

The Impact of Leadership and Competence on the Effectiveness of Village Fund Management in Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict, Tojo Una-Una District

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the influence of leadership and competence on the effectiveness of village fund management in Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict, Tojo Una-Una District. The specific objectives are: (1) to examine the effect of village head leadership on the effectiveness of village funds, (2) to explore the impact of village apparatus competence on the effectiveness of village funds, and (3) to analyze the simultaneous influence of both village head leadership and apparatus competence on the effectiveness of village funds. The research utilizes a survey approach with a quantitative method. A total of 117 respondents, including village government officials and members of the Village Consultative Body (BPD), were selected from Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict. Data analysis was conducted using multiple regression analysis with the assistance of SPSS software. The results show that: (1) village head leadership has a negative and significant effect on the effectiveness of village funds, contributing 11.9%, (2) village apparatus competence has a positive and significant effect on the effectiveness of village funds, contributing 45.6%, and (3) both village head leadership and apparatus competence together have a positive and significant effect on the effectiveness of village funds, contributing 51.2%. These findings suggest that enhancing leadership quality and the competence of village apparatuses is crucial for improving the management and effectiveness of village funds in Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict.

Keywords Village Head Leadership, Village Apparatus Competence, Village Fund Effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelagic country with a vast number of villages that are pivotal in the political and administrative system. As of 2022, the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) recorded approximately 83,794 villages and urban villages (kelurahan) across Indonesia. These villages serve as the fundamental units in the nation's socio-economic and political development. At the local level, villages are vital in advancing the economic and social welfare of their communities. Through community empowerment and local development initiatives, villages are essential in advancing broader national goals.

The central role of villages in the national development framework was further emphasized under President Joko Widodo's administration through the Nawa Cita (Nine Agenda) in 2014-2019. The third agenda, "Building Indonesia from the Periphery by Strengthening Regions and Villages within the Unitary State," emphasized the importance of empowering villages as central components of national progress. As a response to this, Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages was enacted to grant villages greater autonomy in managing their affairs and governance. The law empowered villages to establish governance structures that cater to their specific needs and circumstances, promoting local decision-making and development.



In line with this vision, the Government of Indonesia introduced the Village Fund (Dana Desa) program, which has been allocated since 2015. The Village Fund is sourced from the National Budget (APBN) and is distributed through the Regional Budget (APBD) to fund local governance, infrastructure development, and community empowerment projects. The Government Regulation No. 60/2014 further outlines the principles for managing Village Funds. It stipulates that funds must be used efficiently, economically, effectively, transparently, and responsibly. The priority use of these funds aims to improve public services, reduce poverty, boost economic growth in rural areas, bridge development disparities between villages, and empower the community as the primary driver of development.

The distribution of the Village Fund is based on a formula that divides 77% of the funds equally across all villages. The remaining 23% is allocated proportionally, considering factors such as population, poverty levels, geographical challenges, and the size of the village. An additional 3% is specifically directed towards villages classified as disadvantaged. On average, each village receives approximately IDR 900 million annually. The sheer scale of Village Fund allocations demands careful and responsible management by local governments to ensure that funds are used efficiently and for the benefit of the community.

However, despite the substantial financial resources allocated to villages, challenges remain in ensuring that these funds are used effectively. The implementation of the Village Fund program has faced issues related to transparency, accountability, and the management capacity of local governments. In Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict, Tojo Una-Una District, where the Village Fund is vital for the development of local infrastructure and social welfare, the effective management of funds is crucial. It is in this context that this study seeks to explore the role of leadership and competence in the effectiveness of Village Fund management in Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict.

This subdistrict, which consists of nine villages—Popolii, Olilan, Dolong A, Dolong B, Loe, Kolami, Tutung, Tiga Pulau, and Luok—has been receiving Village Fund allocations since 2015. The research focuses on the period between 2021 and 2023 to assess how funds have been utilized in these villages. Despite significant Village Fund allocations, the effectiveness of their management has varied, with some villages experiencing issues related to fund mismanagement, lack of transparency, and inadequate project outcomes.

In this context, the leadership of village heads and the competence of village apparatus play crucial roles in ensuring that Village Funds are managed effectively and in alignment with the needs of the community. Leadership is often seen as the key factor in providing direction, fostering collaboration, and ensuring that resources are used in ways that are consistent with the development goals of the village. Competence, on the other hand, refers to the skills, knowledge, and abilities of village officials in managing the Village Funds and executing development projects. The effectiveness of Village Fund management can, therefore, be heavily influenced by the quality of leadership and the competence of the apparatus involved.

The current study is designed to address this gap by investigating the influence of village head leadership and apparatus competence on the effectiveness of Village Fund management in Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict. By understanding these dynamics, the research aims to provide valuable insights into how local governance practices can be improved to enhance the effectiveness of the Village Fund program.

Leadership in any organization, including village governance, plays a central role in determining the direction and success of various programs and initiatives. In the context of Village Fund management, the leadership of the village head is particularly important, as it sets the tone for how the funds are allocated and managed. Effective leadership involves not only overseeing the implementation of development projects but also ensuring that funds are used in a transparent and accountable manner.

According to Rivai and Deddy (2014), effective leadership requires a range of skills, including the ability to communicate effectively, motivate others, innovate, and make decisions that benefit the entire community. The leadership style of a village head can significantly influence the behavior of other village officials and the overall management of Village Funds. In many cases, leadership decisions shape the priorities for funding allocation, as well as the process through which projects are planned, executed, and monitored.

In Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict, some village heads have demonstrated strong leadership, actively engaging with the community to identify priorities and ensuring that funds are allocated in alignment with local needs. However, challenges persist in other villages where the leadership may not be as proactive or transparent, leading to inefficiencies in fund allocation and the failure to meet development goals.

Effective leadership also involves fostering collaboration between village officials and the community, ensuring that everyone has a voice in decision-making processes. This approach not only promotes transparency but also enhances the likelihood that Village Funds will be used for projects that have broad community support.

The competence of village apparatus is equally essential in the management of Village Funds. Competence refers to the knowledge, skills, and abilities that village officials possess, which enable them to manage funds effectively. In particular, competence in financial management, project planning, and community engagement is crucial for ensuring that Village Funds are utilized optimally.

Research by Hutapea and Nurianna (2017) suggests that the competence of government officials is a key determinant of the success of local development programs, including the management of village funds. Village apparatuses with higher levels of competence are more likely to make informed decisions regarding fund allocation, project implementation, and monitoring, which leads to better outcomes for the community.

In the case of Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict, the competence of village officials in areas such as financial reporting, use of technology, and stakeholder engagement plays a critical role in the success or failure of Village Fund programs. Many of the villages in this subdistrict face challenges related to the digital literacy of their apparatus, with some officials struggling to use modern tools for financial reporting and project management. In



such cases, capacity-building efforts and training programs are necessary to enhance the skills and knowledge of village officials, enabling them to manage funds more effectively.

Additionally, competence also extends to understanding the regulatory framework surrounding Village Funds. Village officials who are well-versed in the legal and procedural requirements of fund management are more likely to adhere to regulations and ensure that funds are used in a compliant and transparent manner.

Despite the positive intentions of the Village Fund program, several challenges hinder the effectiveness of fund management at the village level. These challenges include issues related to governance, lack of transparency, inefficiencies in planning and implementation, and insufficient oversight.

One of the most significant challenges is the lack of transparency in the management of Village Funds. In some villages, the community is not adequately informed about how funds are being used, leading to mistrust and dissatisfaction with the development process. The lack of transparency can also result in funds being diverted for purposes other than those originally intended, such as personal gain or favoritism towards certain groups within the village.

Moreover, the planning and implementation of development projects often suffer from inefficiencies. In some cases, village development plans are not aligned with the actual needs of the community, leading to the allocation of funds for projects that do not address the most pressing concerns. Additionally, there may be delays in project implementation due to poor coordination between village officials, contractors, and the community.

These challenges emphasize the need for better leadership and enhanced competence among village apparatus to ensure that Village Funds are managed effectively. By improving leadership practices and building the competence of village officials, it is possible to overcome these obstacles and ensure that Village Funds are used to drive sustainable development in rural areas.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the influence of leadership and competence on the effectiveness of Village Fund management in Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict, Tojo Una-Una District. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Analyze the influence of village head leadership on the effectiveness of Village Funds.
2. Assess the effect of village apparatus competence on the effectiveness of Village Funds.
3. Investigate the combined effect of village head leadership and apparatus competence on the effectiveness of Village Funds.

The study seeks to provide insights into how improvements in leadership and competence can lead to more effective management of Village Funds, ultimately contributing to the overall development of rural communities in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership in Village Fund Management

Leadership is a central theme in the management of Village Funds. The role of the village head (Kepala Desa) is particularly crucial, as they are often the decision-makers in terms of fund allocation, project initiation, and the overall direction of village development.

According to Yukl (2010), leadership is defined as the process of influencing others to achieve common goals, which is a critical component in managing resources such as Village Funds. Effective leadership in this context is necessary for ensuring that the funds are allocated to the most pressing needs of the community and used efficiently.

Rivai and Deddy (2014) describe several key dimensions of leadership that influence effective governance, including motivation, communication, innovation, and control. These aspects are particularly relevant for village heads, as they must inspire their apparatus and community members to participate in decision-making processes, maintain transparency, and prioritize community needs. Strong leadership also requires the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and challenges, particularly in rural settings where resources are limited, and communities face unique difficulties.

Effective leadership ensures that local governments, such as village heads, can foster a collaborative environment, encourage community participation, and oversee the proper use of public funds. A study by Nadiroğlu and Mert (2016) highlights that leadership style directly impacts the management of public funds in rural areas. In situations where the village head's leadership style is authoritarian or opaque, it often leads to ineffective management of resources. On the other hand, a participatory and transparent leadership style helps in mobilizing local resources and engaging the community, ultimately leading to more effective fund management.

Competence of Village Apparatus

The competence of village apparatus (officials) is another crucial factor influencing the effectiveness of Village Fund management. Competence is defined as the ability of individuals to perform their duties effectively, based on knowledge, skills, and attitudes. According to Robbins and Judge (2013), competence is directly linked to job performance, and in the context of local government, it affects the efficiency and transparency of fund management processes.

Competence in this context includes a wide range of skills, from financial management to public administration, project planning, and community engagement. Village officials, particularly those responsible for managing Village Funds, must have a solid understanding of financial systems, government regulations, and project management techniques. Additionally, they need to be familiar with the needs of the community they serve to ensure that the allocated funds address the most urgent issues.

Hutapea and Nurianna (2017) emphasize that the competence of village apparatus has a significant impact on the effectiveness of local development programs, including the management of Village Funds. Competent village officials are better equipped to prepare comprehensive development plans, allocate resources effectively, and oversee project implementation. Without proper training and education, village apparatus may struggle to manage funds effectively, leading to inefficiencies, delays, and poor outcomes for the community.

Furthermore, research by Dewi et al. (2021) found that the competence of village apparatus directly influences the implementation and sustainability of programs funded by



Village Funds. Inadequate competence, especially in financial management and reporting, often leads to mismanagement or even corruption. Therefore, building the capacity of village apparatus through training programs and workshops is essential to improving the effectiveness of Village Fund management.

Good Governance and Transparency

Good governance is a critical concept in public administration and plays an essential role in ensuring the effective management of public funds, including Village Funds. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2009), good governance is characterized by transparency, accountability, participation, and responsiveness. These principles are vital for managing Village Funds effectively, as they ensure that funds are used for their intended purpose and that the community can hold village officials accountable.

One of the key challenges in Village Fund management is the lack of transparency in how funds are allocated and spent. Transparency is fundamental in ensuring that village heads and apparatus act in the public's best interest and not for personal gain. As stated by Luthra (2017), transparent governance increases the level of trust between the government and the community. When village residents are aware of how funds are being spent and have the opportunity to provide feedback, they are more likely to support development initiatives and ensure that funds are used appropriately.

Furthermore, participation is another crucial component of good governance. The involvement of community members in decision-making processes helps ensure that the allocation of Village Funds aligns with local needs and priorities. Involving the community in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of development projects can lead to better outcomes, as it ensures that the projects address real issues faced by the people. A study by Butt (2019) highlighted that community participation significantly improves the effectiveness of public programs, including the management of Village Funds.

Effectiveness of Village Fund Management

The effectiveness of Village Fund management can be measured by several indicators, including the success of programs, financial accountability, and the achievement of development goals. According to Campbell (2020), program effectiveness can be evaluated based on several criteria, including output (i.e., the results of the program), satisfaction with the program, and the achievement of predefined goals. The effective use of Village Funds should lead to improved infrastructure, enhanced public services, and increased welfare for local communities.

A study by Khasrisma and Yuniningsih (2017) proposed five key indicators for measuring the effectiveness of public programs, which are relevant for evaluating Village Fund management. These indicators include:

1. Program Success: This indicator assesses whether the planned activities were successfully implemented and whether they achieved the desired results.

2. **Target Achievement:** This focuses on whether the specific goals of the fund allocation (e.g., reducing poverty or improving education) were met.
3. **Satisfaction with the Program:** This measures the level of satisfaction among community members regarding the outcomes of the funded projects.
4. **Input and Output Ratio:** This indicator evaluates the efficiency of fund utilization by comparing the inputs (funds allocated) to the outputs (benefits achieved).
5. **Overall Goal Achievement:** This evaluates whether the overarching goals of the Village Fund program (such as improving community welfare and reducing inequalities) have been realized.

In the context of Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict, it is essential to assess these indicators to determine the success of the Village Fund program. Previous research by Prayoga et al. (2020) indicates that while some areas have seen improvements in infrastructure, challenges remain in fully utilizing funds for projects that address the most pressing community needs. A lack of coordination, inadequate planning, and insufficient oversight have led to underperformance in some areas.

Factors Affecting Village Fund Effectiveness

Several factors influence the effectiveness of Village Fund management, and understanding these factors is essential for improving the performance of the program. Apart from leadership and competence, other factors such as political influence, community involvement, and institutional capacity play significant roles.

Political influence can sometimes lead to the misallocation of funds, where funds are diverted to politically motivated projects or used to favor certain groups within the community. This undermines the effectiveness of the fund program and often leads to dissatisfaction among the general public. A study by Gubernur (2021) found that political interference in village fund allocation can significantly reduce the impact of development programs.

The involvement of village officials and the broader community is also crucial. Research by Elmansyah (2020) emphasized that high levels of community engagement in the planning and implementation phases of projects funded by Village Funds lead to more effective outcomes. Communities that are actively engaged in decision-making processes are more likely to ensure that the funds are spent on projects that meet their needs.

Lastly, the institutional capacity of the village apparatus affects how well the funds are managed. This includes the ability of village officials to prepare detailed budgets, manage financial records, and oversee project implementation effectively. Without a strong institutional framework, Village Funds may not be utilized to their full potential, leading to inefficiencies and poor outcomes.

METHOD

This study uses a survey research design with a quantitative approach to assess the influence of leadership and competence on the effectiveness of Village Fund management in Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict, Tojo Una-Una District. A total of 117 respondents were



selected for this study, comprising village government officials and members of the Village Consultative Body (BPD) in the subdistrict.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire, which was developed to measure three main variables: the leadership of the village head (Kepala Desa), the competence of village apparatus, and the effectiveness of Village Fund management. The questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice and Likert scale questions designed to evaluate respondents' perceptions of leadership, competence, and fund management effectiveness.

The study employed descriptive statistics to summarize the demographic and variable-related data, while inferential statistics were used to test the relationships between the independent variables (leadership and competence) and the dependent variable (Village Fund effectiveness). Specifically, multiple regression analysis was used to examine the individual and combined effects of leadership and competence on the effectiveness of Village Fund management.

Before the data collection, a pre-test was conducted with a sample of 30 respondents to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Validity was tested using Pearson's correlation coefficient, while reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. Data were analyzed using SPSS software to perform the necessary statistical tests, including validity and reliability tests, regression analysis, and correlation tests.

The findings aim to provide insights into how leadership and the competence of village apparatus contribute to the effective use of Village Funds. This methodology is appropriate for answering the research questions and providing evidence to guide improvements in Village Fund management practices.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive statistics of the study are provided to summarize the data collected from the 117 respondents. These respondents consisted of village government officials and members of the Village Consultative Body (BPD) in Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict. The key variables analyzed include leadership of the village head, competence of village apparatus, and effectiveness of Village Fund management.

The descriptive statistics for the three key variables are shown in the following tables. These tables illustrate the distribution of respondents' responses across various categories.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Leadership of Village Head

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Category
Village head motivates the community effectively	4.3	0.68	High
Village head communicates transparently	3.9	0.7	Medium
Village head demonstrates innovation in project planning	3.5	0.75	Medium
Village head makes decisions in consultation with the community	4.1	0.6	High
Village head ensures transparency in fund allocation	3.7	0.8	Medium

Source: Data Analysis (2024)

The table shows that overall, leadership in the subdistrict is viewed as generally positive, with high ratings for motivation and communication. However, there is room for improvement in terms of innovation and transparency in fund allocation, as these indicators received medium ratings.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Competence of Village Apparatus

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Category
Village apparatus understands financial management well	4.2	0.65	High
Village apparatus can operate fund management software	3.8	0.72	Medium
Village apparatus shows good planning and organizing skills	4.1	0.68	High
Village apparatus engages with the community effectively	3.9	0.74	Medium
Village apparatus maintains transparency in financial reporting	4	0.77	High

Source: Data Analysis (2024)

As seen in Table 2, the competence of village apparatus is also rated highly for understanding financial management and planning. However, certain areas like using fund management software and community engagement are rated as medium, highlighting potential areas for improvement.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Effectiveness of Village Fund Management

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Category
Village Fund is used efficiently for community development	3.9	0.68	High
There is transparency in the use of Village Fund	3.6	0.75	Medium
Projects funded by Village Fund align with community needs	3.8	0.7	Medium
Monitoring and evaluation of funded projects are well implemented	3.7	0.78	Medium
The community is satisfied with the outcomes of Village Fund projects	3.9	0.8	High

Source: Data Analysis (2024)

From Table 3, it is clear that respondents generally perceive the effectiveness of Village Fund management positively, with high satisfaction in areas such as fund usage



efficiency and community satisfaction. However, transparency and project monitoring received medium ratings, indicating areas that need further improvement.

Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the influence of village head leadership and competence of village apparatus on the effectiveness of Village Fund management. The results of the regression analysis are presented below.

Table 4. Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t-Value	Sig.
Constant	20.144		3.169	0.002
Leadership of Village Head (X1)	-0.379	-0.241	-3.632	0
Competence of Village Apparatus (X2)	1.27	0.636	9.585	0

Source: Data Analysis (2024)

The regression analysis reveals several important findings:

1. Leadership of Village Head (X1) has a negative and significant effect on the effectiveness of Village Fund management (Beta = -0.241, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that as the leadership of the village head improves, the effectiveness of fund management decreases. This may reflect challenges in leadership practices, such as lack of innovation or transparency.
2. Competence of Village Apparatus (X2) has a positive and significant effect on the effectiveness of Village Fund management (Beta = 0.636, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that as the competence of village apparatus increases, the effectiveness of fund management also improves.
3. Combined Effect: The model explains 51.2% of the variance in the effectiveness of Village Fund management ($R^2 = 0.512$), indicating that leadership and competence together have a substantial impact on fund management outcomes.

The findings of this study highlight several key insights into the management of Village Funds in Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict:

1. Leadership Challenges: The negative relationship between leadership and fund management effectiveness suggests that leadership may not be effectively driving the desired outcomes. This could be due to a lack of innovative decision-making or insufficient engagement with the community in fund allocation. Village heads may need to adopt more transparent, inclusive leadership styles that prioritize community involvement and open communication.

2. **The Role of Competence:** The significant positive relationship between competence and fund management effectiveness underscores the importance of village apparatus in ensuring the successful implementation of development projects. Competent village officials who are well-trained in financial management, project planning, and monitoring can significantly enhance the impact of Village Funds on local development.
3. **Need for Improved Transparency:** Both leadership and competence are closely tied to transparency. The study found that while Village Fund management is generally seen as effective, transparency in fund usage and project monitoring remains an area of concern. Implementing clearer financial reporting systems and involving the community more in the decision-making process could improve transparency and accountability.
4. **Practical Implications:** For better Village Fund management, it is recommended that village heads undergo leadership training focusing on innovation, communication, and transparency. Similarly, strengthening the competence of village apparatus through capacity-building programs will help improve the overall effectiveness of fund management. Ensuring that both leadership and competence align with community needs and expectations is crucial for the success of the Village Fund program.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the influence of leadership and competence on the effectiveness of Village Fund management in Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict, Tojo Una-Una District. Based on the findings, it is clear that both leadership and competence significantly affect how Village Funds are managed and utilized for community development.

First, the study found that leadership of the village head (Kepala Desa) has a negative and significant effect on the effectiveness of Village Fund management. This result suggests that, in Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict, the leadership of the village head may not be driving the desired outcomes. While leadership is a critical factor in managing Village Funds, the negative relationship observed may reflect issues such as insufficient transparency, lack of innovation, or ineffective community engagement in decision-making. These challenges suggest that village heads may need to adopt more inclusive leadership practices, focusing on transparency, accountability, and collaboration with the community to improve Village Fund management outcomes.

On the other hand, competence of village apparatus (village officials) had a positive and significant effect on Village Fund effectiveness. This indicates that when the competence of the village apparatus increases, the ability to manage funds improves, leading to better project implementation and resource allocation. Competent officials with knowledge of financial management, project planning, and regulatory compliance are essential for ensuring that the allocated funds are used efficiently and effectively. The results highlight the importance of ongoing training and capacity-building programs for village officials to enhance their skills in managing Village Funds and executing development projects.

The study also found that the combined influence of both leadership and competence explains a significant portion of the variance in the effectiveness of Village Fund



management. This indicates that improving both aspects simultaneously can have a substantial impact on the success of Village Fund programs. While leadership is essential in setting the direction and priorities, the competence of the apparatus ensures that the strategies and plans are implemented effectively. Therefore, a holistic approach that focuses on both improving leadership and enhancing competence is crucial for the success of the Village Fund program.

Despite the generally positive perceptions of Village Fund management in Walea Kepulauan, the study revealed areas for improvement. Transparency in fund usage and monitoring processes were identified as key issues that need attention. Strengthening governance practices, ensuring clear financial reporting, and involving the community in decision-making can address these concerns. Moreover, establishing effective monitoring and evaluation systems is crucial to assess the impact of funded projects and ensure that funds are used for their intended purposes.

In conclusion, the study emphasizes that both leadership and competence are critical factors in the effective management of Village Funds. For the Village Fund program to achieve its goals of rural development and poverty reduction, it is essential for village heads to adopt transparent and participatory leadership styles. Additionally, the competence of village officials must be continually developed through training programs that focus on financial management, project planning, and community engagement. By addressing these factors, Walea Kepulauan Subdistrict can improve the effectiveness of its Village Fund management, leading to more successful and sustainable development outcomes for the community.

Ultimately, this study provides valuable insights into how leadership and competence contribute to the success of the Village Fund program. Strengthening both areas will be crucial for ensuring that Village Funds can effectively meet the needs of rural communities and contribute to long-term development goals.

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