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Building Village Economic Independence through Participatory Leadership and Good Governance

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to analyze the role of participatory leadership and good governance in supporting village economic independence. It employed a descriptive qualitative approach, collecting data through interviews with three informants: the village secretary, the head of the government affairs section, and a community member. Data were analyzed descriptively through categorization, interpretation, and comparison of informant perspectives. The findings show that participatory leadership is reflected in deliberation, coordination, and community involvement in development planning. Good governance is demonstrated through transparent reporting, supervision, evaluation, and public feedback channels. Economic empowerment is implemented through training and mentoring to improve MSME product quality. However, changing entrepreneurs' mindsets and limited market access remain major challenges. This study highlights the need to integrate product development with marketing support to strengthen village economic independence.

ABSTRAK
Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis peran kepemimpinan partisipatif dan tata kelola pemerintahan yang baik (good governance) dalam mendukung kemandirian ekonomi desa. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara terhadap tiga informan, yaitu sekretaris desa, kepala seksi pemerintahan, dan masyarakat. Data dianalisis secara deskriptif melalui pengelompokan, interpretasi, dan perbandingan informasi antarinforman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan partisipatif diwujudkan melalui musyawarah, koordinasi, dan pelibatan masyarakat dalam perencanaan pembangunan. Penerapan good governance tercermin dalam pelaporan terbuka, pengawasan, evaluasi, dan penyediaan saluran aspirasi masyarakat. Pemberdayaan ekonomi dilakukan melalui pelatihan dan pembinaan untuk meningkatkan kualitas produk UMKM. Namun, perubahan pola pikir pelaku UMKM dan keterbatasan akses pasar masih menjadi tantangan. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa peningkatan kualitas produk perlu disertai dukungan pemasaran untuk memperkuat kemandirian ekonomi desa.

INTRODUCTION

Villages play a strategic role in national development as the foundation of government administration, community empowerment, local economic potential development, and equitable distribution of welfare. Village development should no longer be understood merely in terms of physical infrastructure provision but should also focus on strengthening community economic capacity, developing local economic institutions, increasing productivity, and creating sustainable sources of income. Village economic independence is essential because it reflects the ability of village governments and communities to manage local resources, develop productive economic activities, and reduce dependence on government assistance and fiscal transfers. Since the enactment of Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, which was subsequently amended through Law No. 3 of 2024, village governments have been granted broader authority to manage development and community empowerment based on local needs and characteristics. Fiscal

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support through the Village Fund has also become an important instrument for promoting such development. Nevertheless, the availability of funding and broader administrative authority does not automatically guarantee village economic independence. The success of village development remains dependent on leadership capacity, the quality of governance, and the ability of communities to participate in decision-making processes and the management of local economic potential.

In the practice of village governance, community participation and transparency remain significant challenges. (Akbar et al., 2020), through their evaluation of participatory planning practices in rural Indonesia using a Sustainable Development Goals perspective, emphasized the importance of meaningful community involvement in development planning. Participation should not merely be interpreted as community attendance at village deliberation forums but should also be assessed based on the extent to which communities can influence development priorities and policy directions. (Syukri, 2023) further demonstrated that participatory village governance policies in Indonesia continue to face limitations because development approaches that prioritize economic growth and infrastructure have not fully encouraged the transformation of social relations or the empowerment of marginalized groups. Furthermore, (Yudastio & Azriya, 2022) found that the implementation of transparency and participation principles in Village Fund management in Natar Subdistrict, South Lampung, remained suboptimal, although accountability practices had demonstrated relatively better implementation. These findings indicate that formal participation does not necessarily generate meaningful community involvement when people lack access to information and adequate opportunities to influence village government decisions (Akbar et al., 2020; Syukri, 2023; Yudastio & Azriya, 2022)

Participation-related challenges are closely associated with transparency and accountability in village financial management. The substantial financial resources managed by village governments should generate economic benefits that communities can experience sustainably. However, budget management that primarily focuses on administrative compliance and the completion of annual programs may fail to generate optimal impacts on local economic productivity. (Rijal et al., 2021), in their study of accountability, transparency, and community participation in Village Fund Allocation management in West Lombok Regency, found that accountability and transparency played important roles in village budget management, whereas the influence of community participation was not statistically significant. This finding suggests that community involvement does not necessarily translate into better financial management when participation mechanisms are not effectively connected to decision-making processes. , through an analysis of village fund management and reporting systems in Indonesia using nationwide village data from 2018 to 2020, also identified accountability challenges and emphasized the importance of strengthening reporting systems and institutional oversight. Similarly, (Luh Komang Merawati et al., 2024) found that transparency influenced public trust in Village Fund management, whereas accountability and participation did not demonstrate significant direct effects in their research context in Denpasar. These differing findings indicate that the implementation of good governance principles should not be understood as a set of administrative procedures that automatically generates public trust and development effectiveness. Rather, their implementation needs to be examined in relation to the quality of governance practices and the institutional context of individual villages.

Beyond financial accountability, strengthening village governance is also related to public service performance and the government's ability to manage relationships with communities. (Handayani et al., 2023), in their study of village government service performance, demonstrated the relationship between good governance, positive public perceptions, participation, and village

government performance. These findings emphasize that governance quality is not only associated with administrative and financial management but also with the development of public trust and positive community perceptions of government institutions. (Hidayat, 2025), through a qualitative case study of transparency, accountability, and participation in Village Fund management in Tappale Village, Bone Regency, identified challenges related to information accessibility, the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms, and inclusive community involvement. Meanwhile, (Paulus Gundul, 2025) through an evaluation of the implementation of the Village Financial System (Siskeudes) in Gonis Tekam Village, found that the use of village financial information systems could support information transparency, timely reporting, and more systematic financial administration. These studies indicate that strengthening governance requires a combination of institutional capacity, information transparency, technological utilization, and community oversight mechanisms. Accordingly, good governance should be positioned as the foundation of village resource management to ensure that public policies and budget allocations are directed toward community needs and local economic interests.

In addition to governance challenges, the quality of village leadership is a critical factor in determining the direction of economic development. Village heads are not merely responsible for administrative functions and public services; they also play strategic roles as development leaders, community empowerment facilitators, and drivers of collective action. Changes in socioeconomic conditions, advances in information technology, and evolving development policies require village leaders to demonstrate adaptive capabilities, innovation, and openness to new information and knowledge. Leadership that is insufficiently responsive to these developments may result in conventional development policies that fail to optimize local economic opportunities. In this context, participatory leadership represents a relevant approach because it positions communities as essential actors in problem identification, policy formulation, program implementation, and development evaluation. Through this approach, village heads are expected to establish two-way communication, accommodate the aspirations of different community groups, and foster cooperation with Village Consultative Bodies, Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes), micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, farmer groups, community organizations, and other stakeholders. Participatory leadership, therefore, is not merely associated with a leader's communication style but also with the ability to establish collective ownership of the village development agenda.

The relationship between leadership, governance, and local economic development is also reflected in studies of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes). (Nasfi et al., 2023), through a systematic literature review of academic publications on BUMDes in Indonesia, identified that BUMDes development is associated with various institutional, managerial, leadership, and community empowerment factors. Their review indicated that the existence of BUMDes does not always lead to optimal economic activities, making stronger managerial capacity and institutional support essential. (Trinanda Ultari & Khoirunurrofik, 2024) through a panel data analysis of villages across Indonesia during the 2018–2020 period, found that the presence of BUMDes was positively and significantly associated with village development levels, as measured by the Village Development Index. This contribution was particularly evident among BUMDes engaged in economic and environmental activities. Meanwhile(Samosir et al., 2025), through a case study of BUMDes Guwosari Maju Sejahtera, demonstrated that collaborative governance can strengthen synergies among village governments, communities, and business actors in promoting local economic development. However, the study also identified the need to strengthen institutional vision and mission, financial accountability, and knowledge management to support sustainable innovation. These findings indicate that BUMDes have considerable potential as instruments of

local economic development, but their success depends on leadership capacity, governance quality, collaboration, and community involvement (Nasfi et al., 2023; Samosir et al., 2025; Trinanda Ultari & Khoirunurrofik, 2024)

Recent studies further reinforce the importance of integrating leadership and governance in village economic development. (Syifana et al., 2026), through a qualitative case study in Bumiwangi Village, West Java, found that formal participation through village development planning forums was dominated by certain representatives and tended to follow the village head's agenda. In contrast, informal community forums provided more open spaces for dialogue and enabled more substantive expression of public aspirations. (Zuhro et al., 2026) similarly demonstrated that village deliberation mechanisms may become formalities when discussions are dominated by local elites, leadership is paternalistic, and social accountability remains weak. Conversely, facilitative leadership, supported by strong administrative routines and community oversight, can encourage more meaningful participation. More specifically, (Yuwono, 2026), through a comparative study of successful and less successful BUMDes across four villages in Java, found that successful BUMDes were supported by visionary and participatory leadership, village government political commitment, and active community involvement. In contrast, less successful BUMDes tended to experience passive leadership and weak political and community support. These three studies provide insights into how leadership quality and participation are inseparable from institutional capacity and governance mechanisms that regulate relationships among village governments, communities, and local economic institutions (Syifana et al., 2026; Yuwono, 2026; Zuhro et al., 2026)

Based on the development of previous research, studies of village governance have addressed several important dimensions. (Akbar et al., 2020) (Syukri, 2023) and (Yudastio & Azriya, 2022) emphasized challenges related to the quality of participation and development planning. (Rijal et al., 2021), (Handayani et al., 2023; Hidayat, 2025; Luh Komang Merawati et al., 2024; Permatasari et al., 2024) examined transparency, accountability, public trust, and governance performance. Meanwhile, (Nasfi et al., 2023; Samosir et al., 2025; Syifana et al., 2026; Trinanda Ultari & Khoirunurrofik, 2024; Yuwono, 2026; Zuhro et al., 2026) contributed to understanding the relationships among economic institutions, participation, leadership, and village development. Despite these important contributions, there remains conceptual room to explain the relationship between participatory leadership, good governance, local economic capacity strengthening, and village economic independence within an integrated framework. The novelty of this study does not lie in claiming that the relationship between leadership and governance has never been examined. Rather, it seeks to integrate these two dimensions as complementary mechanisms for building village economic independence. Participatory leadership is positioned as a driver of community involvement and collaboration, while good governance serves as an institutional foundation that ensures transparency, accountability, effectiveness, and responsiveness in village resource management. Both dimensions are subsequently connected to the strengthening of local economic capacity as a process toward sustainable economic independence.

The urgency of developing this conceptual framework is also associated with the sustainability of village development in the context of village head tenure. Law No. 3 of 2024 stipulates that village heads serve an eight-year term and may hold office for a maximum of two terms. Although this provision provides a longer period for implementing development agendas, leadership tenure remains limited. Therefore, village economic development should not depend solely on the vision and capacity of the individual village head in office. Governance systems and economic institutions are needed to maintain program continuity, strengthen community

capacity, and ensure that local economic development initiatives can be sustained across different leadership periods. In this context, village economic independence should not be understood merely as the ability of a village to meet its own financial needs. It should also encompass the collective capacity of village governments and communities to manage resources, develop productive enterprises, expand employment opportunities, increase community income, and strengthen local economic institutions. Accordingly, the success of village development should be assessed based on its ability to establish an economic foundation that does not depend exclusively on fiscal transfers but is also supported by institutional capacity, community participation, and sustainable governance.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study addresses the central question of how participatory leadership and good governance can be integrated to build village economic independence. This question is further elaborated into three research focuses: (1) how participatory leadership is practiced in encouraging community involvement and the development of village economic potential; (2) how good governance principles are implemented in resource management and village economic development; and (3) how the relationship between participatory leadership and good governance can be explained through an integrated conceptual framework for achieving sustainable village economic independence. This study adopts a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the processes, practices, and relationships among these dimensions based on scientific literature and the context of village governance. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze and develop an integrated conceptual framework for building village economic independence through participatory leadership and good governance, thereby contributing to the development of governance studies and providing recommendations for strengthening village economic development governance.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to examine how participatory leadership and good governance contribute to village economic independence. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables researchers to explore social phenomena, institutional practices, and the experiences of individuals within their specific contexts. As explained by (Busetto et al., 2020), qualitative research is appropriate for understanding the nature of a phenomenon through methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis.

Data were collected through interviews with three informants selected based on their roles and relevance to the research topic. The informants consisted of the village secretary, the head of the government affairs section (Kasi Pemerintahan), and a community member. These informants were selected to obtain perspectives from village administration and the community regarding participatory leadership, governance practices, and efforts to strengthen village economic independence. Interviews were conducted using questions related to the research focus, allowing the informants to explain their experiences, views, and assessments. (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021) explain that semi-structured interviews provide researchers with a framework for maintaining the focus of an interview while allowing further exploration of relevant issues raised by participants.

The collected data were analyzed descriptively through data organization, transcription, coding, categorization, and interpretation. Information obtained from the three informants was compared to identify similarities, differences, and complementary perspectives concerning village leadership and governance. This comparison was intended to strengthen the credibility of the findings through the use of multiple informant perspectives. (Santos et al., 2020) emphasize

that triangulation involving different perspectives and sources of information can help improve the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Participatory Leadership in Village Development Planning and Decision-Making

The findings indicate that participatory leadership is reflected in the village government's efforts to involve relevant stakeholders in planning and implementing development programs. The village secretary explained that program implementation is carried out collaboratively with relevant parties to ensure that activities are appropriately targeted. This collaborative approach is supported by joint discussions involving the village head, village officials, and community members to establish a shared understanding before decisions are made. Similarly, the head of the government affairs section stated that coordination is regularly conducted through village deliberation forums, while community members are invited to attend meetings and contribute to development planning. These findings suggest that participation is not limited to the formal involvement of village officials but also provides opportunities for the community to become part of the decision-making process. This is consistent with (Syukri, 2023), who highlights the importance of meaningful community participation in village governance, particularly in ensuring that development processes take account of the interests and needs of different social groups. Furthermore, the involvement of community members through deliberative forums reflects the importance of communication and collective engagement in creating more inclusive village decision-making.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings demonstrate that participatory leadership can function as a mechanism for connecting government initiatives with community needs. The practice of bringing village officials and residents together to exchange views and establish shared perceptions indicates an effort to develop collective responsibility for village development. Nevertheless, participation should not be measured solely by the number of meetings held or the attendance of community members; it should also be assessed through the extent to which their aspirations influence decisions and program implementation. This distinction is relevant to (Syifana et al., 2026), whose discussion of formal and informal participation emphasizes that the presence of participatory forums does not necessarily guarantee substantive community influence. Similarly, (Tamudiman, 2026) found that although village deliberations provide opportunities for citizens to express their aspirations and strengthen the legitimacy of public decisions, meaningful participation remains dependent on information accessibility, communication, and the responsiveness of village authorities to community input. Therefore, the village's collaborative planning practices represent an important foundation for participatory leadership, although their effectiveness ultimately depends on whether community input is translated into development priorities and economic empowerment programs that respond to local needs. In the context of village economic independence, such leadership is particularly important because the sustainability of economic initiatives requires alignment between government planning, institutional coordination, and the actual needs of local communities.

Implementation of Good Governance in Village Administration

The findings indicate that the implementation of good governance in village administration is reflected in the village government's efforts to promote transparency, accountability, public participation, and program supervision. The village secretary explained that information on program implementation and village financial management is reported

openly and periodically in accordance with predetermined programs. This practice is complemented by direct supervision, as described by the head of the government affairs section, who stated that the village government monitors program implementation and provides opportunities for community members to observe activities directly. In addition, the village government has established a dedicated evaluation team to monitor and assess the implementation of community empowerment and economic development programs. From the community's perspective, opportunities to submit criticism and suggestions are provided through complaint links or suggestion boards. These findings demonstrate that good governance is pursued not only through administrative reporting but also through public access to information, direct oversight, and channels for community feedback. This is consistent with (Permatasari et al., 2024), who emphasize the importance of accountability mechanisms and reporting systems in village fund management. Their study also highlights that the existence of reporting procedures needs to be accompanied by effective accountability practices to ensure responsible management of village resources.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that transparency and accountability need to be understood as ongoing processes that connect administrative responsibility with public oversight. The establishment of an evaluation team and the opportunity for residents to observe program implementation represent institutional efforts to strengthen accountability at the village level. However, the community informant's explanation concerning the development of MSME products provides evidence of awareness of village empowerment activities rather than direct confirmation that detailed budget information is fully accessible to residents. Therefore, the implementation of transparency should also be assessed through the availability, clarity, and accessibility of financial information to the community. This interpretation is supported by (Tendri Soli et al., 2026) whose qualitative study of village fund management in Simbur Naik Village found that village governments had made efforts to provide information and prepare accountability reports, although the quality of information and meaningful community participation still required improvement.

In the context of this study, the village government's reporting, supervision, evaluation, and complaint mechanisms constitute important foundations for good governance. Nevertheless, their contribution to village economic independence will depend on whether these mechanisms ensure that public resources are managed transparently, development programs are evaluated effectively, and community feedback is incorporated into subsequent policy decisions.

Village Economic Empowerment through MSME Product Development

The findings reveal that the village government's economic empowerment initiatives primarily focus on improving the quality and competitiveness of products produced by local micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The village secretary explained that the government has organized training activities to enhance product quality and provided guidance to MSME actors so that their products can meet better quality standards. This finding is supported by the community informant, who acknowledged that the development and mentoring activities had contributed to making local MSME products more refined and competitive. The informant perceived the improvement in product quality as a tangible benefit of the village government's empowerment initiatives. These findings indicate that the village government has adopted a capacity-building approach to local economic empowerment by strengthening the skills and production capabilities of MSME actors. Such an approach is important because improving product quality can increase product value and create opportunities for local businesses to compete in wider markets. This is consistent with the study by (Nasution et al., 2025)which found

that product development assistance, training, and mentoring can improve the innovation, quality, and competitiveness of MSME products in rural communities.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that the main challenge in developing village-based MSMEs is not merely the availability of training programs but also the willingness of business actors to change their mindset and continuously improve their products. The village secretary emphasized the need to encourage MSME entrepreneurs to become more open to learning, improving product quality, and developing products with greater market appeal. This suggests that economic empowerment requires a gradual process of capacity development, in which technical assistance is accompanied by changes in entrepreneurial attitudes and business practices. However, improved product quality should not automatically be interpreted as increased income or economic independence, since the available interview data do not yet demonstrate changes in sales, profitability, or market expansion. The community informant also indicated that product development assistance should be followed by support in finding markets for the products. Therefore, the findings highlight a gap between production-oriented empowerment and market-oriented empowerment. To strengthen village economic independence, the government needs to connect product quality improvement with branding, promotion, distribution, and access to potential buyers. In this regard, MSME empowerment should be understood as an integrated process that develops both the production capacity and the market readiness of local businesses.

Challenges and Strategies for Strengthening Village Economic Independence

The findings reveal that one of the main challenges in strengthening village economic independence lies in changing the mindset and entrepreneurial attitudes of local MSME actors. The village secretary explained that some business actors need encouragement to become more willing to learn, evaluate their existing products, and improve product quality to meet higher standards. This indicates that economic empowerment is not solely related to the provision of training or production facilities but also depends on the willingness of business actors to adopt new knowledge and improve their business practices. Another challenge identified through the community interview concerns the limited support for product marketing. Although the community acknowledged improvements in product quality through village government assistance, the informant expected the government to provide further support by helping MSMEs access markets where their products could be sold. This finding suggests a gap between production capacity development and market access. In other words, improvements in product quality do not necessarily guarantee business sustainability if they are not accompanied by appropriate marketing channels and opportunities to reach consumers. A similar issue was identified by (Anindita et al., 2025) in their qualitative study of MSMEs in Kampoeng Cyber, Yogyakarta. Their findings show that limited knowledge, slow adaptation to technology, and resource constraints can hinder MSME development, even when digital marketing opportunities are available.

From a strategic perspective, strengthening village economic independence requires an integrated empowerment approach that combines entrepreneurial capacity development, product improvement, and market expansion. The village government's existing training and mentoring activities provide an important foundation, but these initiatives need to be extended beyond production-related assistance. Practical strategies may include facilitating product branding and packaging, introducing digital marketing platforms, establishing partnerships with local retailers and distributors, and connecting MSME products with regional markets and promotional events. These measures are analytical recommendations derived from the interview

findings rather than activities confirmed to have been implemented by the village government. Furthermore, collaboration between the village government, MSME actors, and external stakeholders is important to ensure that market access initiatives are sustainable and responsive to local business needs. Therefore, village economic independence should not be measured only by the ability of communities to produce higher-quality goods, but also by their capacity to market products, maintain business continuity, and generate sustainable economic value. The central implication of this study is that the transition from product-oriented assistance to integrated production-and-market empowerment represents an important strategic direction for strengthening the economic independence of village communities.

Conceptual Synthesis: Integrating Participatory Leadership and Good Governance for Village Economic Independence

The synthesis of the research findings indicates that participatory leadership and good governance are interconnected elements in supporting village economic independence. Participatory leadership provides a foundation for inclusive planning through collaboration, deliberation, and the involvement of community members in village development decisions. Meanwhile, good governance strengthens this process through transparency, accountability, direct supervision, and evaluation of development programs. The interviews with the village secretary and the head of the government affairs section demonstrate that coordination and collective deliberation are used to align development priorities among village officials and the community. The community informant also confirmed that residents are invited to participate in village meetings and are provided with channels to submit suggestions and complaints. These practices suggest that participatory leadership establishes opportunities for community involvement, while good governance provides administrative mechanisms to support responsible program implementation. This interpretation is consistent with (Yuwono, 2026)who identifies participatory leadership, political commitment, and active community involvement as important governance factors distinguishing successful Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) from less successful ones. His findings reinforce the argument that village economic development requires more than administrative structures; it also depends on leadership practices and meaningful relationships between government institutions and local communities.

Furthermore, the findings suggest a conceptual relationship between governance practices and economic empowerment through the development of local MSMEs. The village government's efforts to improve product quality through training and mentoring demonstrate how participatory planning and administrative coordination can be translated into community-oriented economic programs. However, the community's expectation that the government should also facilitate market access indicates that product development alone is insufficient to ensure sustainable economic independence. Based on these findings, this study proposes an integrated conceptual perspective in which participatory leadership functions as the driving force for collaboration and community engagement, good governance provides the institutional foundation for transparency and accountability, and economic empowerment translates these governance practices into productive opportunities for local communities. The relationship can be understood as a continuous process: inclusive decision-making helps identify community needs, accountable governance supports program implementation and evaluation, and integrated MSME empowerment connects production improvement with market opportunities. Therefore, village economic independence should be viewed not merely as the outcome of government development programs but as a process built through the interaction of inclusive leadership, responsible governance, community capacity, and sustainable market access.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that participatory leadership and good governance play complementary roles in supporting village economic independence. The findings show that participatory leadership is reflected in collaborative planning, village deliberations, and opportunities for community members to express their aspirations in development decision-making. Meanwhile, the implementation of good governance is demonstrated through periodic and open reporting, direct supervision of development programs, evaluation mechanisms, and channels for public feedback. These governance practices provide an institutional foundation for implementing community-oriented economic empowerment programs, particularly through training and mentoring aimed at improving the quality of local MSME products. However, the findings also reveal that improving product quality alone is insufficient to achieve sustainable economic independence. Community members still expect stronger government support in facilitating product marketing and expanding access to potential markets. Therefore, this study highlights the importance of integrating participatory leadership, accountable village administration, and market-oriented MSME empowerment to strengthen the economic capacity of village communities.

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the research involved only three informants, consisting of a village secretary, a head of the government affairs section, and a community member. Consequently, the findings primarily reflect the perspectives of these individuals and may not fully represent the experiences of other stakeholders, including MSME entrepreneurs, village leaders, and other community groups. Second, the study relied primarily on interview data and did not include comprehensive supporting evidence, such as village financial reports, development program documents, MSME sales records, or measurements of changes in household income. Therefore, the study cannot establish the measurable economic impact of the governance and empowerment practices identified. Future research should involve a broader range of informants, multiple village contexts, and supporting documentary or economic data to examine how participatory leadership and good governance influence the sustainability of MSMEs, market access, and measurable improvements in village economic independence.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, the village government is recommended to strengthen participatory leadership by ensuring that community involvement extends beyond attending village meetings to actively contributing to development planning, decision-making, and program evaluation. The principles of good governance should also be consistently implemented through accessible financial reporting, transparent program implementation, effective monitoring, and responsive complaint mechanisms. Furthermore, village economic empowerment programs should move beyond product quality improvement by providing practical support for branding, packaging, digital promotion, distribution, and access to potential markets. Collaboration with local businesses, cooperatives, distributors, and other relevant stakeholders is also necessary to create sustainable marketing opportunities for MSME products. These efforts are expected to connect improvements in production capacity with broader economic opportunities and strengthen the foundations of village economic independence.

Future research should involve a larger and more diverse group of informants, including village government leaders, MSME entrepreneurs, community organizations, and consumers, to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of participatory leadership and village economic governance. Further studies are also recommended to examine multiple villages and compare

different approaches to economic empowerment. In addition, researchers should incorporate supporting documents, such as village financial reports, development program evaluations, MSME sales records, and income data, to assess the extent to which governance practices contribute to measurable economic outcomes. Several potential barriers should also be considered, including limited entrepreneurial awareness, inadequate marketing networks, restricted access to digital technology, and the capacity of village institutions to sustain empowerment programs. Addressing these issues in future research will provide a deeper understanding of the strategies required to achieve sustainable village economic independence.

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