

Madurese Women's Leadership Style in Feminine and Masculine Perspectives

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Abstract. Since the mid-20th century, gender equality and women's emancipation have been global concerns. In Indonesia, gender mainstreaming (*Pengarusutamaan Gender* – PUG) has been implemented since the early 1990s, serving as a cornerstone for development plans across sectors. Women's empowerment and related issues have garnered widespread attention, leading to increased recognition of women in public leadership roles. The shift from patriarchal norms to a culture supportive of women's achievements is underway, fostering opportunities for women to ascend to leadership positions. Public leadership is no longer exclusive to men; women, equipped with competencies and opportunities, can compete healthily for leadership roles. This study, utilizing a grounded theory approach and employing three data collection techniques—interviews, observations, and documentation—focuses on female village heads, supported by input from village staff and the public. The research aims to analyze Madura women's leadership styles from both masculine and feminine perspectives. The findings reveal an androgynous leadership style among Madurese women, incorporating both feminine and masculine traits. In essence, Madurese women exhibit a leadership style that transcends gender stereotypes, embracing a blend of traditionally perceived feminine and masculine qualities.

Keywords: leadership style, women leadership, Madurese women, feminine and masculine, gender

1 Introduction

Experts define leadership as influencing other people or groups to achieve a certain goal. The art of leadership involves 2 main actors: the leading actor and the led actor. A good leader is expected to be able to bind, harmonize, and encourage his followers (subordinates) so that they can compete properly. Fitriani expresses her opinion that a leader has skills that become capital for them to achieve certain goals through certain activities [1][2]. In the process, a leader needs certain skills as capital to influence others. Leadership theory states that the concept of leadership is a form of depiction of the authority that a person has in a formal structure. In a broader context, Robbin introduces the term “non-sanctioned leadership”. It is defined as a

person's ability to influence others who come from outside the formal structure or in other words a leader appears in a group even without being formally appointed [3].

Siagian revealed that one of the assets possessed by a leader is skill or talent. It is also recognized that this is not sufficient capital for leaders because a leader requires theoretical knowledge about the art of leading. Furthermore, Siagian expressed his opinion that the existence of knowledge and talent has not become sufficient capital for someone to carry out his leadership. When a leader can collaborate on talent and knowledge in an opportunity to carry out leadership, then this leader can be said to be a successful leader. The existence of this opportunity will bring a leader to develop talent and apply the knowledge possessed [4].

Recognition of the Indonesian people towards the role of women in public activities, for some people, face pros and cons. This is certainly inseparable from the dominance of patriarchy in several cultural groups in Indonesia. The Madurese community is one of them. This departs from the Madurese religious culture, seen as very masculine by most people.

In very religious societies, men are often placed in the first position and women in the second position. This phenomenon is often associated with men being born and placed in positions of leaders or *imams*. Equal placement in the context of leaders or *imams* in carrying out worship (in certain religions), leaders in the family, and even leaders in the public context is often left to men and a few people agree on this.

Since gender was introduced nationally in a government program entitled Gender Mainstreaming (*Pengarusutamaan Gender – PUG*), this theme is growing in the current era. PUG is a form of government policy that seeks to educate and at the same time create gender equality and justice in various development sectors in Indonesia. Thus, the opportunity for women to take part in various development sectors is increasingly open.

The recognition of equality between women and men in leadership can be seen from various research, one of which is Klenke's on women's leadership in the context of religion and spirituality. Klenke mentions that in the history of religion and the church, there have been opportunities for anyone to become a leader. The developments that have brought about changes in the roles of women and men in the church have changed. The thing to remember when women become leaders, it must be based on self-supportive qualities [5]. Klenke's research is supported by Quraish Shihab who argues that Islam explains that men and women have the same position and what distinguishes them is the level of piety to Allah SWT [6]. Quoting from the Qur'an Surah At-Taubah verse 71 which is translated as follows: "And those who believe, male and female, some of them (are) helpers for others. They command (do) what is right, prevent what is evil, establish prayer, pay zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. They will be blessed by Allah. Verily Allah is Mighty and Wise." The verse very clearly explains an equal position between men and women and both are created to work together and complement each other [6]. This statement is sufficient to explain that women and men have equal opportunities in creating and building their existence.

In the current era, opportunities are open for men and women to express themselves without discrimination. However, in reality, the problems in the field are women accessing these opportunities still face various obstacles. Anggahegari and Lantu argue that it is not wrong when In the current era, opportunities are open for men and women to express themselves without discrimination. However, in reality, the problems in the field are women accessing these

opportunities still face various obstacles. Anggahegari and Lantu argue that it is not wrong when a public statement appears that says to occupy the leadership seat, women must try twice or three times more than men [7].

The existence of women in the public area needs a lot of support from various parties, both male figures, friends, and the environment. The research conducted by Lestari on women's participation in political parties in the 2019 General Election in Surabaya City shows that the fulfillment of the 30% quota for women's representation only reaches the Temporary Candidate List or the Permanent Candidate List stage. The quota also fell below 30% when entering the selection stage or determining the Selected Candidate List. The process has been carried out properly and correctly, but the fulfillment of the quota for the representation of women in political parties in the nomination is only legal. Political parties only pick women to be representatives of political parties, so that they meet the requirements and are registered as valid political parties participating in the election [8].

In the same context, the research was conducted by Anaam and Mowafaq on leadership styles between men and women in the Arab world. In a study conducted in Iraq, Anaam and Mowafaq stated that 83% of participants believed that one of the barriers for women to occupy leadership positions came from male executives in the Arab world. [9]. This condition occurs as a form of defense of male leaders for their existence and consider women as a threat to them.

Research conducted on women's leadership in Bangkalan Madura has concluded that the success of women in occupying leadership positions is closely tied to the support they receive from men in promoting their roles. This finding reflects the pervasive influence of patriarchal norms within the society, which prioritizes male leadership and often underestimates the independence and significance of women leaders. The dominance of patriarchal beliefs underscores the need for broader efforts to challenge traditional gender roles and foster a more inclusive environment where women can thrive in leadership positions based on their merit and abilities, rather than on male endorsement [10].

The concept of competition created in the relationship between men and women must be ended immediately. Parawansa explained that the partnership concept is the right concept to build a cooperative relationship between the two sexes [11]. The concept of partnership leads to the creation of a collective power distribution. Women have real challenges that are not only related to gender issues or women's quotas but also how to create and increase women's representation in politics. It is time for gender mainstreaming to become a worldview of state politics and governance [12].

In research conducted by [13] about the search for answers to dualistic or bipolar on the character of masculinity and femininity. He divided the respondents into 4 characters, namely high feminine (with very emotional characters, very kind and gentle, understanding other people's feelings, very sensitive, warm in relationship, and enjoys being helpful); low feminine (with a character that is less emotional, not kind or gentle, does not understand other people's feelings, is less sensitive, not warm in relationship, and not particularly enjoy being helpful); high masculine (with an active character, independent, likes to compete, easy to make decisions, not giving up easily, able to work under pressure, and feels better than others); and low masculine (passive, dependent, unable to compete, difficult to make decisions, easy to give up, unable to work under pressure, and not as good at things as other people). If society at that time was more of the opinion that masculine was an inherent trait of men and feminine was an

inherent trait of women, then from Foushee's research data it can be concluded that masculine and feminine characteristics can be biologically attached to men or women.

Understanding the concept of gender is also growing, not only talking about feminine and masculine. A Stanford University psychologist Sandra Ben [14] introduced the term androgyny as a gender identity where a person does not belong to the masculine and feminine roles that exist in society. Sandra Ben thinks that androgynous individuals are more flexible and mentally healthier than masculine and feminine individuals. The feminine and androgynous gender with a more expressive character is very suitable for building a relationship and the masculine and androgynous gender is very suitable for academic work and work that requires assertiveness. Sandra also mentioned that creative and intelligent people tend to be androgynous because they tend to be more adaptive. When they are placed in a stressful situation, androgynous women are more assertive and independent than feminine women.

Regardless of the feminine, masculine, or androgynous character, a beauty entrepreneur in Indonesia, Martha Tilaar classifies the character of Indonesian women's leaders into 5 types of flowers. First, the Rose type is the type of leader who has great self-confidence, is communicative, and is popular. Second, the Orchid type is the type of leader who is very tenacious, intensive, diligent, enterprising, ready to face various challenges, and appreciates teamwork. Third, the Jasmine type is the type of leader who is simple, self-effacing, honest, and wise. Fourth, the Lotus type is the type of leader who is honest and independent. Fifth, the Cempaka type is the type of leader who is full of responsibility, nurturing, and giving role models [14].

Furthermore, this research aims to analyze the character of masculinity and femininity inherent in the style of female leaders by taking basic data on Madurese culture. Two things the researchers want to know, namely first, the extent to which feminine traits are attached to Madurese women in carrying out leadership; and second, the extent to which masculine traits are attached to Madurese women in carrying out leadership.

2 Method

This study uses a qualitative method with a grounded theory approach. This study aims to uncover phenomena that are not widely known by others or can be said to explore new experiences. The initial concept in qualitative research assumes that the researcher enters the research location and builds experience through observation and interviews so that a new pattern of action is formed called new theory as theoretical implications which certainly brings benefits [15].

The focus of this research is on finding women's leadership styles in managing village government based on local wisdom in the Madurese cultural perspective. By using masculine and feminine theories, the researcher will dissect the women's leadership style.

The main respondent in this research is a female village head in Sumenep Regency, Madura, East Java with a millennial age (she was 27 years old). Data supporting the research as well as functioning as confirmation data were obtained from interviews with village staff and family members of female leaders. Interviews are a tool used to create situational understanding that

comes from the interaction between researchers and those being studied [16]. Research data collection is done by using interviews, observation, and documentation.

Qualitative data analysis is an ongoing, iterative, and continuous effort. Stages of data analysis with interactive models include, among others; first, data collection; second, data presentation; third: data reduction; and drawing conclusions [17]. In simple terms, qualitative data analysis is interpreted as an analytical effort that is carried out continuously, repeatedly, and continuously. The next final step is to test the validity of the data to test the concepts of validity and reliability [18].

3 Results And Discussion

Men and women are still often defined as two different characters, both biologically and behaviorally. For ordinary people, gender discussion is often defined as a discussion that distinguishes between men and women and is even defined as an understanding or study of changes to an established culture. In the study of feminism, as quoted in the Merriam-Webster 11th Collegiate Dictionary, gender is defined as a characteristic or trait related to a particular gender, either in the form of habits, culture, or psychological behavior, but not biological differences [19]. Maggie Humm believes that gender activists have understood the meaning of gender and sex in a simple way. Sex is defined as sex that has been biologically acquired since birth, namely male and female based on the genitals, while gender is defined as social sex in the form of masculine and feminine attributes that are not attached to a particular gender and these attributes are not congenital [20]. Socio-historically, gender is not fixed and can be learned, so it can be exchanged between men and women.

Brannon asserts that “gender stereotype consists of beliefs about the psychological traits and characteristics of, as well as the activities appropriate to, men or women” [21]. Many people still misconceive the difference between the definitions of “sex” and “gender.” Within society, there is a prevalent belief that tasks such as cooking, childcare, and household chores are exclusively women's responsibilities. Even an expert, Khuza'i, argues that defining gender roles as something unrelated to biological factors results in the loss of women's identity [19]. This opinion suggests that abolishing the boundaries between genders would lead to a decline in morality because norms and orders are considered natural human traits. Therefore, if a woman exhibits masculine traits or vice versa if a man exhibits feminine traits, it is perceived as something wrong.

This misunderstanding is still common in society and experts have different reasons. In this understanding, women are often labeled with feminine characteristics and men with masculine characteristics [21]. There is often a wrong assumption when there are men with feminine attributes or women with masculine attributes. In the view of [13], this is considered a wrong perception or an error in understanding the empirical literature. Feminine character is still considered as a lower character than masculine character.

Connell defines masculinity as anything that refers to the male body (sometimes symbolically and indirectly) but is not defined by male biology [21]. Tillman added that masculinity is “those qualities, attributes, characteristics, values, and behaviors as perceived and described by a participant as being masculine” [21].

Femininity is often placed in the second position and as an adhered characteristic of women. Barker argues that femininity is an identity category that refers to social and cultural characteristics associated with being female [21]. There are several characteristics of expectations attached to femininity, including responsive in household chores, warm, beautiful, warm, emotional, dependent, physically weak, and passive. Every human being always has a feminine and masculine side to a certain degree. There is someone with a more dominant feminine side and there is also a masculine side. This also applies to both men and women.

3.1 Masculine Characteristics of Women Leader

Masculine characters are characterized by several traits, including being active, independent, happy to compete, easy to make decisions, not easy to give up, able to work under pressure, and feeling better at doing things than other people [13]. In his book Sparrow and Rigg, Marshall characterizes masculine traits in several traits, including self-assertion, separation, independence, control, and competition. In the same book, Capra characterizes masculine traits in several traits, including demanding, aggressive, and competitive. [14].

The leader's trust in subordinates is one of the important factors for leaders to see the level of maturity and independence of subordinates in completing each job. The results of the interview with the Ibu Kepala Desa (female head of a village) regarding this matter revealed that "I trust my friends (her staff), but sometimes there are some things that I have to and need to correct first". This was confirmed by the village official, namely, Mr. ZZ (pseudonym) who revealed that "The Ibu Kepala Desa believes, but indeed (there are some things) need correction from her". This was again confirmed by Mr. NM who said "Believe it, as long as it is true it will not be corrected".

From the results of the interview, it can be seen that Ibu Kepala Desa, as a female leader, has masculine traits, which is reflected in how she can trust her subordinates while still taking full control. When subordinates say that the results of their work are still corrected, this is a form of vigilance and thoroughness (feminine characteristics) as a form of leadership control and at the same time ensuring that everything has been done correctly [14].

Most people think that masculinity is an identity that men should have and this is reinforced by research results from experts. From the results of research in the field, it can be seen that when women lead, many masculine sides participate in shaping the pattern of women's leadership. Another masculinity of Ibu Kepala Desa can be seen when she makes decisions very skillfully. Once there was a complaint from the people related to the village service, then at that time, Ibu Kepala Desa gave a quick response. As said by Mr. ZZ who exemplified the handling of residents who have lost their ID cards. Ibu Kepala Desa immediately instructed to assist the residents. Furthermore, there are other cases regarding complaints about the theft of livestock (cows) by residents. By giving instructions and also assisting in the handling process. If at a certain time, the case or problem has not been resolved, then she will carry out continuous monitoring. "In a case like this, especially in a village atmosphere that is not conducive, Ibu Kepala Desa usually will remind us to do our responsibilities," Mrs. ZZ official added. The masculinity of Ibu Kepala Desa emerged from her aggressive nature, not wanting to give up on solving every problem. She revealed that every problem must have a solution.

Most people often think that women use feelings more often in acting, so it is different from Ibu Kepala Desa. She often acts by paying attention to the reality. With polite and friendly speech,

she will explain the problem by paying attention to justice and the reality of every problem. As stated by Mr. NM who said that Ibu Kepala Desa is a person who uses her heart and feelings (feminine traits), but still acts according to reality in seeing a problem. In the results of the interview, the researcher with Ibu Kepala Desa said that using our hearts and feelings because we are fellow human beings, but acting according to logic and reality is the way to realize the justice and welfare expected by the citizens.

Apart from being an independent leader, Ibu Kepala Desa is a leader who enjoys the principle of competition. Her masculinity has received recognition from her husband and village officials who revealed that the village head is not a woman who depends on others, even her husband. During her studies, the head of the village had organizational experience, namely as the Governor of BEM (Student Executive Board) at the faculty level. This seems to make it easier for her to understand the character of the community and position herself as a leader. This experience has certainly taught Ibu Kepala Desa how to become a leader, so she must be able to be more competitive and independent. This is a form of masculinity as stated by [13].

3.2 Feminine Characteristics of Women Leader

Feminine character is characterized by several traits, including being very emotional, very kind and gentle, understanding other people's feelings, very sensitive, warm in relations, and helpful [13]. In Sparrow and Rigg's book, Marshall characterizes feminine traits in several traits, including interdependence, integration, support, cooperation, acceptance, alertness, and presence. In the same book, Capra characterizes feminine traits in several traits, including balanced, responsive, cooperative, intuitive, and unifying [14].

Ibu Kepala Desa is a person who puts forward deliberation and agreement in decision-making. Based on the results of an interview with a village official named Mr. ZZ revealed that "When there is a problem, the village head always discusses it with the Kadus (Dusun Head, bureaucratic structure under the village) and 8 other village officials". This was confirmed by Mr. NM, who said that the village head was not a person who was very careful in making a decision, many aspects must be seen as a form of consideration in making decisions. Ibu Kepala Desa always prioritizes discussion in every decision-making, because she thinks that this way a fair decision will be obtained for the whole community.

Her prudence in making decisions is a form of vigilance and a form of her accountability for every decision. Deliberation in decision-making in the village is one of the methods used by Ibu Kepala Desa to foster togetherness, cooperation, and a sense of shared responsibility. She is aware the full responsibility remains in her hands. In the results of the interview, she revealed that whatever form of decision or condition exists and occurs in the village, all forms of responsibility are in the hands of the leader. This includes the good and bad that happened in the village is her responsibility.

Based on the research data, it can be seen very clearly that the village head is a Madurese woman who lives in a very masculine society. Despite being initially scorned and doubted by much of the community due to her young age (only 25 years old at the time of nomination), Ibu Kepala Desa courageously contested and decisively won the village head election. Possessing self-competence and organizational experience gained during college serves as a valuable asset for competing with prospective male leaders. The competence and quality demonstrated by these

women village leaders are further evidenced by their achievements. This triumph stands as a testament to all Madurese women navigating a patriarchal culture, showcasing that with ability and determination, they too can excel as quality leaders.

However, if you borrow from the theory that has been developed by Sandar Ben [14], the leadership that has been carried out by Madurese woman leaders is a form of androgynous leadership. This is evidenced by the data indicating her utilization of both feminine and masculine traits in leadership. There appear to be no fixed constraints on employing these traits in her leadership. She demonstrates flexibility and adaptability, swiftly adjusting to varying conditions. It can be inferred that each decision made by the female leader is tailored to the circumstances and exigencies prevailing at the time.

4 Conclusion

Utilizing both feminine and masculine leadership theories and drawing from the aforementioned data, it can be inferred that Ibu Kepala Desa leans towards prioritizing a masculine leadership style. This is evident in her objective demeanor, resolute decision-making, active participation in conveying ideas, as well as her competitive and independent attitude. Nonetheless, elements of femininity also surface in her cautious and deliberate decision-making process, her emphasis on cooperation and consensus-building through discussion, and her strong sense of responsibility towards the decisions made by the village government. Furthermore, her organizational experience serves as a valuable asset in her leadership role. The ability of Madurese female leaders to fluidly navigate between feminine and masculine traits suggests the application of an androgynous leadership style, demonstrating adaptability in response to varying conditions and situations.

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