

“Damang” Leadership in the Traditional Government of Dayak Loksado of Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency of South Kalimantan Province during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract. This study aims to see and prove that leadership is a social phenomenon that always exists, and is inherent in every society, both modern and traditional societies. “Damang” as the sacred leader of the Meratus Dayak Tribe in Loksado District has a very dominant position and role in various dimensions of Loksado Dayak community life, namely in human relations with humans, human relationships with the universe, and human relationships with the Creator (God) through Nini Bahatara. The research method used is a qualitative method with data collection techniques are observation and in-depth interviews, with key informants, in this case, "damang" and other parties directly related to the research focus. The results showed that the "damang" as the highest leader in the traditional government of the Loksado Dayak community in the Meratus Mountains area, precisely in the Loksado District Administration, Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency, South Kalimantan Province, has a very central and strategic role and function for people in the socio-economic, political and governmental fields. On the other hand, in the same area, the formal government of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia is also running, in this case, the village government, sub-district government, and district government. In reality, the implementation of these two systems of government (traditional Dayak Loksado government and formal government) can run in harmony and synergize with each other to carry out the functions of government, development, community, and community empowerment. Especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. The benefits of this research are as input for the administration of government in the era of regional autonomy and during the Covid-19 pandemic, where all elements and resources and local wisdom owned by the community can be used optimally to realize the welfare of the people.

Keywords: “Damang” Leadership, Traditional Government, Dayak Loksado, Covid-19 Pandemic

1 Introduction

In general, the countries in the world have ethnic and cultural diversity. In the 184 currently independent nations, there are 600 living language groups and 5,000 ethnic groups. Only a few countries can say whose citizens share the same language or belong to the same ethnolinguistic group. This diversity results in several potential problems to cause many disputes in various matters, such as language rights, regional autonomy, political representation, educational curricula, land claims, immigration and naturalization policies, even national symbols, such as the national anthem or national holidays. Of course, there must be an answer that is morally

justifiable and politically recognizable. These problems are the biggest challenges faced by democratic life today [1].

Indonesia is one of the largest countries in the world, with around 17,508 islands separated by an ocean and a multi-ethnic country. Even though the Indonesian population comes from one race, because they spread to various islands, they lose contact with each other which results in the growth of diversity in ethnic groups, religions, customs, languages, and cultures. Based on the conditions, constitutionally in Article 18 of the 1945 Constitution mandates that: The division of Indonesia regions into a large and small area, with the form of government structure determined by law, taking into account and remembering the basis of deliberation in the government system, and the right of origin in preferential region”.

Until now, Indonesia has 34 provinces and 498 regencies/cities. In each of these provinces and districts/cities, of course, the customs and traditions that make these areas have different characteristics from other regions. In addition, several regions in Indonesia also live and develop traditional government systems, such as the Loksado Dayak Traditional Government System, Ambon Traditional Government System, South of Sumatera Traditional Government System, System of Balinese Traditional Government, and the Model of Nagari Government in West of Sumatera.

Over time, the traditional government leadership has been increasingly abandoned by the local community [2][3]. This change began to occur since the influence of the Dutch colonial nation. Several factors cause these changes in presence of the other leadership systems, that are capable of controlling public life. In addition, the existence of a power system that is more rational and forces people to obey it, because it has legal sanctions and legal instruments with clear boundaries of power. In addition, the existence of social change is the entry of the influence of a new system of knowledge and belief, which rejects excessive ancestral myths, namely the entry of formal education and the entry of Islam, Protestant Christianity, and Catholic Christianity which have their leadership system based on religious provisions.

Individual attachment to the old customary social unit is getting weaker with the increasing number of educated people, plus the influence of the market economy system and modern technology. Overall, social changes in the lives of sub-ethnic groups in several regions in Indonesia have caused the functions and roles of traditional leadership to be increasingly considered incompatible with the progress of the times. Likewise, the leadership of the “*damang*” in the traditional government of the Loksado Dayak, from time to time also experienced a shift. However, the existence of the “*damang*” leadership until now continues to run well and can organize its government peacefully, and can coexist with the formal government in harmony.

The problem in this study is how the leadership system "damang" and the mechanism of its relationship with the Formal Government in the implementation of local government and factors that affect the sustainability of the Traditional Dayak Loksado Government.

2 Method

The research method used is a qualitative method, with data collection techniques are observation and in-depth interviews with key informants, in this case, the “*damang*” and other parties directly related to the focus of the research, such as the Head of Loksado Village, Head of Loksado Sub-district, Head of the National Unity Agency and Politics (Kesbangpol) Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency.

3 Discussion

South Kalimantan Province is one of the provinces in Indonesia which is located on the island of Kalimantan with the capital city being Banjarmasin, consisting of 2 urban areas and 11 regencies. Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency (HSS) with the capital city Kandungan, is one of the oldest regencies in South Kalimantan Province which consists of 10 sub-districts. Loksado sub-district is one of the sub-districts in Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency, it has distinctive demographic characteristics, which has an area of 228 km² divided into 13 villages with a population of 7,402 people.

In Loksado District, it is known that there is traditional leadership in the "Loksado Dayak Traditional Government System" which is located in the interior of the island of Kalimantan, precisely in the Meratus Mountains area, which is administratively located in the Loksado District, South Hulu Sungai Regency, South Kalimantan Province. This Loksado Dayak Traditional Leader is known by the title "damang" who has a very dominant role in the life of the Loksado Dayak community in various dimensions of their lives, both in human relations with humans, human relationships with nature, and human relationships with the Creator through Nini Bahatara.

If interpreted literally, "damang" is a person who always "bamamang" (meaning: speaking) in front of his followers and his followers will always follow what is said (ordered) by the "damang". Because to be appointed as a "damang", a person has some requirements, including having a lineage with the previous "damang", being devoted to God Almighty, being able to read and writing, getting support from the traditional leaders who lead the hall (balai adat) : a longhouse for ceremonial activities and rituals of customs and beliefs, community meetings, and others). In addition to these conditions, implicitly other conditions are unusual and beyond scientific reason, namely being able to speak with ancestral spirits, being able to understand the Balinese language, being able to feel and hear and read the hearts and minds of others, and have high power. So that a "damang" who is chosen and appointed is a charismatic figure in the Loksado Dayak community. Therefore, the Loksado Dayak community considers that what is conveyed by "damang" is a command and instructions from "Gods" that must be followed and obeyed.

According to Koentjaraningrat [4] by borrowing the typological model developed by M. D. Sahlins in his essay, Poor Man, Rich Man, Big Man, Chief [5], that the traditional leadership system in Irian Jaya can be classified into 4 types of leadership in society, namely: (1) the type of authoritative man; (2) King type; (3) type of head klen; and (4) mixed type. The findings of this study show that the leadership "damang" in the traditional dayak Loksado government belongs to a mixed type between (1) authoritative male types; and (2) klen head type.

Moreover, with reference to Max Weber's opinion, that charismatic leadership is a divine gift that cannot be cultivated in any way. So that this charismatic leader has extraordinary abilities (superhuman). This study was successful in identifying the profile of "damang" based on the history of Loksado. Generally those who have served as "damang" are simple figures, friendly, polite, communicative, charismatic, have high occult knowledge, and other characteristics that are generally not owned by ordinary people. This proves that "damang" can be said to be a traditional leader who has charisma.

In addition, "damang" also has a very central and strategic role in the life of the Loksado Dayak community, both in social, economic, political, and government life. In social life, the role and position of the "damang" is reflected in every ritual implementation of the "Kaharingan" belief adopted by the Loksado Dayak community. There are 3 rituals in the "Kaharingan" belief, namely: (1) rituals related to human life, such as the birth of a baby,

marriage, building halls, houses, and others; (2) rituals related to the community's main work, namely farming and gardening; and (3) rituals related to human death.

In the economic life of the Loksado Dayak community, the leadership of the "damang" is very decisive in the pattern of farming and gardening with the shifting field method with a "scroll back" pattern with a span of 5-8 years, which must begin with the "basambu" ritual. This "basambu" ceremony (ritual) is a ritual that is carried out before starting farming and gardening work. In addition, community members who will change their main occupation from farming and gardening, for example, trading, employees, builders, tailors, or other types of work, must always ask for the opinion and blessing and direction of the "damang". However, they still have to try to keep working as farmers or planters, because farming and gardening in the view of the Kaharingan Faith is an obligation for its citizens to maintain the availability of staple food for the community, especially rice.

According to Helmke and Levitsky [6], in formal and informal institutional relations within a country, it is generally based on the typology of four patterns of institutional interaction, namely: (1) complementary; (2) accommodative; (3) competition (competition); and (4) substitutive. In the pattern of relations (relations) between formal government and traditional dayak Loksado government, it is found that the pattern of interconnection of the two is complementary. This certainly has a positive impact on the sustainability of the Loksado Government.

Regarding politics, the Loksado Dayak people will always make the political choice of "damang" as a reference for their political choices. So that the political direction of the Loksado Dayak community will be largely determined by the "damang". Meanwhile, related to government, in addition to the implementation of formal government in the Meratus Mountains area, in this case, the Loksado District Government, Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency (HSS), and 11 villages in this sub-district, namely: Halunuk Village, Panggungan Village, Lumpangi Village, Malinau Village, Hulu Banyu Village, Tumingki Village, Kamawakan Village, Loklahung Village, Loksado Village, Repeat Village, and Haratai Village. According to the Indonesian government system, this village government is the spearhead in governance, development, and society, as well as the traditional Loksado Dayak government under the leadership of "damang" along with a set of kadamangan government structures. In its implementation, the formal government and the traditional government of Dayak Loksado can run in harmony and synergize with each other, so that the wheels of the modern government of the Republic of Indonesia and the traditional government of Dayak Loksado can run together. Like during the Covid-19 Pandemic, where the Loksado District government under the leadership of the Camat and all his staff and 11 villages under the leadership of the Village Head and his staff together with Mr. Damang Irmanto and all ranks of Kadamangan Loksado socialized the importance of implementing Health Protocol 3 M (Wearing Mask, Washing Hands and Keeping Distance), which then becomes 5 M (Wearing Mask, Washing Hands and Keeping Distance, Reducing Mobility, and Avoiding Crowds). In addition, of course also socialized about the importance of vaccines to build community immunity, where this vaccination is not only aimed at protecting oneself, but also to protect family and others.

There are a number of factors that affect the leadership of "damang". These factors are internal factors (personal ability, education and experience, communicative, ability of subordinates, and citizens of the Dayak Loksado tribe) and external factors (local government, advances in science and technology in the field of information and communication, and the implementation of village development and development in the village).

To the current Covid-19 Pandemic, in the context of reducing community mobility, especially people from outside, the existence of "damang" leadership is very much needed by

the Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency Government and all residents of the Meratus Mountains area. One of the efforts made by the Loksado and Damang District Governments and their staff is to temporarily close and gradually open some natural tourist sites, such as: "Haratai Waterfall", Riam Anai Waterfall, Lightning Waterfall, Rampah Menjangan Waterfall, Rampah Lambin Waterfall, Rampah Nettle Waterfall, Tinggiran Hayam Waterfall, Tanuhi Hot Springs, and Amandit River Rafting (Bamboo Rafting). In addition, the activities and rituals of the Kaharingan customs and beliefs of the Loksado Dayak community are also reduced and are required to implement strict and disciplined Prokes. Because with the authority and charismatic as well as the authority it has, the 3M Health Protocol (Wearing Masks, Washing Hands and Keeping Distance) and then developing into 5M (Wearing Masks, Washing Hands and Keeping Distance + Reducing Mobility and Avoiding Crowds) can be enforced by good.

In addition to jointly with the local government, the damang and all his staff, and the Loksado Dayak community, also carry out the "Reject Bala" ritual. This Rejecting Bala ritual is carried out to ask the Creator (God) so that the people who are in the Meratus Mountains area in particular and the people of Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency in general and even the people of South Kalimantan Province and all citizens of the Republic of Indonesia are protected from all outbreaks of the Covid-19 Pandemic. 19 and natural disasters.

4 Conclusion

Leadership as a social phenomenon that always exists and is inherent in every society, both modern society and traditional society. "damang" as the sacred leader of the Meratus Dayak Tribe in Loksado District has a very dominant position and role in various dimensions of Loksado Dayak community life, both in human relations with humans, human relationships with the universe, and human relationships with the Creator (God) through Nini Bahatara. In social, economic, political, and government life, "damang" also has a very central and strategic role for the Loksado Dayak community. Social change in society caused by the entry of the influence of the knowledge system from formal education and new beliefs, such as the entry of Islam, Protestant Christianity and Catholic Christianity which reject excessive ancestral myths and have their own leadership system based on the provisions religion.

Individual attachment to the old customary social unit is getting weaker with the increasing number of educated people, plus the influence of the market economic system and modern technology. In some regions in Indonesia, the functions and roles of traditional leadership are increasingly considered incompatible with the times. Likewise, the leadership of the "damang" in the traditional government of the Loksado Dayak, from time to time also experienced a shift. However, the existence of the "damang" leadership until now continues to run well and can organize its government peacefully and can coexist and synergize with the formal government in harmony.

As a potential and local wisdom, the existence of damang leadership in the traditional government of Dayak Loksado is necessary and must always be maintained so that the implementation of regional government and regional autonomy can run well so that the welfare of the people can be immediately realized within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

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