

Portrait of Gender and Development in Village Area: Do They Shape Inclusivity?

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Abstract: *The existence of women in the village realm is a dilemmatic phenomenon. On the one hand, female leaders can demonstrate the breaking down of stigma and stereotypes that women will not appropriately fill the public sphere. On the other hand, their existence is no different from formality, ignoring the substance and representation of women's interests. This research seeks to compare three villages that were and are currently led by women. Do they reflect inclusiveness? This inclusiveness from the campaign period to the dynamics when taking office will be seen. The research results show that not all female leaders at the village level can design inclusiveness. In carrying out village development planning deliberations, for example, women's involvement is more to overcome administrative requirements than to accommodate their interests.*

Keywords: *Inclusivity; Women Leadership; Village.*

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Introduction

When talking about gender in politics, the rights and positions of men and women should be equal (Indriyany et al., 2020). However, the reality of women's role in politics cannot be denied: they often experience gender discrimination, including violence (Biroli, 2018; Ramadhan & Indriyany, 2022). Women are often positioned in the second-person position (Celis & Lovenduski, 2018). The lack of women's involvement in politics impacts many interests and decisions relating to women that are less accommodated. This situation happens because of masculine policies and the lack of a gender perspective dominating several political policies (Wahyudi, 2018). Meanwhile, even though many of the various political decisions made often involve women as targets.

Women's leadership in both regions and villages is still discriminated against by the assumption that women leaders are not prevalent in society. At the same time, the presence of female leaders is considered more able to accommodate the needs of women than male leaders (Harun, 2019; Munawiah & Dewi, 2021; Wang et al., 1996) because they are considered to have more political knowledge and experience and are supported by resources for understanding women's needs (Ban & Rao, 2008; Daulay & Saladin, 2017; Wang et al., 1996). The maternal traits that emerge in women leaders make them more acceptable, and people will follow their policies because they trust them more (Maily & Barlaskar, 2021). Female leaders are considered more capable of communicating well and being responsive, which is especially important in managing crises (Aldrich & Lotito, 2020). The literature defines this as feminist ethics leadership (Pullen &

Vachhani, 2021). The feminist ethics of leadership discusses the relationship between a leader and society. The leader is defined in one way and forms a collective agency where leadership is achieved communally based on equality. The principle of equality used does not ignore a particular gender, negates women's subjugation to culture, and places women and men in a reciprocal relationship.

On the other hand, women's roles are still limited to domestic affairs. As leaders, they are still considered second persons in the decision-making process because other hegemonies are working above them (Alfiyah & Tini, 2021). Women are always labeled with roles in the private sphere, namely everything related to domestic roles, while public roles are considered a domain only controlled by men. In fact, women's position in the public sphere should undoubtedly be a human right for women who are equal to men. The irony is that many women do not understand the rights of women's roles in the public sphere. Women's lack of understanding of their rights in the public sphere has resulted in a lack of women being involved in the policy-making process, and even their position needs to be underestimated (Wahyudi, 2018).

The challenges of women in the public sphere are not only faced with their limited number but also with the organization's characteristics (which in this case is the village government organization), which is still a male-oriented-dominated organization (Lee & Park, 2021). Asian countries with a solid patriarchal cultural context (in contrast to Western cultures that are considered more egalitarian) make the position of women in the public sphere more fragile. This phenomenon can also explain why fewer women are in the public sphere than

men. One of them is because of the patriarchal culture that is still entrenched. Several works of literature that examine women's leadership in regions and villages have been conducted, such as the success of women's leadership in the village, namely the female village head who succeeded in making the village self-sufficient (*Desa Swakarya*) (Utaminingsih et al., 2020). In addition, other studies explain how the success of women leaders cannot be separated from the existence of equal and fair gender government policies in society (Sabariman et al., 2019).

As for further research that explains the success of regions or villages in the context of international lines, the success of women leaders in rural India is inseparable from the existence of infrastructure for women (Mehta, 2018). Infrastructure facilities that support women's advancement to become leaders by creating a women's movement at the grassroots to minimize the dominance of intervention from men when leading. Furthermore, social networks and support from the community environment are also indicators of the success of women leaders in rural China (Jenning, 2018; Stanton & Prescott, 2018). Looking at some of the literature that examines various perspectives on women's leadership, many new efforts are often exciting to be studied and re-discussed about the phenomenon.

Although previously the role of women was in a position of powerlessness and minority, it has now begun to transform into a shift where women have entered the realm controlled by men, especially in this case, leadership (Fitriani, 2015; Situmorang, 2011; Utaminingsih et al., 2020). The existence of women is no longer a powerless figure. Women in elections show a shift in the community's views towards women's leadership.

(Saputra & Azmi, 2021), including family emotional support (Ismawardi, 2018).

In addition, the entry of women into the political sphere, especially women's leadership, has shown success in making better governance; this is because women are considered more responsive in accommodating the community's needs. (Bruce et al., 2022; Utaminingsih et al., 2020). Women with their essential nature, who tend to be patient, empathetic, and multitasking, also have the potential to build networks with community organizations, especially women's organizations. These factors make women successful in leadership (Fitriani, 2015). The same thing is also explained when women, in order to carry out their leadership, tend to pay attention to governance and can adjust to the situation when carrying out interactions. They communicate and coordinate while performing their leadership duties (Sabariman et al., 2019). Interestingly, women have a point of view in how they behave when a problem occurs in the community by responding like a mother to her child (Utaminingsih et al., 2020).

The undervalued position of women has implications for the many obstacles women face in advancing to become female leaders. From this, it can be seen how there are still many assumptions and views in a patriarchal society that have been socially constructed that women are not worthy of being leaders. Moreover, women's existence still needs to be expanded to include domestic roles, making it difficult for women to actively participate in public roles (Ahmed & Nagowayousif, 2020).

Some structural barriers tend to be patriarchal and impact women's roles and positions when they become a leader or an actor who is an extension of the family or husband (Daulay & Saladin, 2017;

Dunford, 2014; Gyan & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, 2021). In this case, the position of women is only a substitute role (Wahyudi, 2018). The irony is that when women become leaders, they only become symbols of their families or husbands, which affects the position of minor women in determining policies and only taking care of the administrative part. (Utaminingsih et al., 2020) explained that when women become an extension of the family or husband, it is because the family or husband cannot nominate them as leaders due to certain factors.

Women's leadership position, which is only a formality, certainly affects women's obstacles in actualizing the competencies women possess in carrying out their leadership. However, despite the many structural obstacles that tend to be patriarchal and experienced by women, many women still succeed in becoming leaders. Many positions in the political sphere are filled by women, ranging from national to local, such as Retno Marsudi as Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sri Mulyani as Minister of Finance, Minister of Environment and Forestry Siti Nurbaya Bakar, etc.

Departing from the involvement of women in the political sphere at the local level, Banten Province can give a good example: several regents and mayors in Banten Province are filled by female leaders. The female leaders who became government leaders in the scope of the regency or city in Banten Province are Ratu Atut Chasiyah, the former governor of Banten, and the daughter of TB Chasan Sochib, a famous Jawa in Banten. Another daughter of TB Chasan Sochib, Ratu Tatu Chasiyah, is currently the Regent of Serang. Then, his daughter-in-law, Airin Rahmi Diany, has served as Mayor of South Tangerang. Meanwhile, the

Regent of Pandeglang, Irna Narulita, is the wife of the previous Regent of Pandeglang, Dimiyati Natakusumah. The Regent of Lebak, Iti Octavia Jayabaya, is the daughter of Mulyadi Jayabaya, the former Regent of Lebak. Regardless of the political base of these women, seeing this shows that women as individual human beings are also capable, strong, brave, and equal to men in terms of leadership.

Therefore, this paper will dissect women's leadership in the village sphere through a comparative study. This paper will also examine whether women's representation, in this case, the village head, can represent inclusiveness in society or if its existence is limited to leadership that tends to be a formality. For this reason, this paper will highlight the existence of women leaders in the village sphere with a multiple case study approach, namely women's leadership in the village sphere, especially in the locus areas in this study: Cipayung Village, Mekar Agung Village, and Panancangan Village, and how she leads the village with her gender role as a woman. Is there a significant change in the presence of women in the position of village head by examining the policies made, especially those related to the interests and representation of women?

Method

In this study, researchers conducted comparative research using a comparative multiple case study approach (Yin, 2003). The researcher chose these methods because they best suit the comparison of the cases in three research locations. By comparing what happened in the three research locations, choosing a comparative study using multiple case studies was deemed more appropriate than just using a regular case study

approach. Thus, researchers will try to compare the phenomenon of village government leaders (in this case, the village head) in three research locations. The researcher will try to dissect and elaborate through comparisons of village programs or government structures to realize equal representation between female and male residents. To obtain the required data, researchers conducted in-depth observations and interviews with the village heads of the three research sites as primary data, followed by some data on population or relevant village government documents from the three research sites, which will become secondary data in this study. In addition, this research also adopted some supporting scientific literature from studies relevant to this research's focus (J. Creswell, 2016; J. W. Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Result and Discussion

Research Context Village

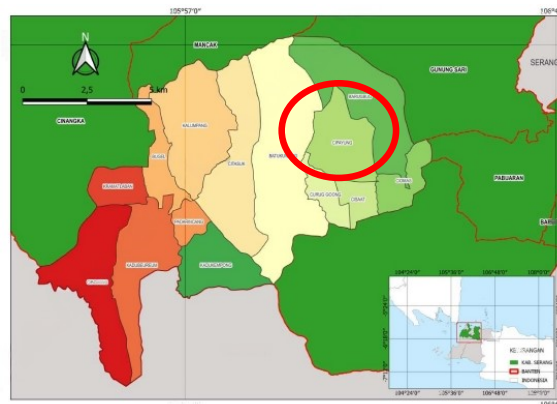
This research was conducted in three locations: Cipayung Village, Mekar Agung Village, and Panancangan Villages. The three research locations have different portraits of socioeconomic areas and different village head leadership.

The first village, Cipayung, is located in the Padarincang Subdistrict, Serang Regency, Banten Province. Cipayung Village is an expansion of Barugbug Village and has been led by a female village head, Mrs. Tatu Roilah, since 2013 until now. Mrs. Tatu Roilah is also the first female village head in Cipayung Village. Currently, the structure of positions in the Cipayung Village Government is filled with a proportional number of men and women. Cipayung Village has a total population of 5,440 people, with a male population of 2,773 and a female population of 2,667. In addition, Cipayung Village is

predominantly Muslim, with a percentage of 100% and mostly indigenous Javanese and Sundanese. When a resident of Cipayung Village marries a non-Muslim, they must first be Muslim.

On the other hand, Cipayung Village also has an Islamic boarding school where many scholars are community leaders. This phenomenon creates a strong Islamic culture in Cipayung Village. As for the portrait of education in Cipayung Village, based on village data, most of the population is dominated by elementary and junior high school graduates. In addition, the livelihoods of the majority of the male population are farmers or farm laborers, while the majority of the female population in Cipayung Village are homemakers. The social groups in Cipayung Village for women are only the *PKK* and *Posyandu*, while men, especially youth, are included in the youth group.

Picture 1. Map of Cipayung Village



Source : (BPS Kabupaten Serang, 2023)

The second village that became the location of this research is Mekar Agung Village, which is located in Cibadak Subdistrict, Lebak Regency. The population of males in 2021 will be 2,300, while the female population will be 2,212. The average population of Mekar Agung Village is Sundanese. At the same time, the majority is Muslim, with 1,958 people, and

some non-Muslims, such as one person who is Christian, three people who are Catholic, and four people who are Buddhist, in 2019. Elementary school graduates dominate the Mekar Agung Village community's educational portrait; the average has graduated from junior high and high school. As for the livelihoods of the people of Mekar Agung Village, based on the results of interviews with the village head, the majority are farm laborers and factories, and the rest are in other livelihoods. As for the portrait of health conditions in Mekar Agung Village, there is a history of malnutrition (stunting), while health facilities in Mekar Agung Village are accessible.

Picture 2. Map of Mekar Agung Village



Source : (BPS Kabupaten Lebak, 2022)

Third is Panancangan Village, located in Cibadak Subdistrict, Lebak Regency, was the third village that became the research locus. The population of Panancangan Village in 2021 was 3,435 people, with 1,732 male residents and 1,703 female residents. Most Panancangan

Village residents are Sundanese, while Muslim residents dominate the religion practiced, and only a few residents adhere to non-Muslims. As for the portrait of education in Panancangan Village, 70% of the average elementary school graduates have graduated from junior high school, and even some continue to college. Most of the residents of Panancangan Village earn a living as construction workers, farmers, and farm laborers with a percentage of 50%, and the rest earn other livelihoods. There are few maternal and infant mortality rates (MMR) regarding health access, as only one male infant exists. In addition, there is no history of stunting. Then, in accessing health facilities, it is easy to reach hospitals, maternity hospitals, polyclinics/medical centers, inpatient care, and pharmacies. In terms of economy, Panancangan Village in 2021 had a total harvest of 1,04.00 tons with a harvest area of 174 hectares. There are no conflicts in Panancangan Village.

Picture 3. Map of Panancangan Village



Source : (BPS Kabupaten Lebak, 2022)

The researcher will provide essential information related to the research context in this section. The research context at the three locations will provide an initial overview and assist researchers in conducting analysis. The three locations' research contexts will be compared to see whether patterns are the same or different.

Women in the Village Structure

The Cipayung Village community is relatively simple in terms of social

structure. The needs of the village itself determine its position in the social structure. The organizational structure is quite diverse, ranging from formal organizations that are usually easily recognized to non-formal organizations. These organizational structures include the Village Government Structure, *PKK*, *Posyandu* Cadres, *BPD*, and Karang Taruna.

The following is a list of female officials in Cipayung Village:

Table 1. List of names of Women Apparatus in Cipayung Village

No.	Apparatus List	Nam3	Position
1.	Village Apparatuses	Tatu Roilah	Village Head
2.		Ratu Nurmila	Head of Administration and General Affairs
3.		Lala Latifah	Head of Government Affairs
4.		Entu Yuyun	Head of Service Leaders
5.	Village Consultative Body (<i>BPD</i>)	Kulelah	Chairperson
6.		Sumilkah	Secretary
7.		Iis Uswatun H.	Member
8.		Bari Apriani	Member
9.	Other	Ratu Lailah	<i>PKK</i> Chairperson
10.		Herawati	Head of <i>Posyandu</i>
11.		Sahiyah	Chairperson of RW 003
12.		Erah	Chairperson of RT 011

(Source: Cipayung Village Profil)

Based on the list of female apparatus names in Cipayung Village, it shows the representation of women in the village government apparatus. This list shows that the needs and interests of women in the village can be represented through gender-perspective village programs. In contrast to the *BPD* in Cipayung Village, the village is still filled with men. With the presence of a female village head, it is hoped that women's aspirations can be encouraged to hold positions in the *BPD*. This statement is in line with what the Head of Panancangan Village said:

"The BPD's current term of office is only until 2024. Meanwhile, the BPD for this period has only served for one year. Later, in the next period in 2024, women should be encouraged to run for office so that women's interests can be accommodated." (Interview with the Head of Panancangan Village).

The presence of women in village structures in the three locations in this study is quite diverse. Cipayung Village tends to be proportional, where several village government organizational

structures are filled by many women in the village structure, including the village head, BPD women, and PKK and Posyandu cadres. Meanwhile, in Mekar Agung Village and Panancangan Village, there still needs to be more village structure.

However, there are often disputes over income between cadres and the village council. Researchers tried to investigate by conducting interviews with the community where the informant we studied was a cadre. The informant said that his position as a cadre in terms of salary was not proportional to the workload carried out.

"I think it is better to be a BPD member than a Posyandu cadre. Often, BPD does nothing for a month but still gets a salary. The salaries of BPD members are also greater than those of cadres. These Posyandu cadres have a harder job than BPD members, especially as they help midwives with this and that data collection. BPD members' salaries are IDR 900,000 per month, while cadres' salaries are only IDR 75,000. It is also not given every month. Yesterday, it was only disbursed in January, February, and March. For most cadres,

there is an additional incentive from the village of IDR 100,000 per month" (Interview with cadre of Cipayung Village, 2023).

This section explains how women in formal structures can have different effects. It can be compared to the presence of women in formal government structures. The greater women's representation, the more women's interests will be accommodated. This phenomenon is different from villages with a minimal presence of women in the political structure. Their challenge to bring women's interests into focus becomes more excellent.

The Emerging Sphere of Women's Leadership in Village Areas

In this section, the researcher will try to classify the comparison table of women's leadership in the village realm, in this case, the female village heads in the three research locations, namely Cipayung Village, Mekar Agung Village, and Panancangan Village.

Table 2. Comparative Table of Female Village Heads in Cipayung Village, Mekar Agung Village, and Panancangan Village

Village Head	Cipayung Village	Mekar Agung Village	Penancangan Village
	Past: Women Now: Women (2 periods)	Past: Women Now: Men	Past: Men Now: Men
Candidacy Background	First period: Family encouragement and support. Second period: Demand from the Community	Women village head: Mandate from H. Mulyadi Jayabaya (former Lebak Regency) Men village head: Form of service to the village, after retirement from state apparatus.	It started with the husband's desire to run for the nomination, but due to his educational background, he encouraged his wife to run for the nomination.

Campaign Promises	Activate village offices regarding administrative services. There is no promise of programs towards women's empowerment.	General Program Serving the Community	General community program	village service
Representation of Women Leaders and Structural Barriers	Does not guarantee women's representation	Does not guarantee women's representation	Does not guarantee women's representation	
Women in village structure village head, village council, village officials, cadres	Proportional	Men Domination	Men Domination	
Women's Involvement in <i>Musrenbang</i>	Women are involved (<i>PKK</i>) and there is a special <i>Musrenbang</i> (time difference during <i>Musrenbang</i>)	Open Women are involved (<i>PKK, Posyandu</i>) but not specifically	Open Women involved (<i>PKK, Posyandu, Village Midwife</i>) but not specifically	

Candidacy Background

In this context, female village heads' nomination of women leaders shows the progress of women's involvement in politics amidst the massive patriarchal culture. The election of women through the nomination of village heads shows a shift in people's views. In this study, researchers wanted to examine the background of the nomination of women leaders in the village. Is the background of the nomination of women leaders in this context the village head purely from the desire of the women themselves so that it will affect the representation of women in every gender-perspective community program, or is there another focus in the background process of nominating women leaders in the villages in the three research locations?

Female leadership, in this case, a female village head, has occurred around Padarincang before. Thus, female leadership in the Padarincang area is familiar to the community. However, in Cipayung Village, one of the locations of this research, a female village head was the first time this had happened in the village. At the time of the research, Cipayung

Village was led by the first female village head, Mrs. Tatu Roilah. The background of Mrs. Tatu Roilah's candidacy for village head is inseparable from the challenges that become obstacles to women's involvement, which is none other than social construction. The community's view in Cipayung Village still assumes that men should be village leaders. However, because of the encouragement and support from Mrs. Tatu Roilah's family, she was convinced to run for village head.

Moreover, Mrs. Tatu Roilah's grandfather served as Head of Cipayung Village in the 1970s. Interestingly, Mrs. Tatu Roilah served as Cipayung village head for two periods. The second period was based on the support and aspirations of the Cipayung Village community, which felt comfortable with Mrs. Tatu Roilah's leadership. Seeing this proves that Cipayung Village has succeeded in terms of women's leadership amid the massive patriarchal culture that has been socially constructed. The existence of women leaders is no longer seen as weak and powerless but instead becomes an essential fundamental for the village government to advance as women leaders.

Furthermore, Mekar Agung Village, which became the second locus of this research, was also once led by a woman. Based on the interview results, Mrs. Nining ran for village head because of the mandate from H. Mulyadi Jayabaya. Of course, H. Mulyadi Jayabaya is an influential local strongman in the political clan in Lebak. In addition to having served as the regent of Lebak, Iti Octavia Jayabaya, the daughter of H. Mulyadi Jayabaya, is currently the regent of Lebak. Mulyadi Jayabaya has created a patronage scheme (Hidayat & Wardani, 2022; Nur'aini, 2018; Wasi, 2023). It is not news that patron-client relationships have taken root even in the realm of village leadership. However, Mrs. Nining's leadership as a female village head in Mekar Agung Village only served one period. Now, Mekar Agung Village is led by a village head named Mr. Madyasin.

As for Panancangan Village, it is the same as Cipayung Village, which is led by a female village head named Mrs. Elis, except that the background of Mrs. Elis' candidacy is not based on women's desire to be involved in participating in politics but rather on being an extension of men, in this case, her husband, Mrs. Elis. This statement was made directly by Mrs. Elis, the village head of Panancangan, when the researchers conducted an interview:

"Initially, it was my husband who was running for office. My mother had only moved to Panancangan Village for two years, while my husband was originally from here. Running for office was fine if he had money because, gradually, the campaign journey required a certificate. My husband did not graduate from junior high school, so his certificate was blocked, and my mother ran for office because she had

already spent money." (Interview with the Head of Panancangan Village, 2023).

Mrs. Elis' candidacy for village head was due to her husband's lack of education to run for village head in Panancangan. In addition, nominating the village head must be done with high economic and social capital. In addition to using economic capital during the socialization process, on the other hand, the father of Mrs. Elis is active in the market. He is the head of the association of traders in Panancangan Village. So, the network of power, which is the basis for attracting the masses to nominate the village head, becomes the political capital for carrying out social control, especially in the Panancangan Village community. This statement was made by Mrs. Elis during the interview:

"So my husband told me to become the village head because I had already spent money, even though I only graduated from vocational school and doubted whether I could do it. However, with the support of my husband and family and the council, I also managed the market as the head of the traders' association." (Interview with the Head of Panancangan Village, 2023).

Family support is an essential part of the process of women's candidacy when involved in politics. Likewise, as Mrs. Elis experienced during the nomination process, the courage to run for village head could not be separated from the support of her husband and family. In addition to family support, the economic base also became the winning capital during the nomination of the village head. Mrs. Elis's father is the head of a merchant association in the market in the Panancangan area. It is not surprising that Mrs. Elis succeeded in winning and being

elected as a female village head because of family support and a relatively strong economic capital base from her family.

Campaign promise

In this section, researchers examine campaign promises during the nomination of female village heads. The presence of women in politics is undoubtedly a breakthrough amid a massive patriarchal culture. The presence of women will be a form of representation for women to be able to voice the interests of women (Gusmansyah, 2019). However, researchers have not found campaign promises regarding gender-perspective programs and women's empowerment in both of them. During the nomination and socialization period, the three female village heads only gave general campaign promises related to village services to the community. Researchers see that there is no opportunity for women to create supporting spaces for empowerment. Women's representation needs to be addressed, even by women themselves. Women's interests are better voiced by themselves because they understand women's needs best (Gusmansyah, 2019). In addition, the decisions and policies formulated will influence the framework of representative democracy (Gusmansyah, 2019).

However, researchers found facts in the field from the three locations of women leaders. In this case, the village head said there was no program direction for women's empowerment or gender priority programs. The head of Cipayung Village said during the interview that campaign promises were related to the socialization of the village head candidacy.

"Our campaign promises are general and do not target a specific gender. Before I became village head, this village

office was never used for village activities, so there were no village employees. People must go to the village official's house if they have needs. Therefore, my campaign promise at that time was only one: I wanted to activate the village office from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. so that people who wanted to take care of administration did not need to come to the village head's house. Other promises only conform to existing regulations in Serang Regency." (Interview with the Head of Cipayung Village, 2023).

It was based on the statement of Mrs. Tatu, the head of Cipayung Village, who stated that there was no gender perspective program or women's empowerment. Mrs. Tatu focused on better village administration services in terms of community services. This statement aligns with the head of Mekar Agung Village regarding campaign promises when researchers conducted interviews.

"My program is to serve the community. The local community asked for an ambulance vehicle, and they needed it. Both men and women continue our responsibility as the village." (Interview with the Head of Mekar Agung Village, 2023).

Representation of Women Leaders and Structural Barriers

The phenomenon of female village heads in Banten is exciting because women's involvement in politics is unlikely amid a massive patriarchal culture. Moreover, a patriarchal society is closely associated with male dominance, including politics and leadership in social life. As the locus of this research, the female village heads in three villages show a breakthrough in women's involvement in politics, such as the village government.

As village heads, they often experienced structural obstacles in their leadership. There is disbelief that women can become leaders because of the inherent and socially constructed stereotype. The Head of Cipayung Village experienced this phenomenon during the initial nomination period as village head.

"When I first ran for office in 2013, a handful of people still said that if the village head was a woman, she could not participate in tahlil or Friday prayers. No one has issued a fatwa that women cannot be leaders. The people who do not like it say it is hard for a female village head not to smoke and drink coffee." (Interview with Cipayung Village Head, 2023).

Based on the statement of Mrs. Tatu, the Head of Cipayung Village, who told how she experienced obstacles and challenges, Even that was obtained before she took office as village head or was still at the nomination stage. There is an assumption that when the village head is a woman, she cannot participate in *tahlil* (a tradition carried out by the NU community with dhikr activities to honor people who have died). This gender-discriminatory assumption becomes a structural obstacle experienced by the village head.

There are exciting things during Mrs. Tatu's journey as village head. Initially, her leadership was considered trivial, and she experienced gender discrimination; finally, she was dismissed by proving her success in leading the village for two periods. The transformation of this acceptance is due to the nature and character of Mrs. Tatu as a woman who is closely related to 'motherhood' with a gentle soul addressing her community like a child. In addition, during Mrs. Tatu's tenure as

village head, she supported women's representation in the village government environment, in this case, the needs of female village government staff related to menstrual and maternity leave.

"Menstrual leave does not require a permission letter. For maternity leave rules, that should only be two months, but the village head relaxes the rules by coordinating with other staff if there is work that can still be done at home. Other staff will assist if it cannot be done at home." (Interview with the Head of Cipayung Village, 2023).

On the other hand, researchers conducted interviews with the community to examine women's leadership in this case, as happened to Mrs. Tatu in leading the Cipayung Village.

"The leader must be able to embrace the community. Do more than approach the public during the campaign period. The previous village head had no contact with the residents. The previous village head was more individualistic and did not manage village affairs. Different from the current village head." (Interview with the Cipayung Village Community, 2023).

The obstacles and challenges experienced by Mrs. Tatu as the head of Cipayung Village are also often similar to those experienced by the head of Panancangan Village. As stated by Mrs. Ellis, the female village head:

"Some protest why women cannot participate in tahlil." (Interview with the Head of Panancangan Village, 2023).

The presence of female leaders does not guarantee the realization of

gender-based programs and women's empowerment. The results showed that the three villages prioritized and took care of public affairs and large government projects closely related to men. For example, the Cipayung Village government prioritizes building bridges and village gates. Likewise, the Mekar Agung village government prioritizes road construction in its APBD budget. Likewise, the Panancangan Village Government prioritizes public accommodation with large government projects. This phenomenon shows that the presence of a female village head does not guarantee to encourage programs and accommodate the needs and representation of women.

"Suppose the priority is roads and infrastructure facilities. They prioritize the village axis road because the community will use it for mobile traders such as vegetable vendors, porridge vendors, motor vehicles, or cars." (Interview with the Head of Panancangan Village, 2023).

This priority is also stated by the Cipayung Village government, which prioritizes road construction.

"For now, it is conducive to prioritizing priority and urgent needs for the community, namely bridge construction, because several bridges were broken due to the flash flood disaster at the end of 2021. The bridge target is one bridge per year; whatever the village head says is a promise, so the community continuously asks for these promises. Whatever the residents need, we have to discuss it because the residents do not understand the limitations of our budget, so we have to work around it. There are roads that are still damaged, such as the road to the Dahu area, so the village still has homework along about 2.5km because it is still a path and

has only been built 250 meters with the cooperation of residents." (Interview with the Head of Cipayung Village, 2023).

Village affairs related to women are limited to the *Posyandu* program. Mrs. Tatu, the head of Cipayung Village, explained that women's affairs in Cipayung Village have a *Posyandu* program and no other women's empowerment programs.

"Because the program is from the government, there are no different or unique rules for women, but if the village head is male, it will be the same, and there are still women's representatives from PKK who oversee women's programs. Other than the Posyandu program, there are no other empowerment programs." (Interview with the Head of Cipayung Village, 2023).

In contrast to Cipayung Village, Mekar Agung Village has many affairs in the form of community empowerment programs involving the role of women. Not only are women active in the *Posyandu* program, but they are also active in managing *UMKM*. *UMKM* activities by women in Mekar Agung Village focus on making snacks and handicrafts from cassava, chips, bags, and *baduy* headbands. The village head often holds an association, then makes a *UMKM*, which is held in every *RW* to stimulate the community, especially women, to be actively involved and creative. The village government accommodates the women's economic empowerment program, and the community produces it.

In addition, the village plays a role in selling community products that have been made. Other than that, there is also a form of women's sports activity, such as volleyball. The Head of Mekar Agung Village also often carried out programs

related to assistance as a form of attention to the community, especially for less empowered women in the form of special assistance for widowed mothers. However, after completing Mrs. Eli's tenure as village head, programs related to women were not prioritized. After replacing the new village head, who was male, although there were programs related to women, they were only limited to the *Posyandu* program. Mr. Madyasin, the current head of Mekar Agung village, also said that regarding programs related to women's affairs.

"There is no program for women here, and the program will be specifically for cadre mothers, pregnant women, Posyandu, and PKK. There are no women's empowerment activities besides PKK and Posyandu." (Interview, Mr. Madyasin, Head of Mekar Agung Village, 2023).

Panancangan Village has a program from the central government called DRPPA (Women Friendly Village and Child Care). The program is integrated directly from the center to the village, implemented using the village budget, and only runs for one year. This program has established a women and children forum that accommodates aspirations and complaint services related to women and children. The aspirations and complaint services include cases of violence both in households and among children. The head of Panancangan Village explained about the DRPPA:

"The DRPPA program goes from the central government to the villages. However, it is not followed by a budget. Some activities are funded by the APBDs, for example, socialization. Some problems, such as complaints about mothers and

children, problems with children dropping out of school, and others, are only resolved through socialization. This village was chosen to be a women- and child-friendly village, meaning that cases of violence, child trafficking, and the sale of people are highlighted. Moreover, fortunately, there are no such cases." (Interview with the Head of Panancangan Village, 2023).

Inclusion and Exclusion of Women in the Village

Musrenbang often recognizes planning from two bases: top-down and bottom-up. Planning with a top-down strategy is usually caused by the need for more understanding of the community to develop the needs of their community and then submit to the government as a form of support. Meanwhile, bottom-up planning is identical to the government being the initiator of regulating the community with the policies or programs it makes. Women's involvement in development can undoubtedly lead to gaps in aspirations, given the persistence of a patriarchal culture that has been socially constructed. Although women are human individuals with the same and equal role in social affairs, the reality of development, including in the village realm, is still dominated by men. Women are present at the *Musrenbang* as a way of realizing the ideal development planning process. Women's involvement is a form of support for developing planning in a village.

Based on the field findings related to the involvement of women in the *Musrenbang* forum, among the three locations in this study, there are different ways in which the village government views and involves women in the *Musrenbang* forum. All three villages involved women, in this case, *PKK* cadres,

to convey their aspirations, such as the *Posyandu* program. During the *Musrenbang* forum, both men and women actively participated in the village planning and development process.

Mrs. Nining, the head of Mekar Agung village, stated this statement:

"Alhamdulillah, every Musrenbang at that time was present. There are RT, RW, and all community leaders because, in the village regulation, it is also regulated that their participation must be prioritized, so we prioritize cadre, Posyandu, and PKK mothers when there is any Musrenbang that uses the APBDes. We must involve all of them." (Interview with the Head of Mekar Agung Village, 2023).

In fact, during the *Musrenbang*, women's voices were often prioritized because of the priority program in the form of regulations for stunting. This statement was confirmed by the Head of Mekar Agung Village in his interview, explaining as follows:

"The Musrenbang invites community leaders, women leaders, youth leaders, and others, so we involve them all. However, we prioritize mothers because it is based on the regulation that mothers must be women. After all, there are regulations for stunting, so the direction is clear. It is mothers who know the impact on the community and what stunting and malnutrition are, so we involve them." (Interview with the Head of Mekar Agung Village, 2023).

In contrast to Mekar Agung Village, where women play an active role during the implementation of the *Musrenbang* forum, in Panancangan Village, the involvement of women is very passive, or it can be said that their involvement requires efforts and strategies from the

government as an initiator to organize and stimulate the women's community (top-down) to be able to actively convey their aspirations for the needs and interests of women themselves. However, it is unfortunate that women in Panancangan Village are very passive, so they need a female leader who can encourage women's programs. This statement was confirmed by the Head of Panancangan Village, who explained how passive the female community was in conveying their aspirations and needs during the implementation of *Musrenbang*.

"Some are active, and some are not. What if the women here know how to mobilize? If we are active, it is okay. If we are not, it is just the same lie, so there must be someone who keeps pushing, so there must be women leaders who encourage women's programs." (Interview with the Head of Panancangan Village, 2023).

The representation of women leaders does not support the lack of women's role in conveying the aspirations needed. Facts in the field found that Panancangan Village needed to establish a program or affairs for women's empowerment. The existence of community empowerment only focuses on male groups, such as the existence of livestock groups containing men. At the same time, women are not involved in this program because farming is a male activity that tends to be heavy work.

"In Musrenbang, it depends on what issues are being discussed. There is a community raising goats. Alhamdulillah, it has been running, and there were up to 11 goats this year. In the livestock group, women are not involved because they have to do heavy work." (Interview with the Head of Panancangan Village, 2023).

The implementation of *Musrenbang* is a forum for women's participation in village development planning. The three locations have different mechanisms, times, and levels of involvement by women. Cipayung Village, in the implementation of *Musrenbang*, is held twice a year. The implementation begins with the first period of pure stages, and the second period is related to planning changes. The participants involved in the *Musrenbang* in Cipayung Village are from the community represented by the LPM, youth represented by Karang Taruna, and women represented by *Posyandu* cadres and the *PKK*. The involvement of women in village planning and development deliberations focuses on discussions of public health so that it will be much more understanding in communicating well.

An exciting thing that happened in Cipayung Village was the implementation of village planning and development deliberations, where there was a unique *Musrenbang* mechanism for women. This difference is in terms of implementation time, where usually the morning time is used for *Musrenbang* in general, involving the community, both men and women. Meanwhile, the special *Musrenbang* held in the afternoon is specifically for women. Meanwhile, those in the women-only *Musrenbang* forum involved several parties: the Women's *BPD*, female village staff, *PKK* cadres, and *Posyandu* cadres. The Cipayung Village Head confirmed this statement during the interview:

"This special Musrenbang for women has been running since 2017. Before the Musrenbang, the RT usually has a meeting first so that it already has details for submission. Such as development priorities proposed by RT and RW.

Submissions are negotiated together, prioritizing urgent development." (Interview with the Head of Cipayung Village, 2023).

As for the women's village, regulation has yet to be established in Cipayung Village, so during the implementation process, it refers to the implementation guidelines and technical guidelines from the center. In addition, according to the statement of the head of Cipayung village, it is sufficient with the regulations made by the center so that it does not make special rules related to women's village regulations. For special attention to women, because it is a government program, there are no different or unique rules for women, but if the village head is male, it will be the same. There will still be a female representative from the *PKK* who oversees the women's program. Cipayung Village still needs to have a village regulation on women. It only generally follows the operational and technical guidelines from the center. The village feels that the regulations made by the center are sufficient, so they do not make special regulations.

The implementation of *Musrenbang* in Mekar Agung Village and Panancangan Village is similar in involving women such as *PKK* and *Posyandu* cadres. However, there is no specific *Musrenbang* regarding time or implementation mechanism. *Musrenbang* held in Mekar Agung Village or Panancangan Village is only limited to general implementation by involving several community leaders, organizations, and women, such as *PKK* cadres and *Posyandu* cadres. Women's involvement in *Musrenbang* does not just appear; it also needs encouragement from a forum or policy that can involve women's participation.

Conclusion

Based on the research results that have explained how the presence of female village heads in the three research locations, namely Cipayung Village, Mekar Agung Village, and Panancangan Village, shapes inclusiveness, it can be concluded that the presence of female village heads provides a breakthrough during a massively socially constructed community culture. The results of the study found that the involvement of women in the political sphere, in this case, village politics, was initially underestimated, and they still experienced discrimination over gender stereotypes that they possessed. However, they were able to prove the success of their leadership. Female village heads in Cipayung Village prove that they succeeded in proving their ability to lead the village government to serve for two periods. On the other hand, the factors driving the advancement of women to be able to run for village head are based on internal and external factors. Internal factors are based on the desire of the women themselves to run for village head. Family support, economic capital, and closeness to local strongmen are external factors. The facts in the field also show that women who are involved in becoming village heads usually become an extension of their family or husband.

In addition, the results of this study also found that the existence of female leaders, in this case, female village heads, still needs to guarantee the representation of women's interests in the public sphere, which is guaranteed by realizing inclusiveness. This can be seen from how the presence of women involved in village planning and development deliberations is only a formality without any programs related to women's empowerment that can support women's progress apart from

the posyandu program. From these three locations, it is more dominant to prioritize running programs that tend to be masculine, in this case, related to the construction of roads and village gates. However, there are community empowerment programs, such as the formation of livestock groups, that are only filled by male communities without the involvement of women because they are considered incapable of running the program.

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