

The Role of Public Leadership of a Bumdes Director Based on Islamic Values in the Framework of Improving the Local Economy

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ABSTRACT

Arya Kemuning is an example of a Badan Usaha Milik Desa (BUMDes) that has successfully generated profits and provided benefits to the surrounding community. This success cannot be separated from the role of the BUMDes director, who has effectively led BUMDes Arya Kemuning in achieving its current performance. This study aimed to analyze the role of public leadership in the management of BUMDes Arya Kemuning, examine the implementation of Islamic values in BUMDes management, and integrate public leadership and Islamic values to enhance the contribution of BUMDes to the local economy. This research employed a qualitative approach, with data collected through interviews and observations. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman model, while data validity was ensured through triangulation. The BUMDes director successfully implemented Montgomery Van Wart's public leadership dimensions, including inspirational integrity, technical-managerial capabilities, and transformational leadership, which were synergized with Islamic leadership values, namely *sidiq* (truthfulness), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *tabligh* (effective communication), and *fathonah* (competence and wisdom). The results showed that the synergy between Montgomery Van Wart's public leadership framework and Islamic leadership values effectively contributed to improving the local economy, including through local employment creation and increased village community welfare supported by local revenue (Pendapatan Asli Desa/PAD) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds. The integration of professional managerial capabilities with Islamic values became a key factor in the success of BUMDes Arya Kemuning in achieving economic independence while generating positive social impacts for the community.

INTRODUCTION

Village-Owned Enterprises (Badan Usaha Milik Desa/BUMDes) are village business entities established to manage village economic activities and are supported by village capital participation (Aji et al., 2025; Alfirdausi & Riyanto, 2019; Fahmi & Panorama, 2025; Falah & Prihadyanti, 2024; Kania et al., 2021; Lesmana et al., 2025; Sofyani et al., 2019). Based on data from the Ministry of Finance, village funds allocated for 2024 amounted to IDR 71 trillion, distributed to 75,259 villages. This allocation increased compared with IDR 70 trillion in 2023 (Ministry of Finance Learning Center, 2024). According to data from the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration, Indonesia has 65,941 BUMDes,

of which 75.8% are active and 24.2% are inactive (Antara, 2024). One factor influencing the success or inactivity of BUMDes is the leadership capacity of BUMDes directors, particularly their understanding of business management, innovation, and creativity (El Anshori & Enceng, 2024; Sari, 2021; Sudrajat, 2024). To encourage the continued growth and development of BUMDes, the government provides recognition for BUMDes that demonstrate effective management and contribute to the development of independent villages and community welfare improvement.

In 2023, Kuningan Regency received an award as the best BUMDes supervisor at the national level from the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration. In addition, Kaduella Village in Kuningan Regency achieved second place in the 2023 Nusantara Tourism Village Competition in the Advanced/Independent Village category. This achievement was closely related to the role of BUMDes Arya Kemuning in managing two leading tourism destinations, namely Telaga Biru Cicerem and Side Land Swimming Pool, which increased BUMDes revenue and contributed to improving community welfare. Through the management and development of Telaga Biru Cicerem tourism destination, known for its clear waters and natural environment, the site has become an attraction for local visitors, domestic tourists, and international visitors. Within one year, BUMDes Arya Kemuning generated revenue of IDR 3 billion and provided employment opportunities for 157 residents of Kaduella Village. Therefore, the existence of BUMDes Arya Kemuning has contributed to reducing unemployment, empowering local communities, and improving community welfare (Abshor & Ansori, 2025; Pawitan et al., 2025).

This achievement demonstrates that leadership is one of the determining factors in successful BUMDes management. Previous research has shown that effective BUMDes management is influenced by leadership factors (Aprilia, Dwi, & Nastiti, 2021). Leadership also influences employee commitment in BUMDes, with stronger leadership contributing to increased organizational commitment (Edy, Marnis, & Syakdanur, 2019). Other research indicates that the commitment of BUMDes directors is a critical factor in achieving successful BUMDes management (Permata Sari, 2021).

Village-Owned Enterprises (Badan Usaha Milik Desa/BUMDes) can be categorized as an implementation of public leadership because their functions and objectives focus on serving village community interests rather than solely pursuing commercial profits. Van Wart (2003) developed a conceptual framework for public sector leadership that integrates three main elements. First, the skill dimension, which includes technical and managerial capabilities. Second, leadership characteristics, which emphasize integrity and the ability to inspire others. Third, a leadership approach that applies a transformational style within the context of public service (Tiara, Khairil, & Susanti, 2025).

In Islamic teachings, every human being is regarded as a leader (khalifah) in accordance with the concept of stewardship stated in the Qur'an, particularly in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 30, as follows:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

It means:

"(Remember) when your Lord said to the angels, "I will make a caliph on earth." They said, "Are You going to place someone there who will cause corruption and shed blood, while we praise You and sanctify Your name?" He said, "Indeed I know what you do not know."

Furthermore, the command for humans to be leaders is also found in the following hadith:

"Each of you is a leader, and each of you will be held accountable for your leadership. A national leader is a leader and will be held accountable for his people. A husband is a leader for his family and will be held accountable for his family. A wife is a leader in her husband's household and will be held accountable for her household. A servant is a custodian of his master's property and will be held accountable for his responsibilities. Therefore, each of you is a leader and will be held accountable for your leadership." This verse and hadith explain that Muslims are encouraged to develop leadership qualities, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Several leadership characteristics demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) include: (1) *sidiq* (honesty and integrity); (2) *amanah* (trustworthiness); (3) *fathonah* (intelligence and wisdom); and (4) *tabligh* (the ability to convey messages effectively) (Ghonim & Muttaqin, 2024).

Research on the leadership role of BUMDes directors has been conducted in several previous studies. A study entitled "The Leadership Role of the Director of BUMDes Hanyukupi in the Management of the Water Byur Tourism Object in Kapanewon Ponjong" aimed to analyze the leadership role of the BUMDes Hanyukupi director in managing Water Byur Tourism Object. The findings showed that the BUMDes Hanyukupi director had performed important interpersonal, informational, and decision-making roles in managing Water Byur; however, several challenges remained, including employees' limited understanding of their tasks and workflow (Saputri, Mayvaa, & Nursanti, 2025). Another study entitled "The Role of the BUMDes Director in Improving Performance: Survey on BUMDes Amanah Sejahtera, Sungai Buluh Village, Kuantan Singingi Regency" examined the role of BUMDes leaders in improving organizational performance. The results indicated that the BUMDes director performed three main roles in improving performance: strategic, technical, and supporting roles (Salmiah, Nanda, & Adino, 2022). Furthermore, the study "Leadership Style, Local Wisdom, and Village-Owned Enterprise Accountability" explored the relationship between leadership style, local wisdom, and village income improvement in strengthening the accountability of the Bersama Rejo Makmur Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes). The study found that transformational leadership and the implementation of local wisdom played important roles in ensuring accountability and fulfilling the interests of various stakeholders, including the community, managers, and village government (Ardiyansyah, 2022).

Previous studies on BUMDes leadership have successfully identified the roles of BUMDes directors from general managerial perspectives, including interpersonal, informational, strategic, technical, and transformational leadership roles, and have linked these roles to performance improvement, accountability, and the application of local wisdom. However, a research gap remains, as limited studies have explicitly examined how Islamic values function as a practical framework for leadership roles in BUMDes management. The novelty of this study lies in integrating Montgomery Van Wart's public leadership theory with Islamic leadership values (*sidiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah*) as a practical framework for BUMDes management, an approach that has not been systematically explored in previous research. Therefore, this study highlights how the integration of Islamic values within public

leadership can contribute to strengthening local economic development while supporting BUMDes economic independence.

This study aimed to analyze the role of public leadership in the management of BUMDes Arya Kemuning, examine the implementation of Islamic values in its management, and integrate public leadership and Islamic values to enhance the contribution of BUMDes to the local economy. The findings of this research are expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of leadership literature by integrating Western public leadership theory with Islamic values in the context of village-owned enterprises. Practically, this research provides insights for BUMDes directors, policymakers, and village governments in developing more effective and value-based leadership strategies to achieve economic independence and improve community welfare.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach to examine the integration of Islamic leadership values into BUMDes management practices (Sugiyono, 2017). The research subjects included the BUMDes director, managers, and community members directly involved in BUMDes management. The research focused on the integration of Islamic values in BUMDes leadership and its contribution to improving the local economy. The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews and direct observations of leadership practices, while secondary data were obtained from official documents, including BUMDes financial reports, organizational regulations, and relevant government policies. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with the BUMDes director, employees, and community members. Data validity was ensured through source and method triangulation. Data analysis was performed using the Miles and Huberman model, which involved data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Proposition 1: Analysis of the Role of Public Leadership in the Management of the Arya Kemuning Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes)

The BUMDes Director's leadership in transforming the Arya Kemuning BUMDes aligns with Montgomery Van Wart's public leadership theory, namely the characteristics of inspirational-integrity, technical-managerial capability, and a transformational leadership style. In terms of technical capability, the BUMDes Director demonstrated competence in managing the organization, including establishing an organizational structure, dividing duties and responsibilities, and implementing a previously nonexistent bookkeeping system. Furthermore, the use of QRIS technology as a payment facility represents an innovation to improve operational efficiency and facilitate accessibility for consumers in the digital era. Meanwhile, in terms of managerial capability, the BUMDes Director implemented a promotional strategy through influencers and empowering the community to upload digital content. The most prominent managerial capability was evident in his excellent service policy, which included free delivery of lost items to customers. This action represents excellent service that goes beyond standard duties, as the leader builds a reputation through integrity and care.

The leadership of the BUMDes Director in managing the BUMDes does not stop at technical-managerial capabilities only, but also touches on aspects of integrity and inspirational characteristics. From Van Wart's perspective, an effective public leader must have a

commitment to prioritizing the public interest. Van Wart defines integrity as not merely honesty, but rather consistency between words and concrete actions. The Director's commitment that the BUMDes is not only profit-oriented, but also an instrument of welfare, is a manifestation of integrity values. According to Van Wart, a leader with integrity will ensure that the organization provides benefits to the community, thereby creating strong public trust. Providing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) routinely every year and absorbing local labor demonstrates that the BUMDes Director has proven integrity and cares about the welfare of the community.

According to Van Wart, inspirational leadership is a leader's ability to communicate a vision, inspire enthusiasm, and mobilize the participation of others for a common goal. By transforming Telaga Biru and creating jobs, the BUMDes Director demonstrates the village's immense potential. This inspires the community to abandon urbanization and instead participate in developing their own village. Furthermore, the BUMDes Director's ability to mobilize residents to actively promote tourism on social media demonstrates his success in instilling a sense of ownership within the community. The local and national awards received by BUMDes Arya Kemuning are evidence of the BUMDes Director's widely recognized inspirational vision. This achievement inspires BUMDes managers and the community to continue innovating. Within Van Wart's framework, the BUMDes Director has achieved the stage of effective public leadership. The BUMDes Director combines integrity, demonstrating moral and social commitment, with inspirational skills, transforming vision into a community economic movement. This synergy has proven effective in increasing BUMDes revenue while simultaneously generating significant social impact. This demonstrates that profitability and community well-being can go hand in hand under inspiring leadership that upholds integrity.

The leadership of BUMDes Director Arya Kemuning in managing BUMDES is an implementation of Transformational Leadership in the public sector as defined by Montgomery Van Wart. In Van Wart's theory, transformational leadership is not simply about system change, but about how a leader is able to change the behavior, values, and motivation of his subordinates to achieve optimal performance through a humanistic approach. Van Wart emphasized that transformational leaders must be able to communicate a simple yet powerful vision. The BUMDes Director's message to "serve every visitor like a king" is a form of providing an inspiring vision. Even without formal training, this message is easily understood by employees who are local residents with limited educational backgrounds. The BUMDes Director does not provide complex technical instructions, but rather instills philosophical values about excellent service standards that are then implemented by all employees. Furthermore, the characteristics of transformational leadership according to Van Wart are attention to individual needs and the development of follower potential. The BUMDes Director's awareness of his employees' educational backgrounds demonstrates an aspect of individual consideration. Rather than implementing rigid rules or severe punishments, he chooses the "call and remind" method when mistakes occur. This approach is a form of education that increases employee loyalty. In the context of public service, it creates a conducive work environment where employees feel valued and guided, not simply supervised. By not establishing rigid rules, the BUMDes Director provides space for his employees to adapt to field situations without fear. Van Wart explained that transformational leaders encourage their followers to be creative in solving problems. The BUMDes Director's relaxed attitude

allows employees to provide sincere service, such as delivering leftover items to homes, which is born of moral awareness, not out of compulsion to comply with rules. The BUMDes Director's integrity, which is oriented towards community welfare and social commitment, provides an ideal influence on his subordinates. Employees see a leader who works not for personal profit, but for the progress of the village. Based on Van Wart's theory, the BUMDes Director successfully transformed the BUMDes by simplifying managerial complexity into a values-based approach.

Proposition 2: Analysis of Islamic values implemented in the management of BUMDes Arya Kemuning

The Prophet Muhammad SAW (peace be upon him) is a role model in leadership. There are four leadership values of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that every leader should emulate: Sidiq, Amanah, Tabligh, and Fathonah. Sidiq is not only true in his words, but also in the alignment between words and actions. The Director of the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) demonstrates the Sidiq character through his commitment that BUMDes must have an impact on welfare, not just profit. This is implemented in the form of providing CSR and PAD every year and creating jobs for local residents. The Director of BUMDes fulfills his leadership promises with results that can be directly felt by the community, so that BUMDes gains trust either in the local or national levels

Trustworthiness is the ability to maintain responsibility and achieve transparency in the management of public resources. Establishing an organizational structure, mapping out tasks (tupoksi), and hiring a treasurer and bookkeeper are all manifestations of trustworthiness administratively. By establishing this system, the BUMDes Director ensures that the community funds and assets managed by the BUMDes are well-maintained. Furthermore, his act of delivering lost items to visitors free of charge demonstrates trustworthiness in safeguarding others' trusts

Tabligh means conveying the truth in an appropriate manner while educating effectively. The BUMDes Director, recognizing the limited educational background of his employees, takes on the role of educator. Rather than providing rigid rules or complex formal training, the BUMDes Director uses a persuasive tabligh approach, advising them to "serve guests like kings." When mistakes are made, the BUMDes Director prefers to call and remind them personally. This is a communication technique that educates without judgment, so that the values of service are conveyed and well-received by visitors

Fathonah in intelligence that gives birth to wisdom in taking innovative and tactical solutions. The BUMDes Director's intelligence is evident in her ability to identify opportunities and overcome obstacles. The use of QRIS to facilitate payments and the addition of tourist spots demonstrates her aptitude for adapting to technology and the market. Leveraging influencers and mobilizing the community for digital promotions is a smart move in modern marketing management. Her flexible approach and understanding of the sociological conditions of the surrounding community demonstrates "emotional intelligence" in leading people

The leadership of BUMDES Director Arya Kemuning shows that the application of prophetic values, namely Sidiq Amanah, Tabligh, and Fathonah, is not only an ethical guideline, but also a driving force for the economy for the community

Proposition 3: Integration of the role of public leadership and Islamic values in order to increase the contribution of BUMDes to the local economy

The success of BUMDES Arya Kemuning in driving the local economy is in accordance with Montgomery Van Wart's three-pillar model of public leadership integrated with the four prophetic values of Sidiq, Amanah, Tabligh, Fathonah. This integration creates a business that not only pursues profit, but also social welfare. The BUMDes Director demonstrates technical-managerial capabilities that align with the Fathonah character. Technically, he built a bookkeeping system and organizational structure that previously did not exist, and implemented digital innovations such as payments via QRIS. Managerially, his intelligence is evident in marketing strategies through influencers and community empowerment for digital promotion as well as adding Instagrammable spots that are favored by visitors. This innovation successfully maximizes the utilization of the village's natural potential, namely Cicereum Lake and transforms it into a productive business unit capable of generating a turnover of IDR 3 billion per year. According to Van Wart's theory, integrity is the consistency between words and actions. This is the embodiment of the traits of Sidiq (truthful/honest) and Amanah (trustworthy). The BUMDes Director demonstrates his moral commitment by ensuring that BUMDes functions as an instrument of welfare, not just generating profit. Public funds are managed transparently through an orderly administration system. This integrity is demonstrated by a fixed contribution of 25% to Village Original Income (PAD) and a 10% allocation to CSR funds. Building public trust becomes social capital that strengthens village economic independence. Van Wart emphasized that transformational leaders must be able to translate a strong vision into concrete actions. This aligns with the nature of Tabligh, where the Director takes a persuasive and educational approach to employees with limited educational backgrounds. Rather than implementing rigid rules, he instills the philosophy of "serving guests like kings" and employs a "calling and reminding" approach to build loyalty. This humanistic approach successfully achieves full local employment, with all employees being local residents. Successful job creation at the village level effectively reduces unemployment and curbs urbanization, as communities have hope and a decent livelihood in their own villages.

CONCLUSION

The success of the Arya Kemuning Village-Owned Enterprise (Badan Usaha Milik Desa/BUMDes) in supporting the local economy resulted from the integration of Montgomery Van Wart's public leadership model, which includes technical-managerial capabilities, inspirational integrity, and a transformational leadership style, with four prophetic values: sidiq, amanah, tabligh, and fathonah. Through the fathonah value reflected in technical-managerial capabilities, the BUMDes director successfully transformed the natural potential of Telaga Biru Cicerem into a productive, digitally supported business unit with an annual turnover of IDR 3 billion. Integrity aligned with the values of sidiq and amanah supported transparent financial management, resulting in tangible contributions of 25% to village revenue (Pendapatan Asli Desa/PAD) and 10% to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, thereby strengthening village social capital. Meanwhile, a transformational leadership style combined with tabligh values fostered a humanistic and educational approach in managing local employees, effectively communicating and internalizing the vision of "serving guests like kings." Overall, this leadership synergy not only contributed to business profitability but also generated significant social impacts through local employment creation, unemployment

reduction, and decreased urban migration, ultimately supporting sustainable village economic independence.

Based on these findings, several recommendations are proposed. For BUMDes directors and managers, it is recommended that Islamic leadership values continue to be integrated with professional managerial practices, as this combination has demonstrated effectiveness in achieving both economic performance and social benefits. For village governments and policymakers, continuous training and capacity-building programs for BUMDes directors should be developed, particularly in digital literacy, financial management, and value-based leadership, to support the adoption of successful practices from Arya Kemuning in other villages. For future researchers, comparative studies involving multiple BUMDes across different regions are recommended to examine the broader applicability of this leadership model and to evaluate the long-term sustainability of the economic and social impacts generated by value-based leadership approaches.

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