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Leadership style analysis of the Head of Sukahurip Village, Pangandaran District

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ABSTRACT

To build village development, parties who can synergise for the programs that will be held in a village, such as the village head, village officials, and the village community are needed. Sukahurip Village is a village located in Pangandaran Regency, which is currently carrying out sustainable development. In the process, the development was assisted by the village head, who was the leader in its management. The village head often involves the community in decision-making. The role of the leader here is important in fulfilling all of these services, starting from the planning and implementation processes. The leader must apply the right leadership style to encourage or move the community to achieve the vision and mission of the village as an advanced village. Therefore, descriptive research is needed regarding the leadership style applied by the Sukahurip Village Head, the results of which can be used for the next Village Head to optimize the potential of his village to carry out sustainable development. This study uses qualitative methods with data collection techniques using interviews and observations. The research data collection method was carried out through interviews, holding a meeting of two people to exchange information and ideas through question and answer so that meaning can be constructed in a particular topic, and observation, which is data collection by observing the subject or phenomenon under study without direct intervention.

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ABSTRAK

Dalam membangun perkembangan desa, diperlukan pihak-pihak yang mampu bersinergi untuk program-program yang akan diselenggarakan di sebuah desa, seperti halnya Kepala Desa, perangkat desa, juga masyarakatnya sendiri. Desa Sukahurip merupakan Desa yang terletak di Kabupaten Pangandaran, yang saat ini sedang melakukan pembangunan berkelanjutan. Dalam prosesnya, pembangunan tersebut dibantu oleh Kepala Desa sebagai pemimpin dalam pengelolannya. Kepala Desa seringkali mengikutsertakan masyarakat untuk ikut andil dalam pembuatan keputusan. Peran pemimpin di sini penting dalam memenuhi semua layanan tersebut mulai dari proses perencanaan maupun pelaksanaan. Pemimpin harus menerapkan gaya kepemimpinan yang tepat agar dapat mendorong atau menggerakkan masyarakatnya sehingga dapat mencapai visi misi desa tersebut sebagai desa yang maju. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan penelitian secara deskriptif mengenai gaya kepemimpinan yang diterapkan oleh Kepala Desa Sukahurip, yang nantinya hasil penelitian ini bisa dimanfaatkan untuk Kepala Desa berikutnya dalam mengoptimalkan potensi desanya untuk menjalankan pembangunan berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan teknik pengambilan datanya adalah dengan cara wawancara dan observasi. Metode pengumpulan data penelitian ini dilakukan melalui wawancara dengan mengadakan pertemuan dua orang untuk bertukar informasi dan ide melalui tanya jawab, sehingga dapat dikonstruksikan makna dalam suatu topik tertentu, dan observasi, yang merupakan pengumpulan data dengan cara mengamati subjek atau fenomena yang diteliti tanpa campur tangan langsung.

Kata Kunci: Daerah Pangandaran; demokratis; kepala desa; kepemimpinan

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INTRODUCTION

An organization consists of a group of people who naturally have different desires and needs. The role of the leader is crucial in fulfilling the diverse needs and desires of the organization's members. The leader is also responsible for connecting the needs and desires of the members with those of the organization. In other words, an organization serves as a means through which individuals can collectively achieve goals established within the organization (Castañer & Oliveira, 2020; Stephens *et al.*, 2020). In running the organization, it is necessary to make efforts to carry out specific tasks as part of organizational management. These efforts include planning, organizing, structuring, directing, and supervising human resources.

To achieve the established goals, cooperation among members is required, which is carried out through both verbal and nonverbal behavior, namely, effective communication. Communication can be defined as a message sent from one person to another through symbols, such as words or expressions, that convey specific emotions and meanings. Communication is essential to the existence of an organization because with the help of communication, managers can coordinate the human and physical elements of the organization into an effective and functioning unit (Mukhtar *et al.*, 2020; Smith *et al.*, 2019).

A village is a unit of government granted ordinary autonomy rights, thus making it a legal entity. This differs from a *kelurahan*, which is a unit of government that merely serves as an extension of the state or city government administration. Therefore, a *kelurahan* is not a legal entity, but merely a venue for the implementation of local administrative services of a regency or city. In contrast, a village is a territory with defined boundaries as a unit of customary law community, which has the right to govern and manage the affairs of the local community based on its origin. Villages are considered very important because the rights of origin and traditional rights (*adat law*) still apply in the village to govern and manage the interests of the local community and play a role in realizing the ideals of independence based on the UUD 1945 (Nainggolan, 2018). Villages existed before the formation of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia. As a sign of their existence, the explanation of *UUD 1945 Pasal 18* states that "Within the territory of Indonesia, there are approximately 250 *Zelfbesturende landschappen* and *Volksgemeenschappen*." Therefore their existence must be recognized and guaranteed within the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, with leadership under a village head.

According to *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 6 Tahun 2014 tentang Desa Pasal 26*, the Village Head is responsible for administering village governance, implementing village development, fostering village community life, and empowering the village community (see: https://www.dpr.go.id/dokjdi/document/uu/UU_2014_6.pdf). The fundamental issue in building a government—whether at the central, regional, or village level—is how to create an enabling environment that fosters a society capable of actively participating in every village development activity. In this regard, the leadership role of each village head is essential. The same applies to the role of the Head of Sukahurip Village.

Sukahurip Village is one of the villages in Pangandaran Regency, West Java, located on the border between Balater Village to the north and Pangandaran to the south. The village is filled with rice fields and located near the sea, so a portion of its residents work as farmers and fishermen. In addition, Sukahurip Village is classified as a *madya* village, which means it possesses social, economic, and ecological resources. However, these resources are not optimally utilized, thus requiring special attention for sustainable village development. This development must be initiated by a leader who is capable of empowering all village potentials and transforming the village into a high-quality one in terms of education, health, community empowerment, and environmental protection.

A village offers various services and facilities to meet the needs of its local community, including health services, education, infrastructure, administration, and sanitation. The role of the leader is crucial in fulfilling all these services, from planning to implementation. A leader must apply an appropriate leadership style to encourage and mobilize the community, enabling them to achieve the village's vision and mission of becoming a developed village. Therefore, a descriptive study is needed on the leadership style employed by the Head of Sukahurip Village, the results of which can later be used by future village heads to optimize their village's potential in achieving sustainable development.

This research was conducted in conjunction with the community service activity of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia in Sukahurip Village, located in Pangandaran Regency. The activity was an implementation of research previously conducted by the author.

Literature Review

Leadership

According to ecological leadership theory, a leader must understand and adapt to the demands of the environment and organizational context in order to achieve the desired goals. This theory also emphasizes that a leader must recognize and adapt to the dynamics of their environment, taking into account various factors such as organizational culture, task demands, and the needs of subordinates. [Taufiq dan Wardani \(2020\)](#) state that character allows trust to emerge, while trust enables leadership to arise. Leadership can be seen as a means to influence and direct individuals or groups of people to work together willingly to achieve specific goals.

Kartono, in his book titled "*Pemimpin dan Kepemimpinan*" (Leader and Leadership), states that a person can be considered a leader if they meet the following criteria;

1. Analytical ability to thoroughly analyze situations and conditions.
2. Communication skills used in giving commands, directions, and advice, meaning that a leader must master proper and effective communication techniques.
3. Courage to carry out their duties and responsibilities as a leader who holds a high position within the organization.
4. Listening ability to listen to the opinions of subordinates so that they not only do what they are supposed to do, but also have their thoughts and ideas heard.
5. Assertiveness to deal with subordinates or other matters that are not by established regulations.

Meanwhile, according to [Purwanto et al. \(2020\)](#), the dimensions of leadership can be observed through an individual's behavior, communication, capacity, quality maintenance, and self-development engagement.

Leadership Style

Leadership styles play various roles, ranging from conflict resolution and decision-making to information transfer, influence, and ultimately building relationships through effective communication ([Bhatti et al., 2021](#); [Mansaray, 2019](#)). Each leader has a different leadership style. Differences in leadership styles among leaders are typically influenced by several factors, including environment, customs, culture, and religion ([Akanji et al., 2020](#)). A leadership style is an approach or method by which a leader manages an organization. However, it is temporary, making it difficult to evaluate a leader using only one specific leadership style.

Autocratic Leadership Style

“Autocrat” comes from the words “*autos*” (self-owned) and “*kratos*” (power); thus, “autocrat” means absolute control. Authoritative leadership is based on absolute power and the necessity of obedience (Mattayang, 2019). A leader who adopts this leadership style has complete control over decision-making as well as the execution of actions. Sari (2018) outlines the following indicators of the autocratic leadership style.

1. Centralized Decision-Making
The control held is absolute and leaves little room for discussion or contribution from others. According to Lee *et al.* (2021), leaders with this style ignore the needs of their subordinates and tend to communicate in a one-way manner.
2. Detailed Delegation of Tasks to Subordinates
When subordinates are assigned tasks, the leader provides detailed instructions that must align with the leader’s expectations.
3. Subjective Attitude
In dealing with subordinates, the leader must balance personal feelings with professionalism. For example, if a subordinate has had a past conflict with the leader, the leader may rate their work poorly during performance evaluations, even though the work objectively follows the guidelines.
4. Lip Service
At times, the leader may allow subordinates to participate or express opinions, but this is only for show, as the final decision still rests with the leader.
5. Strict Supervision of Subordinates’ Work
The leader closely monitors everything that employees do.

Militaristic Leadership Style

This type of leadership is often found in military environments, where typically leaders of this type are overly concerned with maintaining authority and position, making them appear rigid and lacking in communication with their subordinates. Sari (2018), in her research, stated that the indicators of the militaristic leadership style are as follows;

1. Command-Based Instruction System
This system implies that the leader is rigid and strict, demanding absolute obedience from subordinates.
2. Favors Formal Activities
This point means that a leader who adopts a militaristic leadership style always commemorates major events, typically through ceremonies or other rituals.
3. Enforces Absolute Rules
This type of leadership enforces absolute rules that subordinates and the community must obey, so the leader tends not to appreciate suggestions, proposals, advice, or criticism directed toward them.

Paternalistic Leadership Style

This type of leader views themselves as a parental figure, while subordinates are regarded as their children. A key trait of this leadership style is that the leader is someone who is seen as an elder and respected; likewise, subordinates are appointed based on age or lineage, such as being descendants of tribal leaders. According to Bai *et al.* (2019), the indicators of the paternalistic leadership style are as follows;

1. Overprotective Toward the People

Hal ini disebabkan karena pemimpin tersebut menganggap rakyatnya itu sebagai manusia yang belum dewasa sehingga selalu berada dalam pengawasan.

2. Rarely Gives Opportunities to Make Their Own Decisions

This is because the leader does not want decisions to result in mistakes and does not encourage initiative from the people.

3. Acts All-Knowing and Always Right

Because the leader assumes the role of a parent, they believe they know everything and claim always to be right, while their subordinates are seen as lacking. As a result, all subordinates must obey their orders without question.

Participative Leadership Style

A leader with this style consistently involves their members in collaborative work, primarily by decentralizing authority. Participative leadership is a form of leadership that decentralizes authority and empowers team members to contribute to decision-making. The leader continuously engages members to collaborate with them (Utari & Hadi, 2020). In this style, the leader is collaborative and encourages active participation from members in the decision-making process. The leader seeks input, ideas, and contributions, but ultimately retains control over the final decision.

Laissez-faire Leadership Style

This leadership style allows freedom in decision-making and problem-solving. The laissez-faire type permits subordinates to do whatever they wish, with full responsibility. Leadership positions are often obtained through improper means, such as nepotism (Akuffo & Kivipöld, 2019; Arici *et al.*, 2020). The characteristics of this leadership style are as follows:

4. Subordinates are given the freedom to take actions they deem necessary by their respective roles.
5. The leader is not involved in activities.
6. All work and responsibilities are delegated to subordinates.
7. Unable to provide proper coordination and supervision.
8. Lacks authority, making them neither feared nor respected by subordinates.
9. In practice, the leader does not carry out leadership duties and merely serves as a symbolic figure.

Democratic Leadership Style

Democratic leadership is a leadership style that fosters active team participation in decision-making processes, though the leader does not fully control the process. Instead, the leader collaborates with team members to formulate decisions. Mattayang (2019) states that democratic leadership refers to the ability to influence others to willingly cooperate in various ways to achieve common goals or to carry out actions mutually agreed upon by both subordinates and the leader. This style is sometimes referred to as subordinate-centered leadership, egalitarian leadership, participative leadership, or consultative leadership. A democratic leader consults with subordinates in formulating decisions together.

Saleem *et al.* (2020) identify the following indicators of democratic leadership style, which have been adjusted to reflect their characteristics:

1. Decisions Are Made Together

In the decision-making process, various perspectives, knowledge, and experiences from community members or village officials are integrated. A democratic leader engages in this practice because

involving multiple viewpoints and minimizing individual bias leads to better outcomes. Additionally, when community members are involved in the process, their support and commitment to the decisions increase. When people feel their participation matters, the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of development efforts improve (Kelley et al., 2020). This is a key method used by democratic leaders to gain support from members.

2. Appreciates the Potential of Each Subordinate

Valuing potential means recognizing the worth of an individual's or group's abilities. This includes acknowledging skills, talents, and contributions. Appreciating potential is also a foundation for motivating, supporting, and helping individuals or groups to grow.

3. Listens to Suggestions and Criticism from Subordinates

A democratic leader can listen to suggestions and criticism attentively and openly, showing active interest through eye contact, nodding, and other supportive gestures. When receiving criticism, the leader remains calm, does not become defensive or retaliate, and thinks before responding.

4. Collaborates with Subordinates

Cooperation between the leader and subordinates is key to the success of any organization. It is a reciprocal relationship built on active collaboration, effective communication, and mutual understanding. Strong cooperation fosters a positive and productive working environment.

Village Head

According to *Pasal 2 UU Desa*, it states: “*Pemerintah Desa adalah Kepala Desa atau yang disebut dengan nama lain dibantu perangkat Desa sebagai unsur penyelenggara Pemerintahan Desa.*” From this article, it can be understood that the administration of village governance holds authority over a particular area. Additionally, the Village is led by a Village Head, who is supported by village officials to facilitate public services (Rohman, 2020).

The *Kepala Desa* is a government official at the village level, holding primary responsibility for managing administrative affairs within the village. In various regions, the *Kepala Desa* may be known by different titles such as *Lurah*, *Mukhtar*, *Kuwu*, and others. The election system for *Kepala Desa* typically occurs every six years, unless there are changes in national laws or local regulations that determine a different term of office. The duties and responsibilities of a *Kepala Desa* include managing village governance, making decisions, implementing development programs, delivering public services, and representing the village to external stakeholders. According to Lagantondo (2020), the *Kepala Desa* has the authority to carry out their responsibilities as follows:

1. Lead the administration of village governance based on policies jointly formulated with the *BPD* (Village Consultative Body).
2. Propose village regulations (*Peraturan Desa*) for approval by the *BPD*.
3. Prepare and submit a draft of the village regulation concerning the Village Revenue and Expenditure Budget (*APBD Desa*) to be discussed and coordinated with the *BPD*.
4. Promote the welfare and livelihood of the village community.
5. Encourage the development of the rural economy.
6. Coordinate village development through community participation.
7. Represent the village in legal matters, both in and outside of court, and may appoint legal representation as required.

8. Exercise other powers by the provisions of prevailing laws and regulations.

In carrying out their duties and authorities, a *Kepala Desa* (Village Head) is obligated to:

1. To uphold and practice Pancasila, implement the *Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945*, and preserve the unity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI).
2. To improve the welfare of the village community.
3. To maintain public order and security.
4. To understand and apply democratic principles in village governance.

The leadership style of a Village Head, as a leader, must encompass the mindset, energy, and personality needed to create a positive environment for building cooperative working relationships within an organization, as well as to provide adequate supervision in guiding subordinates toward predetermined goals within a set timeframe.

In its implementation, the Village Head may not be able to complete their duties within the designated timeframe. This may be due to several factors, as explained in Pasal 54 Ayat (1) *Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 43 Tahun 2014* sebagaimana telah diubah oleh *Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 47 Tahun 2015* tentang Desa, which states that a Village Head may be dismissed under the following conditions: (a) death, (b) voluntary resignation, or (c) dismissal. Point (a) refers to the Village Head's inability to continue their leadership due to death. Point (b) indicates that the Village Head chooses to pursue another occupation or activity of their own volition and submits a formal request to resign. About point (c), the dismissal may occur due to prolonged illness, inability to carry out leadership responsibilities, or involvement in illegal activities (see: <https://jdih.baliprov.go.id/produk-hukum/peraturan-perundang-undangan/pp/23226>).

METHODS

This type of research is qualitative research. Qualitative research is a method based on the philosophy of positivism, used to study objects in natural conditions, where the researcher acts as the key instrument and selects data sources purposefully. Qualitative research is a method used to examine phenomena in natural settings, with the researcher functioning as the primary instrument (Busetto *et al.*, 2020). The purpose of descriptive research is to provide a clear depiction of what is being observed. One of the characteristics of qualitative research is its descriptive nature. This means that the data collected is in the form of words or images rather than numbers. These data may come from interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, videos, personal documents, or other records. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach because the author aims to portray the actual conditions of leadership style in Sukahurip Village, Pangandaran Regency.

The data collection techniques employed in this research included interviews and observation. According to Roberts (2020), an interview is a meeting between two individuals to exchange information and ideas through a question-and-answer process, allowing meaning to be constructed around a specific topic. The second technique used was observation, which involves collecting data by observing the subject or phenomenon under study without direct interference.

The source of data used in this study is primary data, or original data collected directly by the researcher to address the research problem. In this study, data were obtained through interviews with informants and direct observation. The research was conducted in Sukahurip Village, Pangandaran Subdistrict, Pangandaran Regency, and took place over one month, from July to August 2023.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the results of interviews with several informants, it was found that the Village Head had made significant changes to the village, including the provision of electricity during his previous term. In the following year, a large-scale village development project is planned, covering infrastructure and other village facilities, to strengthen the village's visibility and presence further. Based on the observations conducted, the leadership style of the Village Head of Sukahurip Village, Pangandaran Subdistrict, Pangandaran Regency, is uniquely his own.

Behavior

Based on the statement from the Village Head himself, as follows:

"Saya tahu potensi desa ini banyak sekali, salah satunya menjadi desa peternak domba dan sapi. Dari sisi lokasi yang memiliki banyak lahan ini sangat berpotensi, belum lagi letaknya yang strategis, dekat Pangandaran sebagai pusat perbelanjaan untuk ajang promosi. Namun saya tak bisa memaksa mereka untuk melakukannya. Tetap saja mereka bersikeras berpendapat ini-itu (menolak) dan berkeinginan aset hewan tersebut hanya dijadikan peliharaan semata."

From this statement, it can be inferred that if Sukahurip Village were to develop into a livestock farming village, it would have a direct impact on the community while also elevating the village's profile as an entrepreneurial village. Despite the great potential, the residents criticized the Village Head and rejected his initiative. Nevertheless, the Village Head respected their opinions.

In demonstrating his willingness to communicate, the Village Head of Sukahurip utilized various nonverbal cues, including:

1. Maintaining steady eye contact with the speaker,
2. Using facial expressions such as nodding or raising his eyebrows to indicate understanding,
3. Displaying open body posture—sitting upright or standing with open arms—and occasionally smoking to ease the atmosphere.

Additionally, the Village Head is multilingual, speaking Sundanese, Javanese, and Indonesian, and is adept at using humor that is culturally appropriate in each context.

In addition, the Village Head of Sukahurip is known to have an energetic personality, as illustrated by an informant's statement:

"Bapak itu aktif sekali, orangnya suka main kemana-mana. 'Kan listrik Desa pun ada karena hasil Bapak main itu. Itu masih listrik, belum masuk hal-hal kecil lainnya, terlalu banyak."

In this context, the term *'playing around'* refers to the coordination efforts carried out by the Village Head with external parties of equal or higher authority. These efforts ultimately yielded tangible outcomes that brought about significant improvements in the area under his leadership. According to Nordbäck and Espinosa (2019), coordination in leadership is highly effective and well-received by followers.

The Village Head of Sukahurip is known for his active involvement both inside and outside the village. Whether attending large-scale events or small community gatherings, he consistently arrives before the event begins. A statement from an active community member of Sukahurip Village supports this:

“Yang kami senangi di diri bapak itu, bapak selalu on-time. Bahkan di acara pengajian warga saja bapak hadir sesuai jadwal.”

Capability

Based on the interview results, a key informant stated:

“Setiap Pak Kuwu membuat keputusan, BPD hadir. Perangkat desa hadir, perwakilan masyarakat juga terkadang ikut diundang, karena warga di sini senang sekali untuk berpendapat. Jadi terkadang keputusan yang sudah diputuskan bisa dikomplain oleh warga.”

In this context, the informant provided a case example of a collective decision-making process, specifically when discussing the future of a dam that had previously served as a tourist destination but had become inactive during the COVID-19 pandemic. The villagers were asked whether it should be restored as a tourist attraction to boost community income or simply maintained as a leisure spot for residents. Similarly, the discussion extended to other potential tourist sites within the village, such as *Curug Bojong*. However, the final decision—agreed upon unanimously—was not to pursue its redevelopment due to various natural and logistical obstacles. This is in line with a study previously conducted by Jaya et al., titled *“Strategi pengelolaan objek wisata Curug Bojong oleh pemerintah desa dalam meningkatkan pendapatan asli desa di Desa Sukahurip Kecamatan Pangandaran Kabupaten Pangandaran”* (“Management Strategy of the Curug Bojong Tourism Site by the Village Government in Increasing Village Original Revenue in Sukahurip Village, Pangandaran District, Pangandaran Regency”), which explored the strategies employed by the Sukahurip village government in utilizing Curug Bojong as a tourism site. The study concluded that the site’s management remained suboptimal, primarily due to a lack of management resources. Based on the interview findings, the researcher concludes that in every decision-making process, the village head involves the community in open dialogue and engages all relevant parties. Democratic decision-making tends to be more widely accepted (Lindner & Aichholzer, 2020; Motta, 2021).

In addition, the Village Head of Sukahurip demonstrates strong capabilities in managing resources, budgets, and village programs. He can plan, organize, and supervise various activities and projects effectively. For instance, when the researcher attended a community event in one of the hamlets alongside the Village Head, he publicly stated that a significant work program had been planned for the area, namely the construction of a connecting pedestrian bridge. He presented the prepared budget and outlined the necessary resources. The Village Head of Sukahurip also possesses strong interpersonal skills, as shown by his ability to communicate warmly, often inserting humorous remarks or lighthearted moments that foster laughter and ease in public interactions.

Quality

The Village Head of Sukahurip demonstrates creative and innovative thinking abilities, as highlighted by several key informants:

“Jika ada masalah dan sudah bingung dengan solusinya, lalu konsultasi ke Bapak, itu pasti ada jalan keluarnya. Jadi Bapak itu karena pengalaman bertemu orangnya sudah banyak, jadi memecahkan masalah juga serasa mudah-mudah aja.”

“Bapak itu berkali-kali punya ide-ide baru untuk Desa, tapi masyarakatnya yang susah dan gak mau beradaptasi lah gitu.”

The researcher personally attended a routine meeting between the Village Head and the community to make financial decisions in one of the hamlets. In the meeting, residents were very active in voicing their opinions and arguing about the appropriate amount of cash contributions. Some suggested higher amounts, while others strongly opposed and engaged in debate. After a lengthy discussion, the Village Head of Sukahurip conducted an assessment and created a safe environment for expressing differing opinions by mediating between the parties. A leader must be able to foster a conducive and safe space for open dialogue. (Potipiroon & Ford, 2021; Zhao *et al.*, 2023).

Communication

In collaborating with subordinates, the Village Head maintains open lines of communication to receive suggestions and feedback. Additionally, the Village Head involves subordinates in both the planning and implementation processes to instill a sense of responsibility for the established work programs.

Discussion

Based on the findings, these aspects align with the indicators of a democratic leadership style, as the Village Head of Sukahurip carries out four key actions: making decisions collectively, valuing the potential of subordinates, listening to suggestions and criticism, and collaborating with subordinates. The following is an explanation of the four fulfilled indicators.

Decision Making

The primary indicator of a leader's leadership style lies in how they make decisions regarding work programs or other matters. An ideal leader adopts a democratic leadership style, in which decision-making generally involves multiple parties. In every decision-making process, whether on a large or small scale, the Village Head of Sukahurip engages in dialogue with community members and involves all related elements. The researcher conducted a study on the activities carried out by the village community, in collaboration with the Village Head of Sukahurip, including regular meetings.

The Village Head is a leader who plays a crucial role in decision-making during meetings. This process is conducted in a transparent and participatory manner, taking into account the interests of the village community. Therefore, in every meeting held by the residents, the Village Head of Sukahurip is present to moderate the session, facilitating the delivery of information and open discussions among stakeholders. According to Goldsmith *et al.* (2021), a leader must be able to unify diverse opinions into a mutually agreed-upon consensus.

Appreciating the Potential of Each Subordinate

The Village Head of Sukahurip encourages dialogue with the community and involves all relevant parties. The researcher conducted a study on various activities carried out by the village community in collaboration with the Village Head. Based on the findings, the Village Head of Sukahurip is considered an open-minded, energetic, humorous, and punctual individual. Furthermore, the Village Head proposed a candidate from the younger generation for the position of hamlet head, demonstrating his appreciation for the potential of his subordinates.

1. Providing Support

The Village Head of Sukahurip provides both emotional and practical support to subordinates, such as offering guidance and the necessary resources to help them perform their duties effectively.

2. Appointing Youth as Hamlet Head

Appreciating the potential of subordinates means recognizing and valuing the abilities, skills, talents, and contributions of each individual under one's leadership. Sukahurip has one of the most underdeveloped hamlets in the area, which is now led by a youth hamlet head. According to *Permendagri Nomor 83 Tahun 2015*, the position of hamlet head is appointed by the Regent based on the recommendation of the Village Head. Furthermore, *Undang-Undang No. 40 Tahun 2009, Pasal 16, Bab V*, states that “youth play an active role as a moral force, social control, and agent of change in all aspects of national development.” Based on this law, appointing a young leader to oversee a disadvantaged hamlet is an appropriate and strategic decision.

3. Assigning Additional Responsibilities

To acknowledge the potential of competent subordinates, the Village Head of Sukahurip provides them with opportunities for further growth by assigning them additional responsibilities related to ongoing programs.

4. Recognizing Achievements and Contributions

The Village Head of Sukahurip has a unique approach to recognizing the achievements of subordinates. Rather than offering public praise or open acknowledgment during team meetings, he prefers to express appreciation privately and personally. For example, during one-on-one meetings, he conveys recognition and gratitude for their contributions. If the subordinate is deemed highly capable, the Village Head may recommend them for promotions or other opportunities.

According to [Einola and Alvesson \(2021\)](#), a good leader is someone who can accept opinions and criticism from their subordinates and followers.

Listening to Suggestions and Criticism

The Village Head of Sukahurip demonstrates a willingness to listen to suggestions and criticism from both subordinates and the local community. This is evidenced by his response when offering a development proposal to the villagers. Although the idea aimed to improve the village, the residents rejected it, and he respected the majority's decision. In addition, his nonverbal communication during discussions—such as maintaining eye contact, using expressive facial gestures, and adopting an open body posture—indicates that he actively listens to those speaking to him. These behaviors align with the indicators of a democratic leadership style.

Collaboration

The effectiveness of work can be measured by how well continuity is maintained between various parties involved. The researcher conducted interviews and observations with several individuals from both the local community and the village apparatus. From these interviews, several conclusions were drawn and reviewed about the following collaborative activities:

1. Planning with Subordinates

When implementing long-term work programs, it is crucial to develop effective strategies to shape the project plan. The Village Head of Sukahurip initiated the program implementation by conducting planning activities in collaboration with the team.

2. Collaboration

In addition to collaborating with subordinates, the Village Head of Sukahurip also engages with the broader village community through internal village events, such as religious gatherings (*pengajian*), communal meals (*selamatan*), competitions, community service activities (*kerja bakti*), and other

gatherings. Furthermore, the Village Head collaborates with external parties to promote the overall development of the village.

3. Open Communication

To maintain an open channel of communication for suggestions and feedback from both subordinates and the community, the Village Head of Sukahurip applies a two-way communication approach. This includes holding regular meetings, establishing efficient communication channels, and responding to questions regarding issues raised by the subordinates.

According to [Tarigan et al. \(2021\)](#), collaboration skills are essential for a leader to build coordination with both internal and external stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research conducted, the following conclusion can be drawn: the Village Head of Sukahurip is known to possess a democratic leadership style. In its implementation, the leadership of the Village Head does not always run smoothly. The village community consists of individuals with different characteristics and strong personal beliefs. Even so, the four pillars of leadership—behavior, capability, quality, and communication—demonstrated by the Village Head of Sukahurip align with the indicators of democratic leadership, namely; 1) decision-making carried out collectively, 2) appreciating the potential of subordinates, 3) listening to criticism and suggestions, and 4) carrying out cooperation.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this article. The author affirms that the data and content of this article are free from plagiarism.

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