitative paradigm with interactive model in four interactive steps: data collection, data condensation, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. This anthropological approach focussed on the women's performance, indexicality, and participation at Tipang Village, one of the villages in Baktiraja District, Humbang Hasunduta Regency, North Sumatera Province, Lake Toba area. The analytic parameters are interconnection, evaluability, and sustainability.

**Results:** In developing Tipang to become a friendly village, the occupational sharing between women and men in *marsirimpa* "mutual cooperation" should be complementary, the participation of women is needed even the patrilineal system is regarded as socio-cultural handicap for women, and women possess potentials to communicate them to local community.

**Conclusion:** Women play potential roles in developing friendly village based on local wisdom *marsirimpa* "mutual cooperation" at Tipang Village. The complementary occupational sharing between men and women should be maintained to develop the village. Friendly village will give impact to many health aspects.

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## Introduction

Tipang Village is one of the villages at Baktiraja District, Humbang Hasundutan Regency, North Sumatera Province, Lake Toba Area. This village has local wisdom *marsirimpa* "mutual cooperation" between the community. It is necessary to be maintained for supporting community health. As a part of Batak Toba society, the local community of Tipang Village practices the local wisdom *marsirimpa* "mutual cooperation". The word *marsirimpa* is one to one correspondence to the term *gotong royong* in Indonesian. The basically conceptual rule of *marsirimpa* is "cohesion; togetherness; in unison", which should be possessed by a group of men or women who wants to implement mutual cooperation. This basic rule then derives three types of *marsirimpa*, namely *masiurupan* "mutual help", *rampak mangula* "mutual cooperation", and *marsisolisoli* "working alternately". Mutual cooperation in Marsirimpa. Mutual cooperation in Marsirimpa culture is expected to build a friendly village.<sup>1</sup>

Friendly village means a village which is friendly because of cultural performances as well as the local residents living in the village look friendly.<sup>2</sup> The cultural performances include cultural buildings, cultural traditions and cultural images that people get when going, staying, and leaving the village. The local residents include touch of cultural participation which involves all societal roles living in the village. The cultural performances and participation exist in the village which can be implemented in order to make the village friendly. The term "friendly" should be interpreted as "cultural" or "civilized" as conducted by the local residents to develop a village.

In the era of the industrial revolution, the use of technology could influence a high level of individualism. Individualism and solitude can lead to depression and other psychological problems.<sup>3</sup> Some recent publications have released that the nature of mutual cooperation in a society can be a prevention of sexual deviations and drug abuse.<sup>2</sup> Even helping each other is thought to affect neural networks and strengthen positive traits in humans.<sup>4</sup>

This research aimed at studying the role of women in developing a friendly village which is beneficial for health which is beneficial for health analyzing local wisdom *Marsirimpa* in the North Sumatera Province.

## Method

The research method employed was an interactive model in qualitative paradigm. Qualitative research describes data empirically with verbal expression to discover holistic meaning, to explain the overall process, and to formulate accepted pattern of socio-cultural issues of humanity in a holistic depiction. The qualitative researchers conduct the study in natural setting. "Qualitative research inquires the process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem". The qualitative researchers describe a complex, holistic picture, analyze verbal expression, report the detailed views of information and conduct the study in the natural setting.<sup>5</sup>

There are four interactive steps of qualitative research method applied in this study as follows (Fig. 1).<sup>6</sup>

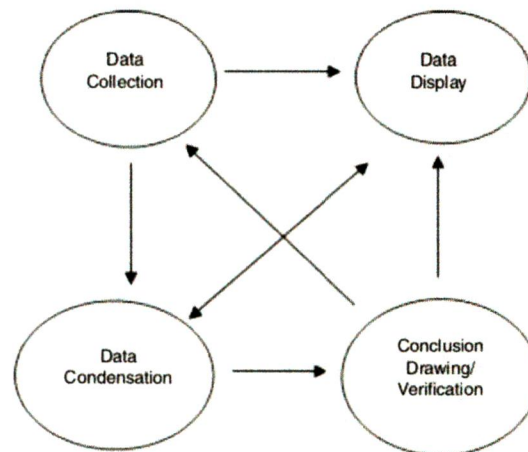


Figure 1 Step of research.

Collecting data employed four methods, namely direct participatory observation, in-depth open-ended interview, focus group discussion and written documents. The anthropological approach was applied to analyze the occupational sharing between women and men, the socio-cultural handicaps of women in conducting their roles, and the potentially communicative role of women in developing a friendly village. All texts, contexts, and contexts relating to above topics were analyzed anthropologically. The applied parameters of anthropological study were interconnection, valuability, and sustainability.

Friendly village such as Tipang Village is a region related to landscape management. It is studied by landscape anthropology. Landscape anthropology is a multidisciplinary study on landscape and layout of region based on the analysis, interpretation, and implementation of language, culture and other aspects of humankind.

## Result

The presence and participation of women seems to greatly influence mutual cooperation because of the nature of women who are more easily gathered. Mutual cooperation that presents women in the Marsirimpa tradition makes the village more friendly.

Based on the research conducted at Tipang Village, as one of the villages in Baktiraja District, Humbang Hasundutan Regency, North Sumatera Province, the results of the research may be described as follows.

### 1. The Occupational Sharing between Women and Men in Marsirimpa "Mutual Cooperation"

The local people complementarily led by modern leader *kepala desa* "village head" and traditional leader *raja bias* "village figure" play important roles in developing the village through the participation of both men and women. The qualitative invention of this research indicates that local wisdom *marsirimpa* "natively mutual cooperation" underlines the occupational sharing between men and women.

*Marsirimpa*, a Batak Toba term for "mutual cooperation" or "cooperate mutually", is practiced by a group of men or a group of women. Each group practices it to manage the village in terms of livelihood cycle and life cycle. The number of group member for livelihood work consists of five to ten people, but for life, cycle ceremony may be more than 20 people.

The group of men who *marsirimpa* "cooperate mutually" usually do the harder work which needs more power while the group of women who *marsirimpa* do the lighter work which needs less power. *Marsirimpa* in planting and cleaning rice or paddy fields is done by a group of women while digging the paddy fields, labeling fields before being planted, and harvesting are done by a group of men in livelihood cycle. In life cycle ceremony, *marsirimpa* in preparing culinary cuisine and traditional cuisine is done by a group of women while preparing animal meat for dishes is done by a group of men.

A group of men with *marsirimpa* build cultural buildings, while both the group of men and of women in different roles conduct cultural traditions. *Marsirimpa* in cleaning and beautifying the village is also done by a group of women.

## 2. The Women's Potentials in Village Communication

The informal role of women in communicating governmental development issues as well as socio-cultural affairs is very important in Tipang Village. Governmental development issues including facilities and infrastructure of school, irrigation, homestay, and road are given through *Kepala Desa* "village head." Socio-cultural affairs including traditional ceremonies of life cycle (birth, wedding or funeral), social conflicts and rituals are conducted by *raja bias* "traditional leaders". Women possess potentials to communicate them to local community.

The women's chatting habit is their socio-cultural capital to communicate information to all local community at the village. For the stay longer than men at the village for doing domestic or home affairs, therefore they have more opportunity to welcome people friendly.

## Discussion

The group of women together with that of men participates to practice local wisdom *marsirimpa* in cleaning and beautifying the Tipang Village in terms of livelihood, ceremony, and public works. The complementary occupational sharing makes the village friendly. The local wisdom *marsirimpa* becomes the character of friendly residents of the village, with the participation of both men and women, living in the village. Local community possessing cohesion, togetherness, and union in practicing mutual help, working together and working alternately indexicalizes character of friendliness.<sup>7</sup>

The continuous tendency of women's capability, communicative potential, and sustainable emancipation may give them a better chance to develop their village friendly. Developing Tipang Village as one of the tourist destinations

at Lake Toba area needs gentle touch of women to make it friendly.

The friendly village will make children can develop with love so as to support their mental development both psychologically and physically. A comfortable atmosphere will make quality of life increase in all age groups. The elderly who live in a mutual cooperation atmosphere that gave birth to a friendly village will be given more attention to their health aspects.<sup>8,9</sup>

## Conclusion

Women play potential roles in developing friendly village based on local wisdom *marsirimpa* "mutual cooperation" at Tipang Village. The complementary occupational sharing between men and women should be maintained to develop the village. The friendly village will give impact to many health aspects.

## Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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