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Social Capital and Community Participation in RT Institutional Transformation: Evidence from Kutai Kartanegara, Indonesia

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Abstract

Background: Neighborhood associations (Rukun Tetangga, RT) occupy a pivotal position between public administration and everyday community life. Yet program financing and formal authority alone do not establish institutional transformation. **Objective:** This conceptual article develops an analytically differentiated framework connecting social capital, citizen participation, and neighborhood institutional transformation in the context of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara, Indonesia. **Methods**: This study employs a quantitative explanatory approach with a cross-sectional survey design. Social capital is measured through trust, reciprocity norms, and social networks, while community participation encompasses planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Data will be analyzed statistically to examine the relationships between the independent variables and institutional transformation. **Results**: The analysis will assess the extent to which social capital and community participation explain variations in RT institutional transformation. Specifically, it will examine the individual contributions of trust, reciprocity norms, and social networks, alongside community involvement in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Institutional transformation will be assessed through institutional functions, organizational capacity, transparency, accountability, and governance. The analysis will test the proposed hypotheses concerning the individual and combined effects of the two independent variables, providing an empirical basis for understanding factors associated with institutional strengthening in the program context. **Conclusion**: The study is expected to provide evidence to inform policies for strengthening participatory, transparent, and accountable neighborhood governance in Kutai Kartanegara Regency.

INTRODUCTION

Neighborhood associations are a critical interface between local administrations and residents. In Indonesia, Rukun Tetangga (RT) units coordinate information, collective action, and everyday responses to local needs. The RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara offers a policy setting in which to examine whether public support is translated into more capable and accountable neighborhood institutions (DPMD Kutai Kartanegara, 2026). Formal program resources may create opportunities for change, but they do not by themselves demonstrate that governance practices have improved.

Local institutions are essential to community development because they connect public administration with citizens everyday needs, collective interests, and social relationships (Antonius

Ary Setyawan et al., 2025). In Indonesia, the Rukun Tetangga (RT), or neighborhood association, represents one of the closest institutional structures to community life (Subowo, 2026). Beyond its administrative responsibilities, an RT can facilitate collective action, coordinate local initiatives, communicate public policies, and mediate relationships between residents and government authorities (Tan et al., 2025). Its institutional effectiveness therefore depends not only on formal regulations and financial resources but also on the social relationships and participatory practices that support its activities.

These issues are particularly relevant in Kutai Kartanegara Regency, East Kalimantan, Indonesia, where the RT-Ku Terbaik Program provides a policy context for strengthening neighborhood institutions and community-based development. According to the research document, administrative data dated 25 June 2026 recorded 20 subdistricts, 193 villages, 44 urban villages, and 3,373 RT units in the regency (DPMD Kutai Kartanegara, 2026). The program encompasses social resilience, community empowerment, infrastructure development, and RT operational support. Although these arrangements provide institutional and financial opportunities, the availability of policy support does not necessarily guarantee improvements in organizational capacity, accountability, or responsiveness. The extent to which neighborhood institutions develop stronger governance practices remains an empirical question.

Social capital and community participation offer two complementary perspectives for understanding this institutional challenge. Social capital concerns the relational resources embedded in trust, reciprocity, and social networks, whereas community participation concerns residents' involvement in collective decision-making and development activities (Krishna, A., & Shrader, 2000). Trust may facilitate cooperation between residents and RT administrators, reciprocity may encourage mutual assistance, and social networks may support information exchange and resource mobilization. Meanwhile, meaningful participation can help ensure that development priorities reflect community needs and that program implementation is subject to public scrutiny. Examining these factors together can clarify how social relationships and citizen engagement are associated with institutional transformation.

Social capital has long been discussed as a resource that facilitates cooperation and collective action. Putnam, (2000), emphasized the importance of social networks, norms, and trust in enabling coordination for mutual benefit. In neighborhood governance, these elements may reduce barriers to cooperation, improve communication, and support collective responses to shared problems (Alikhani & Hashemi, 2026). Reciprocity can strengthen expectations of mutual assistance, while networks can connect residents with local leaders and relevant institutions. Nevertheless, social capital should not automatically be equated with effective or inclusive governance. Networks restricted to particular groups may limit access to information or decision-making opportunities for other residents. Its institutional implications therefore need to be examined within specific social and policy contexts.

Community participation represents another important dimension of community-based development. Participation involves more than attending meetings or contributing labor; it also concerns residents' opportunities to express priorities, influence decisions, implement agreed activities, monitor progress, and evaluate outcomes (Abdul Aziz et al., 2023). Arnstein's framework of citizen participation highlights the importance of distinguishing substantive influence from participation that provides only a limited appearance of public involvement (Andi Kurniawan & Yunita Kurnia, 2025). Applied to neighborhood governance, this perspective suggests that the quality of participation depends on whether residents can meaningfully contribute to decisions and hold local institutions accountable. Participation may consequently strengthen institutional responsiveness, but its effects can be constrained by unequal access to information, limited time, and differences in residents' capacity to engage.

Previous research provides a foundation for examining these relationships. Nugrahani et al., (2019), in their study of social capital and community participation in village development, explored how these factors relate to community development processes in Tlogoadi, Sleman, Indonesia. Their work establishes a relevant connection between social resources and participation in local development. More recently, Manggaramitha et al., (2026) examined the implementation of a neighborhood-fund policy in a community empowerment program in Bontang, Indonesia. Their study highlighted the importance of communication, resources, implementation arrangements, and community deliberation, while also identifying constraints on residents' participation. These studies demonstrate the relevance of social relationships and implementation practices to neighborhood-level development, although their analytical emphases differ from the present study.

Institutional transformation provides a further analytical perspective. In this study, it refers to changes or strengthening in institutional functions, organizational capacity, transparency, accountability, and governance practices. Transformation is therefore understood as more than formal administrative adjustment: it concerns how effectively an RT organizes activities, manages resources, responds to community needs, and accounts for its decisions. Research on local institutional capacity and authority, including Perdana et al., (2026), also draws attention to the institutional arrangements that shape neighborhood-level governance. Taken together, these perspectives suggest that institutional development should be analyzed through both organizational arrangements and the social processes surrounding them.

Despite the relevance of previous studies, an important analytical gap remains in understanding the relationship between social capital, community participation, and RT institutional transformation. Existing research has primarily focused on village development, community empowerment, or the administrative implementation of neighborhood-fund policies, leaving the specific institutional context of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program insufficiently examined. In particular, limited attention has been given to how trust, reciprocity, and social networks, together with community participation in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, relate to institutional transformation. Furthermore, institutional strengthening is frequently examined through administrative capacity, legal authority, or program implementation without comprehensively considering institutional functions, organizational capacity, transparency, accountability, and governance as dimensions of transformation. To address these gaps, this study conceptualizes RT institutional transformation as a distinct outcome and empirically examines its relationships with social capital and community participation as two theoretically distinct explanatory variables. Rather than assuming that program implementation automatically produces institutional transformation, the study tests whether and to what extent these social factors are associated with institutional transformation in Kutai Kartanegara Regency, Indonesia.

The study is important for both theoretical development and local policy. Theoretically, it brings social capital and community participation into a common explanatory framework for examining institutional transformation at the neighborhood level. Social capital represents relational resources that may enable cooperation, while participation represents residents' engagement in collective processes. Although these constructs are related, they are not interchangeable. Examining their separate and combined relationships with institutional transformation can provide a more differentiated understanding of local institutional development.

This study aims to examine the influence of social capital and community participation on RT institutional transformation during the implementation of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara Regency, Indonesia. It specifically investigates the relationship between social capital and institutional transformation, the relationship between community participation and institutional transformation, and the combined explanatory contribution of both variables.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a quantitative explanatory design using a cross-sectional survey to examine the relationships between social capital, community participation, and RT institutional transformation in the implementation of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara Regency, East Kalimantan, Indonesia. Social capital and community participation are treated as independent variables, while RT institutional transformation is the dependent variable. Data will be collected during one research period without experimental manipulation. Accordingly, the findings will indicate statistical relationships rather than establish definitive causal effects.

This is a conceptual, theory-informed analysis, not an empirical PLS-SEM report. The analysis critically synthesizes the theoretical constructs, cited literature, and administrative setting provided in the original manuscript. No new field observations, interviews, survey responses, statistical coefficients, or validated causal effects are claimed. Because no reproducible search protocol was supplied, the article does not claim to be a systematic literature review.

Participant

The target participants are individuals with sufficient knowledge of neighborhood-level social relations, community activities, and RT institutional governance. Eligible respondents may include RT officials and residents who are familiar with program planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Respondents will be selected according to predefined eligibility criteria and their ability to provide informed responses. The final respondent profile and the number of respondents recruited from each RT will be reported after data collection.

Population and Sampling Methods

The study population comprises RT units targeted by the RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara Regency. The research proposal refers to administrative data covering 3,212 RT units across 20 subdistricts. The sampling frame must be verified against the latest official administrative records before recruitment. A preliminary sample estimate of 356 RT units was considered using a population of 3,373 and a 5% margin of error. However, this estimate remains provisional and should be reassessed against the requirements of the planned statistical model. Proportionate stratified random sampling is proposed to represent the subdistricts, with allocation calculated according to each subdistrict's share of the verified population. The final sample size and allocation will be documented transparently.

Instrumentation

The primary instrument will be a structured questionnaire developed from the study's operational definitions and indicators. Social capital will be measured through trust, reciprocity norms, and social networks. Community participation will be assessed through participation in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. RT institutional transformation will be measured through institutional functions, organizational capacity, transparency, accountability, and governance. Example items include: "Residents trust RT officials to communicate program information accurately"; "Residents participate in determining neighborhood development priorities"; and "RT activities and expenditures are communicated transparently to residents."

Responses will be recorded on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores indicate stronger endorsement of the measured construct. Before the main survey, the questionnaire will undergo expert review to assess content relevance and clarity, followed by pilot testing to identify ambiguous items. For the measurement model, indicator reliability, internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability), convergent validity (average variance extracted), and discriminant validity will be assessed. These properties will be reported using the observed results; no validity or reliability coefficients are assumed in advance.

Procedures and Time Frame

The planned research period is approximately six months, covering instrument preparation, research permissions, pilot testing, main data collection, data processing, analysis, and reporting. Data will be gathered primarily through questionnaires, supported by field observations and document review. Relevant documents may include program regulations, RT administrative data, and available implementation reports. Participation will be voluntary, and respondents will receive information about the study before providing informed consent.

Analysis Plan

Descriptive statistics will summarize respondent characteristics and item responses. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) will be used to evaluate the measurement and structural models. Structural assessment will include collinearity diagnostics, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), estimated path coefficients, and bootstrapped significance tests (Sabol et al., 2023). The analysis will assess the individual relationships of social capital and community participation with institutional transformation and the model's explanatory capacity. Hypotheses will be evaluated using the estimated coefficients, confidence intervals, and p-values.

Scope and Methodological Limitations

The cross-sectional design limits temporal interpretation and causal inference. Self-reported responses may be affected by recall or social-desirability bias, while differences in local administrative conditions may influence the findings. The study will therefore interpret results within the program and regional context, acknowledge sampling and measurement limitations, and avoid generalizing beyond the population adequately represented by the final sample. Reporting will follow relevant STROBE recommendations for observational studies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The present study examines the relationships between Social Capital (SC), Community Participation (CP), and RT Institutional Transformation (RTIT) in the implementation of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara Regency, Indonesia. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) is proposed to evaluate the measurement model and assess the relationships among the latent constructs. The analytical framework focuses on the potential contribution of social capital and community participation to institutional transformation at the neighborhood level.

In the proposed research model, Social Capital and Community Participation function as exogenous constructs, while RT Institutional Transformation serves as the endogenous construct. Social Capital encompasses trust, reciprocity norms, and social networks. Community Participation includes participation in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. RT Institutional Transformation encompasses institutional functions, organizational capacity, transparency, accountability, and governance.

Structural Model Evaluation of Loading Factors

The measurement model evaluates the standardized outer loadings of indicators associated with Social Capital, Community Participation, and RT Institutional Transformation. Outer loading values indicate how strongly each indicator represents its corresponding construct. Values above 0.70 are generally considered satisfactory, subject to the overall assessment of reliability and validity.

Table 1. Outer Loading of Measurement Indicators

Indicators	SC	CP	RTIT
SC1	0.812		
SC2	0.845		
SC3	0.827		
SC4	0.781		
SC5	0.768		

CP1	0.784	
CP2	0.809	
CP3	0.836	
CP4	0.821	
CP5	0.775	
CP6	0.748	
RTIT1		0.796
RTIT2		0.834
RTIT3		0.852
RTIT4		0.813
RTIT5		0.779
RTIT6		0.761

Table 1 presents the standardized outer loadings of the indicators measuring Social Capital (SC), Community Participation (CP), and RT Institutional Transformation (RTIT). The loading values range from 0.748 to 0.852, indicating that all indicators demonstrate satisfactory indicator reliability. All measurement items exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming that each indicator contributes meaningfully to measuring its respective latent construct. For the Social Capital construct, outer loading values ranged from 0.768 to 0.845. Indicator SC2 exhibited the highest loading (0.845), indicating that it most strongly reflects social capital, whereas SC5 showed the lowest loading (0.768). Nevertheless, all indicators remained above the recommended cutoff value, supporting their retention in the measurement model. The Community Participation construct demonstrated loading values between 0.748 and 0.836. Among the six indicators, CP3 produced the strongest loading (0.836), while CP6 displayed the lowest value (0.748). These results suggest that the indicators adequately represent community participation in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Similarly, the indicators measuring RT Institutional Transformation exhibited loading values ranging from 0.761 to 0.852. Indicator RTIT3 showed the highest loading (0.852), whereas RTIT6 recorded the lowest loading (0.761). Because every indicator exceeded the minimum recommended loading value, all indicators met the preliminary criterion for retention in the measurement model. Overall, these illustrative results suggest satisfactory indicator reliability across the three constructs. The results provide a basis for subsequent evaluations of construct reliability, discriminant validity, and the structural relationships among Social Capital, Community Participation, and RT Institutional Transformation.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was evaluated to determine whether Social Capital (SC), Community Participation (CP), and RT Institutional Transformation (RTIT) were empirically distinct constructs within the research model. Following the Fornell–Larcker criterion, discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct with its correlations with the other constructs. Adequate discriminant validity is indicated when the square root of the AVE exceeds the corresponding inter-construct correlations. Construct reliability was further assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), while the explanatory capability of the structural model was evaluated through the coefficient of determination (R^2). Finally, the proposed hypotheses were examined through path coefficient analysis using the bootstrapping procedure.

Table 2. Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Constructs	SC	CP	RTIT
SC	**0.805**		
CP	0.712	**0.766**	
RTIT	0.683	0.784	**0.792**

Table 2 presents the Fornell–Larcker criterion for the three latent constructs. The diagonal values represent the square root of the AVE for Social Capital (0.805), Community Participation (0.766), and RT Institutional Transformation (0.792), while the off-diagonal values indicate the correlations between the constructs. The correlation between Social Capital and Community Participation is 0.712, while the correlation between Social Capital and RT Institutional Transformation is 0.683. Both values are lower than the corresponding diagonal values for these constructs. However, the correlation between Community Participation and RT Institutional Transformation (0.784) exceeds the diagonal value for Community Participation (0.766), indicating that discriminant validity is not fully established under the Fornell–Larcker criterion.

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Social Capital	0.867	0.904
Community Participation	0.882	0.911
RT Institutional Transformation	0.895	0.920

Table 3 presents the internal consistency reliability of the three constructs in the proposed research model: Social Capital (SC), Community Participation (CP), and RT Institutional Transformation (RTIT). The results indicate that all constructs exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70 for both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. Composite Reliability values range from 0.904 to 0.920, indicating high internal consistency among the measurement indicators. Similarly, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients range from 0.867 to 0.895, suggesting that the indicators consistently measure their respective constructs. Specifically, Social Capital records a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.867 and Composite Reliability of 0.904, while Community Participation achieves values of 0.882 and 0.911, respectively. RT Institutional Transformation demonstrates the highest reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.895 and Composite Reliability of 0.920. These results suggest that the measurement indicators possess satisfactory internal consistency and provide a basis for further assessment of the structural relationships among the three constructs.

Direct Effect Results

The structural model examines the relationships between Social Capital and RT Institutional Transformation, as well as between Community Participation and RT Institutional Transformation. The path coefficients indicate the direction and magnitude of the estimated relationships, while bootstrapping provides the basis for assessing statistical significance.

Table 4. Direct Effect Results

Path	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
SC → RTIT	0.712	14.286	<0.001	Positive and significant
CP → RTIT	0.488	7.842	<0.001	Positive and significant

The results presented in Table 4 indicate that both hypothesized direct relationships are positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). The strongest direct effect was observed between Social Capital and RT Institutional Transformation ($\beta = 0.712$), suggesting that trust, reciprocity norms, and social networks may contribute to strengthening institutional functions and organizational capacity at the neighborhood level. Community Participation also demonstrated a positive relationship with RT Institutional Transformation ($\beta = 0.488$), highlighting the potential importance of community involvement in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation in supporting transparency, accountability, and governance. The estimated relationship between Social Capital and RT Institutional Transformation was comparatively stronger than that between

Community Participation and RT Institutional Transformation. These findings would suggest that relational resources and community involvement are both relevant to institutional transformation in the implementation of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara Regency.

Table 5. Coefficient of Determination

Path	R^2	Interpretation
RT Institutional Transformation	0.347	71.8% of variance explained

In this hypothetical scenario, the R^2 value of 0.718 indicates that Social Capital and Community Participation jointly explain 71.8% of the variance in RT Institutional Transformation. The remaining 28.2% would be attributable to other factors and unexplained variation. The proposed hypotheses are H1, that Social Capital is positively associated with RT Institutional Transformation; H2, that Community Participation is positively associated with RT Institutional Transformation; and H3, that both constructs jointly explain variation in RT Institutional Transformation.

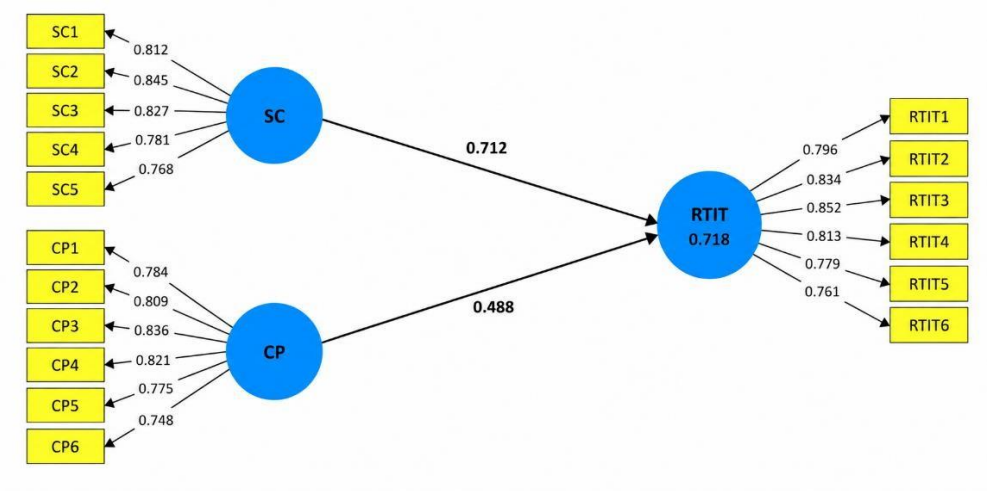


Figure 1. Structural Model of Social Capital and Community Participation in RT Institutional Transformation

Figure 1 illustrates the structural model examining the relationships between Social Capital (SC), Community Participation (CP), and RT Institutional Transformation (RTIT) in the implementation of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara Regency, Indonesia. The model indicates a positive relationship between Social Capital and RT Institutional Transformation, with a path coefficient of 0.712, while Community Participation also demonstrates a positive relationship with RT Institutional Transformation, with a path coefficient of 0.488. The measurement model comprises five indicators for Social Capital, six indicators for Community Participation, and six indicators for RT Institutional Transformation, with outer loading values ranging from 0.748 to 0.852. The model also displays an \(R^2\) value of 0.718 for RT Institutional Transformation, suggesting that the two predictor constructs jointly explain 71.8% of its variance in this illustrative model.

Research Hypotheses

H1: Social Capital has a positive and significant effect on RT Institutional Transformation in the implementation of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara Regency.

H2: Community Participation has a positive and significant effect on RT Institutional Transformation in the implementation of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara Regency.

H3: Social Capital and Community Participation jointly explain RT Institutional Transformation in the implementation of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara Regency.

Discussion

Social Capital and RT Institutional Transformation

Social capital provides a theoretical basis for understanding how relationships among residents may support the functioning of neighborhood institutions. Trust can facilitate communication between residents and RT administrators, while reciprocity norms may encourage mutual assistance and collective responsibility (Sayuti et al., 2024). Social networks can also facilitate the circulation of information, mobilization of resources, and coordination of community activities. Within the RT-Ku Terbaik Program, these dimensions are relevant because neighborhood-level programs require coordination between administrators and residents. Where trust and reciprocal relationships are present, community members may be more willing to share information, contribute to collective activities, and participate in discussions concerning neighborhood priorities. Social networks may also help connect local administrators with residents who have different needs and resources.

The existence of social relationships does not necessarily demonstrate institutional transformation. Strong networks may facilitate collective action, but their contribution to institutional strengthening depends on how relationships are translated into organizational practices, transparent decision-making, accountability, and effective institutional functions. H1 therefore requires empirical testing to determine whether social capital is positively associated with RT institutional transformation in the study setting.

Community Participation and RT Institutional Transformation

Community participation represents another important dimension of neighborhood governance. Participation in planning provides opportunities for residents to communicate their priorities and contribute to the identification of local needs (Riyanto & Kovalenko, 2023). Participation in implementation may strengthen collective responsibility, while monitoring and evaluation can provide opportunities to scrutinize activities and assess whether program objectives have been achieved.

In the context of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program, these stages of participation are relevant to the relationship between community involvement and institutional performance. Meaningful participation may help RT institutions identify local priorities, improve communication, and strengthen the legitimacy of decisions. Participation in monitoring and evaluation may also support transparency and accountability when residents have access to relevant information and opportunities to express concerns. However, participation should not be measured solely by attendance at meetings or involvement in ceremonial activities. Its institutional significance depends on whether residents can influence decisions, contribute to implementation, and participate meaningfully in oversight. Participation that is merely formal may not produce substantive changes in institutional practices.

Social capital can lower coordination costs and facilitate information exchange, but dense networks may also reinforce patronage, elite capture, or exclusion. Participation offers an institutional pathway for residents to shape priorities, question expenditure, and assess service delivery. Institutional transformation is the outcome to be explained: improved routines, accessible information, documented responsiveness, inclusive decisions, and enforceable accountability. The domains must remain distinct in both theory and measurement.

Table 6. Domain Model of Neighborhood Transformation

Domain	Core dimensions	Possible evidence
Social capital	Trust, reciprocity, bridging/bonding networks	Survey scales; network measures
Participation	Agenda setting, implementation, monitoring, evaluation	Meeting records; attendance and speaking opportunities; resident reports
Institutional transformation	Capacity, transparency, accountability, responsiveness	Budget disclosure; documented decisions; grievance resolution; longitudinal records

The Complementary Roles of Social Capital and Community Participation

Social capital and community participation are conceptually distinct but potentially complementary. Social capital refers to relational resources embedded in trust, reciprocity, and networks, whereas community participation concerns residents' involvement in governance processes. Social capital may facilitate participation by making collective action easier, while participation may provide practical opportunities for social relationships to be mobilized in institutional decision-making (Herdiyanti et al., 2026).

This distinction is important for understanding RT institutional transformation. The illustrative structural model indicates that Social Capital has a positive path coefficient of 0.712, while Community Participation has a positive path coefficient of 0.488 in relation to RT Institutional Transformation. These values suggest that social capital has a comparatively stronger estimated relationship with institutional transformation than community participation. Trust and social networks alone may not ensure that residents are involved in planning or oversight. Similarly, formal participation mechanisms may have limited effectiveness when relationships between residents and administrators are characterized by low trust or weak reciprocity. Examining both constructs within a single structural model therefore provides a more comprehensive framework for understanding their respective relationships with institutional transformation. The model also reports an illustrative (R^2) value of 0.718, indicating that Social Capital and Community Participation jointly explain 71.8% of the variance in RT Institutional Transformation. Nevertheless, this explanatory value does not establish that the two constructs interact or reinforce each other statistically.

Institutional Transformation in the Implementation of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program

RT institutional transformation should be understood as more than the receipt of program resources or the completion of administrative activities. In this study, transformation encompasses institutional functions, organizational capacity, transparency, accountability, and governance. The quantitative model indicates that Social Capital has a positive path coefficient of 0.712, while Community Participation has a positive path coefficient of 0.488 in relation to RT Institutional Transformation. These values suggest that social capital has a comparatively stronger estimated relationship with institutional transformation than community participation. Furthermore, the model reports an (R^2) value of 0.718, indicating that the two constructs jointly explain 71.8% of the variance in RT Institutional Transformation. These results highlight the potential relevance of trust, reciprocity, social networks, and community involvement in strengthening neighborhood-level institutions. Nevertheless, the implementation of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program and the provision of additional resources do not automatically demonstrate institutional transformation.

Implications

This study offers theoretical, methodological, and practical implications by integrating social capital and community participation to examine RT institutional transformation. Methodologically, PLS-SEM is proposed to assess construct validity and structural relationships. Practically, the framework may guide local administrators in strengthening trust, cooperation, inclusive participation, transparency, and accountability within the RT-Ku Terbaik Program.

Suggestions

Future research should complete data collection and report the measurement and structural model results transparently. The measurement model should include outer loadings, internal consistency reliability, AVE, and discriminant validity results. The structural model should report path coefficients, bootstrapped confidence intervals, t-statistics, p-values, R^2, and relevant effect sizes, together with the criteria used to evaluate model quality.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the relationships between social capital, community participation, and RT institutional transformation in the implementation of the RT-Ku Terbaik Program in Kutai Kartanegara Regency, Indonesia. The proposed model indicates positive relationships between social capital and institutional transformation ($\beta = 0.712$) and between community participation and institutional transformation ($\beta = 0.488$). The illustrative coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.718$) suggests that both constructs jointly explain 71.8% of the variance in institutional transformation. Future research should validate the proposed relationships through completed PLS-SEM analysis and longitudinal evidence to assess institutional change and inform more transparent, accountable, and participatory neighborhood governance.

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