
Challenging Gender Stereotypes About Women's Leadership In A Perspective Of New Public Leadership In Banyuwangi Village, Gresik

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Abstract

This research is motivated by the persistent gender stereotypes in rural communities that often question women's capacity as leaders, creating a need to examine how female village heads practice modern public leadership. The study aims to analyze the application of New Public Leadership (NPL), the role of network management, and the creation of public value within female leadership in Banyuwangi Village, Gresik. Using a qualitative method through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, the findings show that the female village head successfully implements NPL principles through open communication, transparency, responsiveness, and cross-actor collaboration that fosters adaptive work networks and tangible public value. However, uneven community participation, residual gender bias, and bureaucratic burdens remain challenges that affect leadership effectiveness. The study concludes that the success of female leadership not only breaks gender stereotypes but also offers a model of collaborative leadership at the village level. Practical implications highlight the need to strengthen public literacy, improve the capacity of village apparatus, and enhance participatory mechanisms to reinforce the implementation of NPL and promote more inclusive and responsive village governance. The novelty of this study lies in its analysis of female village head leadership through the New Public Leadership (NPL) framework at the village level within a patriarchal social context, demonstrating that collaborative practices, network management, and public value creation function as mechanisms for legitimizing women's leadership.

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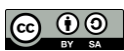
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INTRODUCTION

Leadership in public organizations has become one of the central themes in the discourse of modern governance. In various countries, developments in social, political, and technological dynamics are driving the need for a leadership model that is more adaptive, responsive, and oriented to public values. This transformation is marked by increasing public demands for transparency, accountability, and the effectiveness of public services. Globally, according to (Brookes, 2011) The paradigm shift in public administration from a traditional bureaucratic approach to a more collaborative model has opened up space for new concepts in leadership,

one of which is *New Public Leadership* (NPL). This concept affirms that leadership in the public sector focuses not only on the internal effectiveness of the organization, but also on the creation of public value and the ability to manage stakeholder networks in an inclusive manner. In this context, public leaders are required to be able to build trust, mobilize participation, and create adaptive solutions to increasingly complex social problems.

In Indonesia, the demand for strengthening public leadership does not only occur at the national and regional levels, but also at the lowest level, namely villages. Villages as the closest government unit to the community have a strategic position in realizing participatory and inclusive development. Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages gives broad authority to villages to regulate and manage their own interests, including in terms of development, services, and community empowerment. This authority places the village head as a key actor who plays an important role in driving the village government as well as becoming a representative figure of the community. The village head not only carries out administrative functions, but also plays a role as a social leader who must be able to establish communication, build collaboration, and accommodate various interests of residents (Rohmah & Lukito, 2025).

In the development of leadership discourse, gender issues are one of the important aspects that are widely studied, especially related to the role of women in strategic positions. Social and political research shows that women's leadership has unique characteristics that are often associated with participatory, communicative, and social-well-being-oriented leadership styles (Alfiyah and Tini, 2021). Nevertheless, women still face structural and cultural barriers, which stem largely from patriarchal values that are rooted in society. This phenomenon makes the study of women's leadership, especially at the village government level, very relevant. Although the number of female representation in Indonesian politics is increasing, the proportion of female village heads is still much lower than that of male village heads. (Wirayadi, 2025) noted that the representation of women as village heads nationally is still at a very small level.

In the context of Gresik Regency, the dynamics of women's representation in local leadership show positive developments. Data shows that the percentage of female village heads increased from 3.9% in 2015 to 6.7% in 2023. Although this number is still unbalanced, the increase reflects the increase in public trust in women's leadership and the beginning of a shift in public perception of women's ability to lead. This increase can also be read as an indicator that women are beginning to gain a wider space to be involved in public decision-making at the community level.

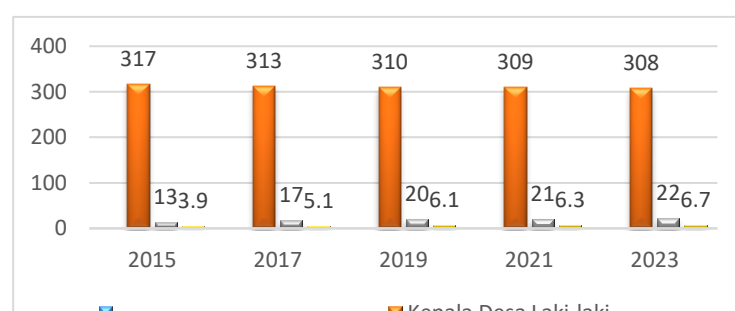


Figure 1. Graph of female village heads in Gresik district (2015-2023)
 Source: Community and Village Empowerment Office (PMD) of Gresik Regency

One of the villages that shows this phenomenon is Banyuwangi Village, Manyar District, Gresik Regency. This village is led by a female village head, Hj. Siti Maslahah, who has been in office since 2022. As the only woman to lead the village, she faces structural challenges such as limited resources, cultural resistance, and high expectations from the community for a leader figure. However, Hj. Siti Maslahah succeeded in showing that women are able to carry out village leadership effectively through various programs that focus on public services, community economic empowerment, and environmental development. Her leadership is a representation of how women can gain political and social legitimacy even though they are in an environment that is still colored by gender bias.

This phenomenon is interesting to examine through the perspective of *New Public Leadership* (NPL), a leadership approach that emphasizes public value creation, network management, and collaborative leadership (Morgan et al., 2018). NPL departs from the idea that public leaders do not work individually in rigid bureaucratic structures, but must be able to embrace various actors, build coalitions, and create innovations in governance. In the context of villages, the implementation of NPL is relevant because villages are complex social spaces, where community interests are very diverse and require an open, adaptive, and participation-based leadership approach. Thus, a study of how women village heads apply the principles of NPL can provide a new understanding of relevant forms of public leadership in the local context.

From a theoretical perspective, this research departs from three main concepts. First, the concept of leadership is understood as the process of influencing and moving members of the organization to achieve common goals. (Kiki Saputra, 2021)emphasizing that leadership is not only the ability to influence, but also the capacity to manage resources effectively. Second, a gender perspective that examines how the social roles of men and women are shaped by cultural construction. This is important because women's leadership in villages is often overshadowed by gender stereotypes that place women in domestic roles. Third, the concept *New Public Leadership* which affirms the importance of collaborative leadership, network management, and public value creation. (Brookes, 2011) and (Moore, 1997) said that the success of public leaders in the modern era is determined by their ability to move networks and generate value that is felt by the community.

In the local context, Banyuwangi Village provides a concrete illustration of how women's leadership operates within a complex social environment. The challenges faced by female village leaders are not limited to administrative and governmental responsibilities, but also

extend to building trust in communities that remain strongly influenced by patriarchal norms. In such conditions, the New Public Leadership approach becomes a relevant analytical framework to understand how women leaders facilitate collaboration, manage social conflicts, and create innovations in public services. This approach highlights that effective leadership at the village level requires not only administrative competence but also strong social and relational leadership capacity.

Previous studies indicate that women's leadership has become an important theme in social and political science, particularly in relation to gender issues and local governance. Research has shown that female leaders tend to demonstrate communicative, inclusive, and welfare-oriented leadership styles, while simultaneously facing structural constraints such as patriarchal culture, gender stereotypes, and limited community participation (Alfiyah & Tini, 2021; Yusuf & Anwar, 2023). However, most existing studies examine women's leadership primarily within general gender or local political frameworks and rarely engage with contemporary public leadership models. This limitation indicates a conceptual gap in understanding how modern public leadership approaches, particularly New Public Leadership (NPL), operate in legitimizing women's leadership at the village level within rural communities that remain strongly influenced by patriarchal values. Accordingly, the state of the art of this research lies in its focus on analyzing the leadership of female village heads through the New Public Leadership perspective, emphasizing the role of collaborative practices, network management, and public value creation as core elements of leadership effectiveness.

Based on this theoretical and empirical background, this study carries both academic and practical urgency. Academically, it contributes to the still limited body of literature on women's leadership in village governance by introducing an NPL-based analytical framework that connects leadership practices with legitimacy and public value outcomes. Practically, the findings are expected to provide insights for local governments, women's empowerment institutions, and village communities in strengthening women's leadership and promoting more participatory village governance. To address these gaps, this study is guided by the following analytical focus: how New Public Leadership contributes to legitimizing women's leadership in patriarchal village contexts, and how network management and public value creation function as key mechanisms of leadership effectiveness. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the application of New Public Leadership in the leadership of a female village head in Banyuwangi Village, Manyar District, Gresik Regency, with particular attention to how NPL principles are enacted in leadership practices, decision-making processes, and the management of social interactions within the village.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method to explore in depth the role of female village heads in Banyuwangi Village, Manyar District, Gresik Regency through an approach *New Public Leadership*. The qualitative method was chosen because this research focuses on the meanings, experiences, and social processes that emerge in leadership practice, not on statistical calculations. A descriptive approach is used to explain leadership dynamics, including the decision-making process, public services, and community empowerment efforts.

This method is in accordance with the statement that qualitative research aims to understand social events and human behavior from various perspectives (Joaquim Pinto, 2024)

Information sources were obtained from interviews with village heads, village officials, and the community, as well as supporting data through documentation such as village archives, activity reports, village regulations, minutes of deliberations, population data, and development reports. Documentation is used as a complement and verification of data to ensure the accuracy and validity of findings. The main data collection technique is an in-depth interview with a set of questions that have been compiled by the researcher (Aditya Wardhana & Zainuddin Iba, 2024). The number of informants includes one village head, two village officials, and five communities. Data analysis was carried out using an interactive model (Miles et al., 1992) which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is carried out by selecting important information related to the leadership of female village heads through an approach *New Public Leadership*. The data that has been reduced is then presented in the form of a descriptive narrative to facilitate understanding the relationship between findings. Furthermore, conclusions are drawn by verifying all the data that has been collected, so that the research results can be trusted and describe the factual conditions in the field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Banyuwangi Village, Manyar District, Gresik Regency, is currently led by Hj. Siti Maslahah, a female village head who was inaugurated in 2022 through simultaneous elections. She won the election with 850 votes, beating one male candidate, and became the first woman to lead the village after previously the position of village head had always been held by men, including her husband. Hj. Siti Maslahah's victory was not only influenced by the social closeness factor, but also personal integrity and a track record of service that received wide trust from the community (Arifin, 2022). This position also places her in a social space that is still thick with patriarchal values, so she has to prove her leadership skills in the midst of the stereotype that the position of village head is more appropriate for men (Rohmah & Lukito, 2025).

Since taking office, Hj. Siti Maslahah has made various breakthroughs in the fields of public services, economic empowerment, and environmental development. The restructuring of village apparatus is carried out to improve governance and increase service responsiveness (Gresik, 2022). In the economic sector, she encourages the strengthening of female MSMEs through business legality assistance and entrepreneurship training. The development of Pecuk Ecoriparian ecotourism is one of the flagship programs designed to create new jobs (Isnaini et al., 2024). In the environmental sector, the collaboration with PT Freeport Indonesia resulted in the planting of 10,000 mangrove seedlings to overcome abrasion and flash floods (PTFI, 2025).

These programs demonstrate a participatory, collaborative, and inclusive leadership style, in accordance with the values of *New Public Leadership*. The village head plays the role of a facilitator who drives citizen participation, increases transparency, and builds public value through innovation and mutual cooperation (Tabah Rizki, 2023). Her emphasis on women's empowerment, open public services, and cross-sectoral collaboration make her leadership relevant in the context of modern village governance.

Mrs. Hj. Siti Maslahah represents a female leader who has succeeded in breaking through cultural barriers in the local bureaucracy. His leadership is clear evidence that *the values of New Public Leadership* (NPL) can be applied at the village level effectively. Through an adaptive, inclusive, and community-welfare-oriented approach, he is able to build a more responsive and effective public governance.

In the framework of bureaucratic reform, NPL emphasizes the importance of leadership that is able to respond dynamically to the demands of public services. Since 1997, public sector reform has been part of the government's modernization agenda aimed at increasing transparency, accountability, and orientation to the needs of the community. Therefore, public leaders are required to build trust through ethical, technology-based, and citizen-centered services.

In addition to adaptive leadership, network management is an important component of effective collaborative governance. Agranoff and McGuire emphasized that leaders need to play an active role in facilitating interaction, coordination, and synergy between organizations. Unfortunately, the leadership aspect of networking is often overlooked, even though it is crucial in managing functional dependencies and collaboration dynamics.

The final component in NPLs is the creation and management of public value as the main orientation of leadership. This concept, introduced by Mark Moore and developed by Talbot and Kelly, asserts that public leaders are responsible for maintaining legitimacy and ensuring the capacity of organizations to achieve social goals. In contrast to the conventional approach or *New Public Management* (NPM), NPLs are more relevant in a network governance environment that emphasizes the achievement of public value collectively.

1. Leadership Roles

Leadership roles basically refer to a leader's ability to influence, direct, and move the members of an organization to achieve a common goal. According to (Cardon, 2011) Leadership is the process of directing and guiding others to be willing to do work voluntarily. Meanwhile, (Susanti, 2019) emphasized that leadership includes the ability to provide motivation, example, and the ability to set clear organizational direction. Thus, the role of leadership is not only administrative, but also includes aspects of communication, motivation, exemplary, and decision-making.

Some people consider that the current leadership of female village heads is quite good, especially because the results can be seen directly through ongoing development and increased public information disclosure. This shows that there is a positive change in village governance that is more transparent and oriented towards community services.

"The construction of the road is visible, the programs are clear, and the community feels that they are sufficiently cared for. Several residents also highlighted the increase in transparency, including the presentation of village budget reports that are posted openly so that the public can know the direction of budget use". (Interview with residents of Banyuwangi village, Gresik)

The quote shows that the community is experiencing firsthand the practice of responsive and transparent leadership. Real physical development and the disclosure of

budget information are indicators that village heads carry out leadership roles oriented towards public services. This is in line with the principles of New Public Leadership (NPL) which emphasizes the importance of collaboration, participation, and accountability in governance.

"I feel that I am seen and listened to and the village head is easy to meet when there is an urgent need or development proposal." (Interview with residents of Banyuwangi Village, Gresik).

This statement confirms that the village head is seen as an open figure and easily accessible to the community. Good communication skills create an emotional closeness between residents and the village government, which strengthens public trust. This participatory attitude is an important element in building inclusive and responsive leadership to the needs of citizens.

"The cooperation with the village head is very good, supporting each other; If one can't, the other helps and all the devices go in line with the vision to improve people's welfare." (Interview with Banyuwangi village officials, Gresik).

The statement from the village apparatus reflects the existence of harmonious collaborative leadership in the village government work environment. The village head is able to direct and coordinate the device effectively, creating synergies that support the achievement of a shared vision. This mutually supportive work pattern reflects the characteristics of transformational leaders who are able to build solidarity and collective commitment.

The results indicate that the leadership of the female village head in Banyuwangi Village has successfully realized participatory, transparent, and collaborative governance, not merely as normative principles but as institutionalized leadership practices embedded in everyday governance interactions. These practices are experienced not only by community members as service recipients, but also by village officials as collaborative partners who actively support governance processes. This dual recognition from both external (citizens) and internal (bureaucratic actors) sources suggests that leadership effectiveness operates through relational legitimacy, thereby reinforcing the social acceptance of women's leadership at the local level. Within the framework of New Public Leadership (NPL), these findings demonstrate that leadership legitimacy is generated through inclusive processes rather than formal authority alone.

When examined through the lens of NPL, interview data from community members and village officials reveal a consistent pattern of alignment between leadership practices and NPL principles, particularly cooperation, deliberation, empowerment, and citizen-oriented public service. Budget transparency, open communication channels, and the active encouragement of citizen participation function not only as administrative tools, but as mechanisms through which trust is produced and sustained in village governance. This finding confirms that the village context constitutes a practical arena in which NPL theory is operationalized, translating abstract leadership values into concrete governance outcomes.

From the perspective of servant leadership theory Patmasari et al., (2022), effective leaders are expected to listen, empathize, and foster community bonds.

Empirical evidence from community interviews indicates that the village head is perceived as approachable and responsive, demonstrating humanist leadership practices that prioritize social closeness and attentiveness to citizens' needs (Virtanen et al., 2022). These practices reinforce participatory governance by reducing social distance between leaders and residents, thereby enabling more inclusive decision-making processes. Rather than standing as a separate framework, servant leadership in this context functions as a micro-level behavioral expression of NPL values.

Similarly, transformational leadership theory emphasizes the leader's capacity to inspire, align organizational members, and build synergistic cooperation (Jaya & Diah, 2020). Interview data from village officials reveal that the village head effectively unites the village apparatus around shared goals, ensures clear task coordination, and maintains internal harmony. This internal cohesion operates as a structural condition that enables participatory and collaborative governance to function consistently, strengthening the institutional capacity of the village government to implement development programs in a focused and sustainable manner.

Taken together, these findings indicate that the leadership role of the female village head in Banyuwangi Village reflects not only the normative principles of New Public Leadership, but also their practical realization through servant and transformational leadership behaviors. Communicative, transparent, participatory, and collaborative leadership practices emerge as interrelated mechanisms that enhance public trust and governance effectiveness, rather than as isolated leadership traits. Consequently, this study demonstrates that women's leadership at the village level can serve as a viable model for strengthening democratic, inclusive, and public value-oriented governance, particularly within socio-cultural contexts where leadership legitimacy is continuously negotiated.

2. Network Management

Network management in the context of government refers to the ability of leaders to build, coordinate, and maintain cooperative relationships with various actors, both internal and external. According to Robert Agranoff (2003), network management involves the process of facilitation, coordination, and integration between various stakeholders to achieve a collective goal. Meanwhile, Osborne, (2006) explained that network management is key in the public sector because the provision of services is not only managed by the government, but also works through cross-agency partnerships. Thus, network management demands strong communication, coordination, and collaboration skills.

Some people consider that village heads are able to cooperate with various parties, especially in the implementation of development and delivery of government programs. This assessment arises because the village head is considered to be active in going directly with the village apparatus and establishing communication with the sub-district and other institutions to solve the needs of the community. The community also sees that the coordination between the village head and the village apparatus is quite good so that the village program can run according to the needs of the residents.

"Often go directly with the village apparatus, as well as establish communication with the sub-district and other institutions to solve the needs of the community." (Interview with residents of Banyuwangi Village, Gresik)

The quote shows that the community sees an effective working network between the village head and the village apparatus, the sub-district government, and other related parties. They assessed that this cross-party cooperation contributes to the smooth development of villages. This means that the community considers that the village head is able to manage the government network properly and responsively.

In addition to the assessment from the community, the village apparatus also provided views on the leadership of the village head. They emphasized that cooperation with the village head is very good because they always move as a unit. This shows that the leadership of the village head is not only felt by the residents, but also by the internal team of the village government.

"The village apparatus and the village head become one team that runs in the same direction with the same vision, and if there is a task that one person cannot do, then the other team members will help." (Interview with the staff of Banyuwangi Village, Gresik).

The statement illustrates that the village head not only manages the team's internal relationships well, but also actively establishes working relationships with external actors. The village head routinely coordinates with sub-district institutions, village assistants, community leaders, and other village community institutions. This reflects the ability of a strong network, where collaboration and coordination are carried out on an ongoing basis to support the achievement of the vision of village development.

The findings indicate that the female village head in Banyuwangi Village has effectively carried out network management functions, not merely by establishing cross-agency collaboration, but by actively transforming fragmented actors into an adaptive and interdependent governance network. This effectiveness is reflected in her capacity to initiate coordination, sustain cooperation, and align the interests of village officials, community groups, and external stakeholders toward shared development goals. From a New Public Leadership (NPL) perspective, this finding confirms that leadership effectiveness is not rooted in hierarchical authority, but in the leader's facilitative role in connecting actors, mediating interests, and enabling collective action.

Evidence from interviews with both community members and village officials further reveals a consistent pattern of relational leadership, in which smooth coordination is sustained through trust-based communication rather than formal command structures (Vivona, 2024). Informants emphasized that cooperation across actors occurs routinely and informally, suggesting that network effectiveness in Banyuwangi Village is grounded in social legitimacy and mutual dependence. Within the NPL framework, this pattern illustrates a shift from bureaucratic coordination toward collaborative governance characterized by participation, connectivity, and shared responsibility.

This empirical pattern aligns with Haryono (2019) government network theory, which conceptualizes public networks as systems of interdependent actors bound by

trust and information exchange. The interview data demonstrate that trust is not an abstract principle, but a practical resource mobilized through frequent interaction, openness, and reciprocal support. Given that village governments lack the capacity to manage public services independently, such network-based coordination becomes a structural necessity rather than a managerial choice, reinforcing the centrality of network management in local governance effectiveness.

Furthermore, the findings provide concrete evidence of what Agranoff & McGuire, (2001), describe as network activation. The female village head performs this function by initiating cooperation, maintaining relational continuity, and ensuring inclusive actor involvement through routine coordination forums, clear task distribution, and a cooperative leadership approach. Testimonies from village officials describing themselves as “one team moving in the same direction” indicate that network management operates not only externally, but also internally by fostering collective commitment and role equality within the village apparatus.

Taken together, these findings suggest that network management in Banyuwangi Village functions as a mechanism of leadership effectiveness, where collaboration, equality of roles, and openness translate into improved governance performance and increased public trust. More importantly, this analysis demonstrates that network management under New Public Leadership is not simply an administrative technique, but a strategic leadership practice that enables women leaders to overcome structural constraints and legitimize their authority within patriarchal governance contexts. Thus, network management emerges as a critical explanatory factor for the successful implementation of New Public Leadership in Banyuwangi Village and offers empirical evidence of how women’s leadership contributes to adaptive and modern village governance.

3. Public Values

The concept of public value was first introduced by Mark H. Moore (Archive, Ida Widianingsih, Heru Nurasa, 2019), which defines it as the value or benefit created by public organizations through services, policies, and government performance results that are directly felt by the community. Public values include aspects of quality service, justice, transparency, responsiveness, and improving the welfare of citizens. Osborne added that public value is not only created by the government, but is also the result of collaboration between the government and the public, so the success of a government is measured by the extent to which services and policies are able to meet public needs and build public trust (Denny Dharma Wahyu, Riswin Wizandani, Juliansyah, 2024).

The interview process with the community shows first-hand experience of the leadership quality of female village heads in public service and transparency. Residents' responses emphasized that interaction with village officials felt faster, friendlier, and more solutional. In addition, they feel the ease of obtaining information and seeing the openness of development reports, which strengthens the perception that village government is increasingly accountable.

"The community said that village services are 'good, fast, polite, and still served even outside working hours.' In addition, residents assessed that the village apparatus was 'responsive, humble, and always accepted the community well.' Transparency is also felt to increase because village development reports are announced openly, and the community can easily get information. Many residents emphasized that the village programs are running well and have a positive impact, especially for women and small economic groups." (Interview with residents of Banyuwangi Village, Gresik)

From the opinion of the community, it can be concluded that public value is created through three main aspects that reinforce each other. First, responsive, humane, and consistent public services go beyond formal service hours. Second, increasing transparency that ensures citizens' access to information and the direction of budget use. Third, development programs that are relevant and have a real impact on vulnerable groups, thereby strengthening public trust and support for village government.

Furthermore, interviews with village officials provide internal perspectives on leadership competencies and the quality of collaboration. They emphasized the ability of village heads to understand regulations, communicate across sectors, and maintain closeness with the community. This explanation enriches the picture of how decisions and services are built on a shared vision and solid coordination.

"The village apparatus conveys that the village head has competencies that support the realization of public values, such as understanding the rules, cross-sector communication skills, and closeness to the community. They emphasized that the village head is able to formulate programs that meet the needs of residents and ensure that services run optimally. The village apparatus also mentioned that cooperation in government runs harmoniously, 'supporting each other,' so that village programs can run effectively." (Interview with the staff of Banyuwangi Village, Gresik).

From the interviews with village officials, it can be concluded that the creation of public value relies on leadership that is competent, communicative, and able to manage internal collaboration. Female village heads are seen as successful in translating community needs into quality policies and services that are executed through cohesive teamwork. This synergy strengthens the effectiveness of services, expands the range of benefits, and maintains the continuity of program implementation.

Thus, the findings demonstrate that the leadership of the female village head in Banyuwangi Village has successfully consolidated responsive public services, information transparency, and intergovernmental collaboration into tangible and experienced public values, rather than abstract normative claims. Public value in this context emerges as the cumulative outcome of everyday leadership practices, particularly communicative interactions that connect village officials and citizens. As communication functions as a core leadership mechanism, the role of the village head as a communicator becomes central in stimulating participation and fostering reciprocal engagement (Nurany, 2023). Empirical evidence from residents' and village officials'

perceptions indicates that responsiveness, openness, and consistency in program implementation operate as observable indicators of adaptive and accountable governance, ensuring that policies are aligned with community needs.

More importantly, the findings suggest that the leadership of the female village head transcends administrative execution and operates as a value-generating process, in which transparency and collaboration serve as strategic instruments for building trust and legitimacy. Perceptions from both citizens and village apparatus reveal that accountability is not only procedural, but performative, as openness in information and inclusive service practices allow the public to directly assess governance outcomes. This performative dimension of public value strengthens leadership legitimacy in a socio-cultural context where women's authority is often questioned, indicating that public value functions as empirical proof of leadership effectiveness. Consequently, community-centered leadership practices not only enhance citizen satisfaction, but also reinforce the effectiveness and sustainability of village development through verifiable and socially recognized accountability.

From a theoretical perspective, Moore's public value framework emphasizes that effective, timely, and meaningful public services constitute the core of public value creation (Archive, Ida Widianingsih, Heru Nurasa, 2019). This theoretical assumption is reflected in the empirical findings from Banyuwangi Village, where village officials demonstrate polite, humble, and responsive service behaviors, including a willingness to serve residents beyond formal working hours. Such practices indicate a strong service orientation shaped by the leadership of a female village head, supporting previous empirical evidence that women leaders tend to be more sensitive to community needs and capable of delivering higher-quality public services (Yusuf, H., & Anwar, 2023). However, this study goes beyond confirming Moore's framework by showing that service-oriented public value also functions as a source of social legitimacy for women leaders operating within patriarchal village contexts, a dimension not explicitly addressed in classical public value theory.

Beyond service responsiveness, transparency emerges as another critical dimension in strengthening public value and leadership legitimacy. Osborne (2010) positions transparency and accountability as central mechanisms in public value formation, as they reduce information asymmetry and enhance public trust. In Banyuwangi Village, the publication of development reports and the ease of access to information function not merely as administrative routines, but as strategic instruments of legitimacy for women's leadership within a patriarchal social structure (Azizuddin & Shamsuzzoha, 2024). This finding extends New Public Leadership by demonstrating that transparency operates not only as a governance principle, but also as a gendered legitimacy mechanism that enables women leaders to counter cultural skepticism and reinforce their authority in local governance.

In addition to service orientation and transparency, public value is also generated through effective network governance. Agranoff and McGuire's concept of networked governance underscores that cross-actor coordination and collaboration are

prerequisites for sustainable public value creation (Nasrulhaq, 2020). Field findings reveal that the female village head's communicative leadership style, regulatory competence, and emphasis on internal harmony enable routine coordination, clear task distribution, and mutually supportive working mechanisms. This study extends the NPL perspective by illustrating how women's leadership styles facilitate network management in socially constrained environments, suggesting that gender-sensitive leadership practices can enhance the effectiveness of collaborative governance.

Taken together, these findings suggest that in patriarchal communities where the legitimacy of women's leadership is often questioned public value functions as tangible and performative evidence of leadership effectiveness. Residents' recognition of improved services, transparency, and collaboration reinforces the notion that leadership legitimacy is not derived solely from formal authority, but from perceived outcomes and social impact. This aligns with previous studies indicating that women leaders tend to adopt inclusive and welfare-oriented leadership approaches (Rohmah & Lukito, 2025). Accordingly, this study extends NPL by conceptualizing public value not only as a policy outcome, but also as a performative and transformational strategy through which women leaders negotiate and overcome gender-based legitimacy challenges.

More broadly, the findings indicate that the leadership practices observed in Banyuwangi Village reflect the core principles of New Public Leadership (NPL), while also intersecting with contemporary leadership models such as servant leadership and transformational leadership. Open communication, transparency in public service, and participatory dialogue serve as foundational elements in building public trust. These practices not only enhance the effectiveness of village development programs, but also demonstrate that modern leadership values can be successfully operationalized at the grassroots level under gendered social constraints.

Furthermore, the female village head demonstrates strong network management capabilities by prioritizing collaboration, equality of roles, and openness among actors. Partnerships involving village officials, community members, women's groups, and external stakeholders illustrate that NPL principles are not merely theoretical constructs, but are enacted in everyday governance practices. This empirical evidence expands NPL by highlighting the role of gender-inclusive leadership in activating and sustaining collaborative networks in rural governance settings.

When compared with NPL theory, these findings largely confirm its core assumptions regarding collaboration, transparency, and service responsiveness (Dwiyanto, 2021). However, the ideal of equal participation emphasized in NPL has not been fully realized, as disparities in public literacy and information access continue to limit citizen engagement (Kurniawan & Roslinda, 2024). Moreover, gender-related challenges reaffirm that the effectiveness of NPL at the village level is shaped not only by leadership capacity, but also by broader socio-cultural and institutional structures (Ahsani, 2020; Isnaini Muallidin, 2020; Suhardi et al., 2025). This limitation suggests that NPL must be further developed to incorporate socio-cultural and institutional capacities as determining conditions for effective participation at the local level.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the leadership of a female village head in Banyuwangi has successfully operationalized New Public Leadership principles and

generated significant public value for the community. While transparency, responsive services, and collaborative networks emerge as key strengths, challenges related to participation, patriarchal norms, and bureaucratic rigidity remain. Theoretically, these findings extend New Public Leadership theory as articulated by Brookes (2011) and Moore (1997) by integrating gender dynamics and socio-cultural context into the analysis of public value creation and network management. This study demonstrates that women's leadership can effectively operationalize NPL principles even within patriarchal environments, indicating that NPL should be understood as context-sensitive and gender-responsive, particularly in local governance settings.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the leadership of a female village head in Banyuwangi has successfully implemented the principles of New Public Leadership (NPL) through a communicative, transparent, participatory, and responsive leadership style. By fostering collaboration among village officials, community members, and external actors, the village head has created adaptive governance networks that generate tangible public value, reflected in increased citizen trust and more effective village development programs. However, this success occurs within a socio-cultural context still shaped by patriarchal norms, where gender stereotypes, uneven citizen participation, and bureaucratic rigidity continue to pose structural challenges.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The focus on a single village limits the generalizability of the findings, while the relatively small number of informants may constrain the diversity of perspectives captured. In addition, the reliance on interview-based perceptions may not fully reflect long-term governance outcomes. These limitations suggest that the findings should be interpreted as context-specific insights rather than universal conclusions.

In practical terms, the findings highlight the importance of strengthening village officials' capacity, enhancing public literacy, and improving participatory mechanisms to support more inclusive collaborative governance, particularly in communities where gender stereotypes remain prevalent. Theoretically, this study extends New Public Leadership by integrating gender dynamics, network governance, and public value creation within a village-level leadership context, conceptualizing public value as a performative mechanism for legitimizing women's leadership. Future research is encouraged to adopt comparative and longitudinal designs across different village contexts to further examine how NPL operates under varying socio-cultural and institutional conditions.

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