

The Effectiveness of the Leadership of the Head of Karangrejo Village in Improving Public Service Performance

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Abstract:

Various public service problems such as lack of disclosure of information related to the use of village funds, slow population administration processes, and non-optimal implementation of MSME empowerment programs are strategic problems considered to hinder the development of Karangrejo Village, Tulungagung Regency. This condition encourages the need to analyze the leadership strategy of the Village Head to solve these various challenges in order to improve services to the community. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the leadership of the Head of Karangrejo Village in improving the performance of public services through the adjustment of leadership style to the conditions faced. The research method used is qualitative descriptive. Using the contingency theory approach (Fiedler, 1967) with three indicators of the leader's need structure, the leader's situation control, the interaction between the leader's need structure and the situation control that reflects his leadership style based on the LPC (*Least Preferred Co-worker*) score as a data analysis tool, the results were obtained that the Karangrejo Village Head was able to implement his leadership well. This can be known, both with emphasis on tasks and on interpersonal relationships, according to the context and situational needs. This adaptation has been proven to be able to encourage the improvement of the quality of administrative services, strengthen public trust, and reactivate the participation of MSME actors in village economic development. This study emphasizes that the success of public services is greatly influenced by the ability of leaders to adapt their leadership style to evolving situations.

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Introduction

As the highest government structure in rural areas, village heads have the responsibility to manage these resources. The leadership of the village head has an important position in determining the quality of public services at the village level. The village head is not only an administrative leader, but also a driver of change that can encourage the village apparatus to provide optimal services to the community, public services are not only to meet the basic needs of the community, quality public services can also improve the welfare and participation of the community in village development. The application of technology in administrative and communication processes has brought fundamental changes in the provision of public services (Cahyono A. S., 2024).

Effective leadership is reflected in the ability of the village head to inspire and motivate village officials and residents to jointly achieve the development goals that have been determined. The participatory democratic leadership style is often associated with improving the quality of public services, because of this leadership style, village heads tend to involve the community in the decision-making process and are more sensitive to the needs of their citizens. On the other hand, authoritarian leadership can create obstacles in the implementation of optimal public services because the leadership style tends to be less communicative. In addition, the effectiveness of public services is also influenced by internal factors such as the ability of village officials, budget availability, and information technology support.

According to (Sukmi et al., 2025) shows that good leadership is able to increase the effectiveness of services in the village through increasing coordination and communication between village apparatus. In line with the opinion (Setyawan et al., 2023) which emphasizes that an inclusive and participatory leadership style contributes positively to public service performance, especially in terms of responsiveness and transparency. However, there are still many challenges faced by village heads, such as limited resources, resistance to

change, and low community participation, which can affect the effectiveness of public services.

Karangrejo Village has distinctive social and economic characteristics, as well as its unique governance dynamics, so it is relevant to study. This article analyzes how the leadership of the Karangrejo village head affects the quality of public services, identifying the supporting factors as well as their inhibitions. Some of the supporting factors are the first, the existence of a village head leadership that is responsive and open to the aspirations of the community which creates a more accommodating bureaucracy. The village head is able to build effective communication with village officials and residents, so that the needs and expectations of the community can be well accepted and followed up appropriately.

Second, the availability of adequate service infrastructure, both in the form of physical facilities such as representative village offices and the use of simple information technology that increasingly supports the service process to residents. Easy access to information, regular service hours, and clarity of procedures are factors that support the transparency and efficiency of public services.

Third, the active participation of the community in the decision-making process. Residents' involvement in village deliberations such as MUSRENBANGDES and other meeting activities related to village programs to the use of village funds.

Fourth, the synergy between the village government and local institutions such as PKK, Karang Taruna, as well as farmer groups and MSMEs also supports the smooth running of services. This collaboration expands the scope of services, especially in the field of economic and social empowerment, so that the benefits of public services are more felt by various levels of society.

All of these factors make public services in Karangrejo Village seem more organized, responsive, and adaptive to changes in community needs, so they are worthy of being used as an object of analysis to understand how village public services can be carried out effectively, which the author will then conduct a deeper analysis related to the effectiveness of the leadership of the village head in Karangrejo Village.

Some of the inhibiting factors in the implementation of government in Karangrejo village are several problems that hinder the effectiveness of services and community participation. First, the lack of information related to the use of Village Funds has caused distrust from the community towards the village government. Second, population administration services run slowly due to the low discipline of village officials, which has an impact on residents' dissatisfaction. Third, the MSME empowerment program has failed because the leadership approach used is not in accordance with the needs of the community, which actually requires intensive coaching and mentoring.

Therefore, through responsive and innovative leadership, the village head has succeeded in overcoming these various problems. The transparency of the management of the Village Fund is improved through routine deliberation with residents, administrative services are improved by enforcing the discipline of village officials, and the MSME empowerment program is changed with a more participatory approach and based on the real needs of the community. This success not only restored residents' trust in the village government, but also encouraged the active participation of the community in sustainable village development.

Definition of Leadership

The development of the culture of national leaders is an issue faced by Indonesia that needs to be implemented systematically and improved, depending on the actual condition of the country and how it impacts the lives and culture of the community. Indonesia, as a country with social and cultural diversity, has an important role in sustainable development efforts to achieve national goals and targets (Cahyono, 2013).

Leadership means the ability to motivate individuals who are led with passion and belief in achieving predetermined targets. Management practice involves presenting various issues related to managerial issues and their impact in various ways to solve challenges that arise in the environment (Adistia & Verawati, 2022). Leadership is one of the essential elements that impact the efficiency and success of an organization. Various theories have been created to describes how successful leadership can emerge, one of which is Fiedler's contingency theory. This theory was introduced by Fred E. Fiedler in 1967 and

became one of the earliest and most influential theories of contingency leadership in the study of organizational behavior (Fiedler, 1967).

Leadership Effectiveness

Leadership effectiveness is a crucial aspect in organizational management that directly affects employee performance and job satisfaction. A number of studies show that the right leadership style and the level of involvement of organizational members can increase the effectiveness of a leader (Wicaksono & Wahyudi, 2011). To understand the characteristics of an effective leader, various leadership theories have been developed. Among them are leadership style theories, such as transformational and transactional leadership. Leaders who are able to inspire, motivate, and encourage positive change in their subordinates tend to show higher effectiveness in carrying out their roles (Wang et al., 2011).

Employee engagement is one of the important factors that affect how effective a leader is. (Shuck et al., 2014) states that leaders who can build a work culture that encourages employee engagement can help increase productivity and job satisfaction. This can be achieved by communicating openly and giving appreciation for the contributions made by employees. Research conducted (Avolio et al., 2009) shows that effective leaders tend to make organizational performance better. Leaders who can establish a good relationship with their team can help improve the overall performance of the organization.

In other words, (Fiedler, 1967) argues that a person becomes a leader not due to his personal characteristics, but to various situational factors and interactions that occur between the Leader and his situation. The reason for using Fiedler's Theory in analyzing the effectiveness of the leadership of the Karangrejo Village Head is based on the relevance of this theory to the leadership situation in the village environment. Fiedler's theory emphasizes that the effectiveness of a leader depends on the compatibility between the leadership style and the conditions of the organization. In the context of Karangrejo Village, the social relationship between the village head and the apparatus and the community, the clarity of the structure of public service duties, and the formal authority of the village head as a holder of strategic positions, are situational variables that are in accordance with

the framework of this theory.

In Fiedler's Contingency Theory, leadership effectiveness is determined by three main indicators, namely:

1. The structure of the leader's needs, which reflects his leadership style based on the LP score.
2. Leader situation control, which shows the extent to which the leader has influence over the situation, as well.
3. The interaction between the leader's needs structure and situation control, which is at the heart of this contingency model.

Through Fiedler's approach, the author can analyze whether the Head of Karangrejo Village is more task-oriented or relationship-oriented, as well as whether the leadership style is appropriate in dealing with the needs of public services in the village. This theory also opens up opportunities to evaluate the suitability between the leadership style applied to the real situation faced by the village, so that it is academically seen as relevant and able to explain the various effectiveness of leadership in improving the quality of services to the community.

Definition of Village

Based on Law Number 6 of 2014, a village is a unit of territory inhabited by a number of communities that have their own system of government within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. A village is also referred to as "a legal community unit that has territorial boundaries that are authorized to regulate and manage government affairs, the interests of local communities based on community initiatives, rights of origin, and/or traditional rights that are recognized and respected in the system of government of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia" (Ministry of Home Affairs 2014). One of the characteristics of the village is a close social life where the relationship between residents in the village tends to be closer and familial (Koentjaraningrat & in Indonesia, 2002).

Villages not only play a role as a place to live, but also as a center of economic and social activities for the community. Villages play an important role in national development as the starting point for public services, local economic development, and cultural preservation. Sustainable village empowerment is

essential to strengthen local independence and support equitable development.

Village Head

The Village Head is the leader of the government at the village level who is directly elected by the villagers through a democratic process. He plays an important role in running the wheel of village government, development, community development, and citizen empowerment. The Village Head is responsible to the community through the Village Consultative Body (BPD), and administratively responsible to the Regent or Mayor through the Sub-district Head (Setiadi et al., 2025).

The provisions regarding the Village Head are regulated in Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, which states that the term of office of the Village Head is six years and can be re-elected a maximum of three times, either consecutively or not. This term of office restriction rule has been reaffirmed by the Constitutional Court in Decision Number 42/PUU-XIX/2021, although there is still opposition from a number of village organizations. A village head, as a leader in village government, is required to be able to carry out his main duties in leading and coordinating the running of village government. In addition, the leadership style of the village head is an important factor that greatly affects the success of development at the village level. (Hariyanto, 2020).

In addition to responsibilities, the village head also has the authority regulated in Article 26 paragraph (2) of Law Number 6 of 2014, which is as follows:

1. Regulating the implementation of Village Government
2. Assign and dismiss the Village apparatus
3. Controlling responsibility for the management of Village Finance and Assets.
4. Determining Village Rules
5. Determining the Village Revenue and Expenditure Budget
6. Building the lives of villagers
7. Maintaining the security and order of residents in the village

Developing and improving the Village economy and connecting it to achieve a productive scale economy for the widest possible prosperity of the Village community

8. Increasing the Village's source of income
9. Propose and approve the handover of part of state property
10. Improving the socio-cultural life of the villagers
11. Effective in the use of technology

Public services

Public services are various activities carried out by government agencies or public organizations to meet the needs of the community for goods and services. This activity is carried out in accordance with applicable rules and standards. The government, through its institutions and apparatus, has the responsibility to plan and provide the best service to the community (Dwiyanto, 2021).

According to Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services, public services are activities or a series of activities carried out to meet the needs of every citizen and resident for administrative goods, services, or services. This service must be carried out in accordance with the applicable legal provisions by the party responsible for providing services to the community.

According to (Light, 2018), public services are the government's efforts to meet the needs of the community fairly, on time, and with good quality. Meanwhile, (Vandenabeele et al., 2018) explained that public service is a form of government administration that aims to meet people's expectations, protect their rights, and provide services fairly, honestly, and efficiently.

Methodology

This research approach uses a qualitative descriptive research method. This study describes and analyzes the effectiveness of the leadership of the Karangrejo village head in improving the performance of public services by using the theory of leadership effectiveness (Fiedler, 1967). Qualitative research is a type of research used to study objects in a natural context, with researchers acting as the primary instrument. Data collection is carried out through various techniques, data analysis is inductive, and the results of the research focus more on understanding meaning than on efforts to generalize (Prasanti, 2018).

Result and discussion

The leadership in Karangrejo village in this study represents several policies of the village head in solving problems in Karangrejo village and can be explained through the following table:

Table 1.

Problems and Policies of the Head of Karangrejo Village.

NO	PROBLEM	POLICY	IMPACT
1.	Residents complained about the lack of information related to the use of Village Funds.	Holding regular village deliberations involving community, youth, and representatives women for Explain the work program and budget.	The level of public trust has increased and Citizen Participation In the village deliberations, it increased significantly.
2.	The community often complains Slow administrative services population such as making ID cards, family cards, and cover letters.	Creating Standards New Operational Procedures (SOPs) on service hours and service procedures Citizens, as well as announced it on the village bulletin board.	The community feels that their rights are served more fairly and professionally and Village Officials Discipline Increases.
3.	The Failure of the MSME Empowerment Program in Karangrejo Village due to Incompatibility of Leadership Style and Situation.	Collaborating external MSME companions from the Cooperative Office for Taking a personal approach to the participants and developing a program training.	The participation of MSME actors is increasing and starting to be brave marketing products outside the village and The existence of new entrepreneurs in the field handicrafts and processed foods.

Table Source. Processed by researchers.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion in the previous chapters, the researcher concluded several aspects regarding the involvement of the people of Tulungagung Regency in the 2024 Regional Elections. Community participation in local political events, especially in the election of Regional Heads in Ngunut District, is relatively high, with a voter participation rate of 90%.

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The Effectiveness of the Leadership of the Head of Karangrejo Village in Improving Public Service Performance

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