

Analysis of the Village Head's Leadership in the Implementation of The Poverty Alleviation Program in North Malingping Village

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the leadership of the Village Head in implementing poverty alleviation programs in Malingping Utara Village, Malingping District, Lebak Regency. The village head plays a strategic role in determining the direction of village development policies, including poverty alleviation as a central issue in local development. This research applies leadership theory using a qualitative descriptive approach. The key informants consist of the Village Head, village officials, neighborhood leaders (RT/RW), and program beneficiaries. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, then analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and inductive conclusion techniques. The results show that the Village Head's leadership style tends to be participatory and communicative, which positively affects the effectiveness of poverty alleviation programs. However, some challenges remain, such as data validation issues and limited community involvement during program evaluation. Overall, adaptive and open leadership has proven to support the achievement of program objectives more effectively.

Keywords: *Leadership, Poverty Alleviation, Malingping Utara Village*

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I. Introduction

Poverty is one of the fundamental problems faced by most regions in Indonesia, including rural areas. The government through various development policies has made efforts to reduce the poverty rate, one of which is through village-based poverty alleviation programs. Villages are the spearhead of the implementation of the program because they are in direct contact with the poor who are the main targets of the policy. In this

context, the leadership of the village head

plays an important role as the main driver of the success of the program at the local level.

The village head is not only tasked with carrying out administrative functions, but also responsible as a social leader who is able to direct, mobilize, and empower the community. Law Number 3 of 2024 concerning Villages provides broad authority for village heads to carry out government, development, community development, and community empowerment. Thus, the effectiveness of the implementation of poverty alleviation programs in villages is highly dependent on the leadership style and capacity of the village head in managing existing resources and establishing active community participation.

North Malingping Village, Malingping District, Lebak Regency, is one of the villages with a relatively high poverty rate. Most people depend on agriculture and informal jobs that are low-income and unstable. This condition is exacerbated by limited access to education, employment, and production facilities. Therefore, the village government implements a number of poverty alleviation programs, including Direct Cash Assistance for Village Funds (BLT-DD), social assistance for poor families, and community economic empowerment activities.

However, the effectiveness of the implementation of the program still faces various challenges, especially in terms of the accuracy of beneficiary data, limited community participation, and weak coordination between village institutions. In a situation like this, the quality of the village head's leadership is the determining factor. A leader who has managerial skills, effective communication, and an open attitude will be better able to mobilize community participation and create transparent and accountable village governance.

The leadership of the Head of North Malingping Village, Budi Angkat Purwondo, is interesting to study because his participatory and communicative leadership style is considered to have a great influence on the implementation of social programs in his village. Through a deliberation approach and information disclosure, village heads strive to ensure that every development policy and aid distribution truly reflects the needs of the community. However, there are still a number of technical obstacles, such as inaccuracy of aid targets due to delays in data updates and social jealousy among citizens.

This research is important because it provides an empirical understanding of how village head leadership can affect the effectiveness of the implementation of poverty alleviation programs at the local level. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the study of leadership in village government and the implementation of social policies. Practically, the results of the research can be an input for local and village governments in improving the quality of poverty alleviation program governance so that it is more targeted, transparent, and sustainable.

Thus, this study departs from the belief that the success of a social program in the village is not only determined by the availability of funds or regulations, but also by the leadership role of the village head who is visionary, adaptive, and able to build active community participation as a development partner.

Literature Review

The Concept of Leadership in Village Government

Leadership is a fundamental element in the process of implementing government. In general, leadership can be interpreted as a person's ability to influence, direct, and move individuals and groups to jointly achieve predetermined goals. Kartini Kartono (2008) explained that leadership includes the ability to make decisions, motivate, communicate effectively, and be responsible for the welfare of the community. In the context of village government, leadership not only functions administratively, but also plays a role as a means of social transformation and community development.

The village head, as the highest leader at the local level, has a strategic position in determining the direction of development and village public policy. Based on Law Number 3 of 2024 concerning Villages, village heads are authorized to organize village government, carry out development, community development, and community empowerment. This strategic role requires village heads to have good managerial capacity, high integrity, and effective communication skills in order to optimize all potential local resources in order to improve the welfare of the village community.

Leadership Style and Effectiveness of Social Programs

Leadership style has a great influence on the effectiveness of the implementation of public policies, including poverty alleviation programs. According to Northouse (2025), there are several relevant leadership styles, including: transformational, transactional, participatory, and authoritarian.

- Transformational leadership emphasizes inspiration, motivation, and value change, where leaders encourage society to innovate and participate in development.
- Transactional leadership focuses on the structure and adherence to administrative procedures, so its effectiveness depends on reward and sanction mechanisms.
- Participatory leadership opens up space for the community to be actively involved in decision-making through village deliberations, increasing the sense of ownership of the programs carried out.
- Authoritarian leadership, although considered less than ideal, is sometimes needed in certain situations to maintain social stability and order.

In the context of village development, a participatory leadership style is considered the most appropriate because it is in line with the principles of village autonomy and democratization. Village heads who involve the community in the planning and implementation process of the program will gain stronger social legitimacy and encourage the success of the program in a sustainable manner.

Theory and Dimensions of Effective Leadership

According to behavioral and situational leadership theory, the effectiveness of leadership is determined by the leader's ability to adapt his or her leadership style to the social conditions of the society he leads. In the rural context, leaders are required to understand local values, social culture, and patterns of community interaction that tend to be collective. Kartini Kartono (2008) stated six main indicators of effective leadership, namely: the ability to make decisions, motivate subordinates, communicate well, control emotions, maintain discipline and responsibility, and the ability to direct subordinates wisely. These six indicators are the basis for assessing the extent to which the leadership of village heads is able to encourage the effectiveness of the implementation of social programs, including poverty alleviation.

Concepts and Indicators of Poverty in Rural Areas

Poverty is a multidimensional problem that is not only related to economic aspects, but also social, cultural, and structural. According to Fatimah and Nugroho (2022), poverty is a condition of the inability of individuals or groups to meet basic needs such as food, health, education, and housing. In Indonesia, the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) sets poverty lines based on minimum food and non-food needs. In March 2024, the poverty line

is set at IDR 550,458 per capita per month, with the rural poverty rate reaching 11.34%, much higher than in urban areas.

Rural poverty is generally relative and structural. Village communities still face limited access to education, employment, and health facilities. Most rely on the subsistence agriculture sector and informal jobs with uncertain incomes. This condition results in a high dependence on government social assistance. Therefore, poverty alleviation strategies need to emphasize community empowerment and human resource capacity building, not just the provision of cash assistance.

Poverty Alleviation Program as Public Policy

Poverty alleviation programs are a tangible form of public policy implementation at the local level. According to Gasik (2020), public programs are a series of systematic and coordinated activities to achieve certain policy goals. In the village context, programs such as the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance (BLT-DD) are the main instruments to help the poor to survive in difficult economic conditions. Since its launch in 2020, BLT-DD has not only functioned as a social safety net, but also as a stimulus for the local economy by strengthening people's purchasing power.

However, the effectiveness of the implementation of this program is highly dependent on the governance and leadership of the village head. Without accurate data, transparency, and community participation, programs are potentially off target. Village heads play an important role in ensuring the validity of beneficiary data, coordinating village officials, and building good communication with the community so that assistance can have a real impact on poverty reduction.

The Relationship between Leadership and the Success of Poverty Programs

The relationship between leadership and poverty is direct and significant. Adaptive, participatory, and communicative leadership is able to encourage community involvement in program planning and supervision. Conversely, leadership that is closed and less responsive to the aspirations of the community will cause the program to be only administrative in nature without having a long-term impact. In the context of this study, the leadership of the village head is a key variable that determines the effectiveness of the implementation of poverty alleviation programs in North Malingping Village.

II. Research Methods

Approaches and Types of Research

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-exploratory type. This approach was chosen because it is able to describe and understand social phenomena in depth based on the natural context that occurs in the field. The main purpose of this study is to examine how the leadership of village heads plays a role in the implementation of poverty alleviation programs in North Malingping Village, Malingping District, Lebak Regency.

The qualitative approach is considered appropriate because it emphasizes the meaning, perception, and experience of the actors who are directly involved in the leadership process and program implementation. As revealed by Silverman (2021), qualitative research seeks to produce rich and in-depth descriptions of human experience, social interactions, and social processes that occur naturally without variable manipulation. Therefore, this research is not oriented to numbers or statistics, but to understanding the meaning and relationships between social actors at the village level.

This type of descriptive-exploratory research is used to describe the reality of village head leadership and the dynamics of the implementation of poverty programs in a systematic, factual, and accurate manner. With its exploratory nature, this study also opens up space for researchers to discover new patterns and contextual understandings that may not have been studied much in previous research.

Research Location and Time

The research was carried out in North Malingping Village, Malingping District, Lebak Regency, Banten Province. This location was chosen because the village is one of the active recipients of various poverty alleviation programs, especially the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance (BLT-DD) program. In addition, the village exhibits complex socio-economic dynamics, with a relatively high poverty rate and community dependence on the agricultural sector and informal employment.

The research activities were carried out during the period from March to July 2025, which included the initial observation stage, field data collection, analysis, and preparation of research reports.

Data Sources and Types

This study uses two main types of data sources, namely primary data and secondary data.

- Primary data was obtained directly from the results of in-depth interviews with key informants involved in the implementation of poverty alleviation programs in villages. The informants include the Village Head, village officials, RT/RW chairs, community leaders, and residents who benefit from the BLT-DD program. In addition, primary data was also obtained through direct observation of aid distribution activities and village deliberation processes.
- Secondary data was obtained from various official documents and written sources, such as village administration reports, lists of social assistance recipients, village regulations, archives of program activities, as well as relevant scientific literature and previous research results. This data is used to strengthen field findings and provide theoretical context to the research results.

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection technique was carried out through three main methods: in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation.

- In-depth interviews are conducted in a semi-structured manner to allow flexibility in digging up information. The questions were prepared based on leadership style indicators according to Kartini Kartono (2008), such as the ability to make decisions, motivate subordinates, communicate, and the responsibility of the village head in the implementation of the program. Interviews were conducted directly with key informants, both formally at the village office and informally in the community.
- Field observations were carried out to observe the leadership behavior of village heads, community participation, and the dynamics of the implementation of poverty programs. This observation is moderately participatory, where the researcher is not fully involved in the activity, but plays the role of an active observer of social interaction and the policy implementation process.
- Documentation is used to complete and verify the data of the results of interviews and observations. The documents studied included data on aid recipients, reports on the realization of the village fund budget, and photos of social program activities.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman interactive model which includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn.

- Data Reduction is carried out by sorting, summarizing, and simplifying field data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents. This process aims to focus data on the main theme, namely the leadership style of village heads and the effectiveness of poverty alleviation programs.
- Data presentation is carried out in the form of narratives and thematic tables to illustrate the relationship between variables. The data is systematically compiled to facilitate the extraction of meaning.
- Conclusion Drawing and Verification is carried out inductively, by interpreting the patterns and relationships of the data that has been presented.

To maintain the validity of the data, this study uses source triangulation, method triangulation, and time triangulation techniques. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information from various informants; The triangulation method is carried out by combining interviews, observations, and documentation; while time triangulation is carried out by repeated observations at different times to ensure data consistency.

Research Limitations

This research has several limitations, including the difficulty of reaching some informants due to the busyness or lack of interest in participating, the limitations of official documents that are not all well documented in the village, and the limitation of research time that is adjusted to the academic calendar and schedule of village government activities. Nonetheless, through a qualitative approach and rigorous triangulation, this study still produced findings that are valid and relevant to the local context.

III. Results And Discussion

Overview of Research Locations

North Malingping Village is one of 13 villages in Malingping District, Lebak Regency, Banten Province. Based on administrative data in 2024, the population will reach around 6,583 people, consisting of 3,370 men and 3,213 women. Most people work in the agriculture, small trade, and informal work sectors. Economic conditions that depend on the weather, fluctuations in agricultural product prices, and limited access to basic education and infrastructure make these village communities vulnerable to poverty.

As an area that receives various government programs, such as the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance (BLT-DD), the Family Hope Program (PKH), and Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT), North Malingping Village is an important locus in assessing the extent to which the village head's leadership affects the effectiveness of the implementation of poverty alleviation programs at the local level.

Village Head Leadership Style

The results of the study show that the Head of North Malingping Village applies a participatory and communicative leadership style. This style is reflected in the involvement of the community in the village deliberation process (*musdes*) to determine the priorities of aid recipients and development activities. The village head actively invites village officials, RT/RW chairs, and community leaders to discuss social problems and determine measures to handle them.

Based on the interview, the village head stated that openness in decision-making is the main principle so that the community feels responsible for the success of the program. This approach is in accordance with the participatory leadership theory put forward by Yukl and Gardner (2020), where the active participation of subordinates in decision-making will increase the sense of ownership and effectiveness of policy implementation.

However, the results of observations also show that even though the communication pattern is going quite well, there are still community groups that do not fully understand the program mechanism or feel that they have not received the same opportunity in the decision-making process. This shows that the implementation of a participatory leadership style still requires consistency and equitable distribution of information at all levels of village society.

The Role of Village Heads in the Implementation of Poverty Alleviation Programs

Village heads play an important role in all stages of the program, from planning, implementation, to evaluation. At the planning stage, the village head leads a village deliberation meeting to determine the program targets based on the results of data collection of the poor. The data used is sourced from the results of verification with village officials and RT/RW, and is adjusted to the data of the Lebak Regency Social Service.

In the implementation stage, the village head plays the role of the main director and supervisor so that the distribution of aid is carried out transparently and on target. Recipient communities are required to sign a receipt list, while documentation of activities is kept as a form of public accountability. Supervision is also carried out by the Village Consultative Body (BPD) to maintain public trust in the village government.

At the evaluation stage, the village head together with the village apparatus conducted a field review to assess the extent to which the assistance had an impact on the welfare of the community. Based on interviews with village officials, most of the BLT-DD assistance is used to meet basic needs, children's education costs, and small business capital. This shows that social assistance provides a positive short-term economic effect for the recipient community.

Obstacles in Program Implementation

Although the program has been running regularly, the study found some major obstacles. First, there is still inaccuracy in beneficiary data, especially due to the lack of synchronization of local data with central data (DTKS). As a result, there are cases of dual assistance recipients or poor families who have not been registered.

Second, public participation in the planning and evaluation stages is still low. Some people still consider the assistance program as a matter of the village government alone, not as a collective responsibility.

Third, the aspect of coordination between institutions is also a challenge, especially in the process of data verification and activity reporting. The village head admitted that the limitations of human resources and administration at the village level made the documentation process not fully optimal.

These findings show that even though participatory leadership styles have been implemented, there is still a need to increase the capacity of the apparatus and social control mechanisms in order for the effectiveness of the program to be improved in a sustainable manner.

Analysis of Leadership Relationships and Program Effectiveness

The results of this study strengthen the theory of Kartini Kartono (2008) which emphasizes that effective leadership is characterized by decision-making skills, motivation, communication, and social responsibility. The head of North Malingping village has succeeded in building public trust through open communication and a leadership style that prioritizes deliberation. This has a positive effect on public acceptance of poverty alleviation programs.

However, the effectiveness of the program has not been maximized because there are still structural and technical aspects that limit the impact of the policy, such as data validation and low citizen participatory awareness. In this context, the leadership of village heads needs to be combined with community empowerment so that the program is not only oriented towards cash assistance, but also on long-term economic capacity building.

Village heads also need to strengthen cross-sector coordination with local governments, village assistance agencies, and civil society organizations. This cross-agency collaboration is important to ensure the sustainability of the program and expand the range of benefits for the poor.

Implications of Research Findings

The findings of this study confirm that participatory and communicative leadership at the village level is a key factor in the successful implementation of social programs. Village heads who are adaptive and open to community aspirations tend to be able to build public trust, increase accountability, and strengthen community participation in the development process.

The practical implication of this study is the need for sustainable village government leadership and management training so that village heads have the capacity to manage data, public communication, and community empowerment. Theoretically, this study enriches the study of the relationship between local leadership styles and the effectiveness of social policies at the grassroots level.

IV. Conclusions and Suggestions

Conclusion

This study concludes that village head leadership has a central role in determining the effectiveness of the implementation of poverty alleviation programs at the local level. The results of the study show that the Head of North Malingping Village implements a participatory and communicative leadership style, which is characterized by active community involvement in village deliberations, information transparency, and good coordination between the village government and its apparatus. This leadership style has a positive impact on the implementation of social programs, especially in strengthening the sense of shared responsibility and increasing the legitimacy of policies in the eyes of the public.

However, the effectiveness of the program has not been fully optimal. There are still various obstacles such as inaccurate data on beneficiaries, low community participation in the evaluation stage, and limited administrative capacity of village officials. This shows that the success of the program is not only determined by the character of the leadership, but also by a transparent governance system, an accurate database, and adequate human resource support.

Conceptually, the results of this study confirm the theory of Kartini Kartono (2008) which emphasizes that effective leadership includes decision-making skills, good communication, motivation, social responsibility, and emotional control. In the context of North Malingping Village, an adaptive and open leadership style has encouraged an increase in the effectiveness of assistance programs such as BLT-DD, although it still requires refinement in technical and participatory aspects. Thus, the leadership of the village head can be said to be a key factor that determines the success of village-based social policies.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, there are several recommendations to increase the effectiveness of the implementation of poverty alleviation programs at the village level:

1. Capacity Building of Village Leadership and Apparatus. Village heads and their apparatus need to undergo training in government management, public communication, and social program management in order to be able to optimize coordination and supervision functions.
2. Improvement of the Poverty Data System. The village government needs to update beneficiary data periodically through direct verification with RT/RW to ensure that the assistance is on target.
3. Strengthening Community Participation. Through village deliberative forums, the community must be involved not only in planning, but also in the supervision and evaluation of programs in order to create a sense of shared ownership.
4. Cross-Sector Collaboration. Village governments need to expand cooperation with local governments, village assistance agencies, and civil society organizations to strengthen resources and expand the impact of programs.

By paying attention to these recommendations, it is hoped that the implementation of poverty alleviation programs in North Malingping Village can run more transparently, participatory, and sustainable, and be able to lead to an improvement in the welfare of the village community as a whole.

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