

## **Analysis of Leadership Styles in Building Social Harmony in Rural Communities: A Systematic Review**

**Ade Sadria<sup>1</sup>, Urip Sulistiyo<sup>1</sup>, Firman<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia

Corresponding author e-mail: [adesadria@gmail.com](mailto:adesadria@gmail.com)

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**Abstract:** This systematic review integrates findings from studies on leadership styles transformational, paternalistic, and participative and their influence on social harmony and community development within rural Indonesian contexts. Following the PRISMA methodology, 150 pertinent articles were initially identified, with 11 studies ultimately selected for rigorous in-depth analysis. The results reveal that transformational leadership fosters innovation and collective action, substantially enhancing social cohesion and community participation. However, its efficacy is often undermined by entrenched socio-cultural hierarchies and limited educational infrastructure in rural settings. Paternalistic leadership, while adept at maintaining social stability and moral order, constrains flexibility and impedes innovation, rendering it less adaptable to the exigencies of modernization. Participative leadership emphasizes inclusivity and shared decision-making, thereby strengthening community involvement, but it remains hampered by resource scarcity and temporal constraints. A recurring theme throughout the analysis highlights the necessity of aligning leadership practices with local cultural norms to build community trust and optimize the success of development initiatives. This review ultimately underscores the imperative for culturally attuned leadership that not only preserves indigenous wisdom but also navigates the challenges of modernization, fostering sustainable development in rural communities.

**Keywords:** Leadership Styles, Rural communities, Social Harmony, Systematic Review

### **A. Introduction**

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the social fabric and guiding the development trajectory of rural communities, where traditional values and cultural norms significantly influence community interactions and collective decision-making. In rural Indonesian communities, leadership extends beyond governance or authority; it serves as a critical mechanism for fostering social cohesion and supporting community members in navigating the challenges posed by modernization and globalization. As rural areas increasingly face the

pressures of change, understanding how different leadership styles contribute to social harmony and community participation has become crucial. Recent studies highlight the importance of leadership in sustaining social unity and driving community development initiatives. For instance, Chandra and Goyal (2022) emphasize that effective leadership in rural areas is often contingent upon the leader's ability to align with local cultural values, which in turn ensures greater community engagement in development efforts. Consequently, this systematic review seeks to analyze how different leadership styles—transformational, participative, and paternalistic affect social cohesion and participation in rural community development.

Transformational leadership, in particular, has been associated with fostering resilience within communities by enhancing the collective spirit necessary for successful development projects. Leaders who adopt this style are often regarded as visionaries, inspiring others to work towards shared goals and strengthening the social bonds within the community. However, the implementation of transformational leadership is frequently constrained by resource scarcity and deeply entrenched traditional hierarchies, which can impede community engagement and innovation (Siti Hajar et al., 2020). Participative leadership, on the other hand, emphasizes the inclusion of community members in decision-making processes, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment among rural populations. According to Putri and Wahyudi (2021), participative leadership is particularly effective in rural communities with strong traditions of communal governance, as it aligns with cultural practices that emphasize collective decision-making. However, the success of this leadership style often hinges on the ability to overcome structural challenges, such as limited access to education and a lack of institutional support, both of which are common in rural settings.

Paternalistic leadership remains prevalent in more traditional rural communities, where leaders are often perceived as moral guides and protectors of communal welfare (Farh & Cheng, 2020). This leadership style, characterized by a hierarchical and protective approach, ensures social stability by reinforcing established norms and values. However, the hierarchical nature of paternalistic leadership can restrict innovation and limit the active participation of community members in development processes. Moreover, rural leaders frequently struggle to balance traditional expectations with the demands of modernization. Purnama et al. (2023) note that the pressures of modernization and globalization pose significant challenges for rural leaders, particularly in integrating modern development strategies while maintaining the integrity of local wisdom and cultural traditions. This systematic review, therefore, explores the challenges and limitations faced by rural leaders in implementing different leadership styles, with particular attention to the barriers arising from socio-economic constraints and cultural expectations.

Local wisdom and cultural norms are integral to the effectiveness of leadership in rural Indonesia, where cultural diversity necessitates a deeply contextualized approach to leadership practices. The vast cultural landscape of Indonesia, with its rich traditions and diverse ethnic groups, requires leaders to adapt their leadership strategies to resonate with local values. Leaders who successfully promote social harmony often do so by incorporating elements of local wisdom into their leadership practices, ensuring that development initiatives are aligned with the community's cultural identity (Zulkifli & Idris, 2021). This review examines the extent to which local wisdom and cultural norms influence the effectiveness of leadership in promoting social harmony, recognizing that leadership cannot be separated from the socio-cultural fabric in which it operates. These norms play a crucial role in shaping how leaders manage social conflicts, guide community projects, and foster the transmission of cultural values across generations.

In summary, this systematic review addresses three core research questions:

1. How do different leadership styles affect social cohesion and participation in community development?
2. What are the challenges and limitations faced by rural leaders in implementing these leadership styles?
3. To what extent do local wisdom and cultural norms influence the effectiveness of leadership in promoting social harmony?

By synthesizing recent scholarly research, this review seeks to offer a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the ways in which different leadership styles enhance social cohesion, sustain active community participation, and safeguard cultural identity in rural Indonesian communities. The insights generated through this systematic review are intended to inform the development of leadership practices and policy frameworks that are not only effective but also culturally responsive, ensuring they are intricately aligned with the distinctive socio-cultural dynamics of rural populations. This alignment is crucial to fostering long-term social harmony, community resilience, and the preservation of Indonesia's rich cultural heritage.

## **B. Methods**

In this systematic review, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines were rigorously followed to ensure transparency and methodological rigor, as outlined by Moher et al. (2009). The primary objective of this review was to analyze peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2019 and 2024, focusing specifically on how different leadership styles contribute to building social harmony in rural communities. The aim was to provide a comprehensive understanding of how leadership styles –

transformational, participative, and paternalistic—impact social cohesion, community participation, and the preservation of local cultural values in rural areas. The data collection process involved a systematic search of several prominent academic databases, including ERIC, JSTOR, and Google Scholar. The search terms were carefully selected to capture the core elements of the study: “Leadership Styles,” “Social Cohesion,” “Rural Communities,” and “Cultural Values.” The objective was to identify empirical studies that provided evidence on the outcomes associated with the application of leadership styles in fostering social harmony and community engagement in rural communities. To ensure that the review was both comprehensive and relevant, strict inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied. The inclusion criteria required that studies specifically focus on the influence of leadership styles within the context of rural community development in Indonesia, offering measurable outcomes related to social harmony, participation, or the preservation of cultural values. Conversely, studies were excluded if they did not directly address leadership styles in rural settings, lacked empirical data, were not peer-reviewed, or did not meet the necessary methodological rigor.

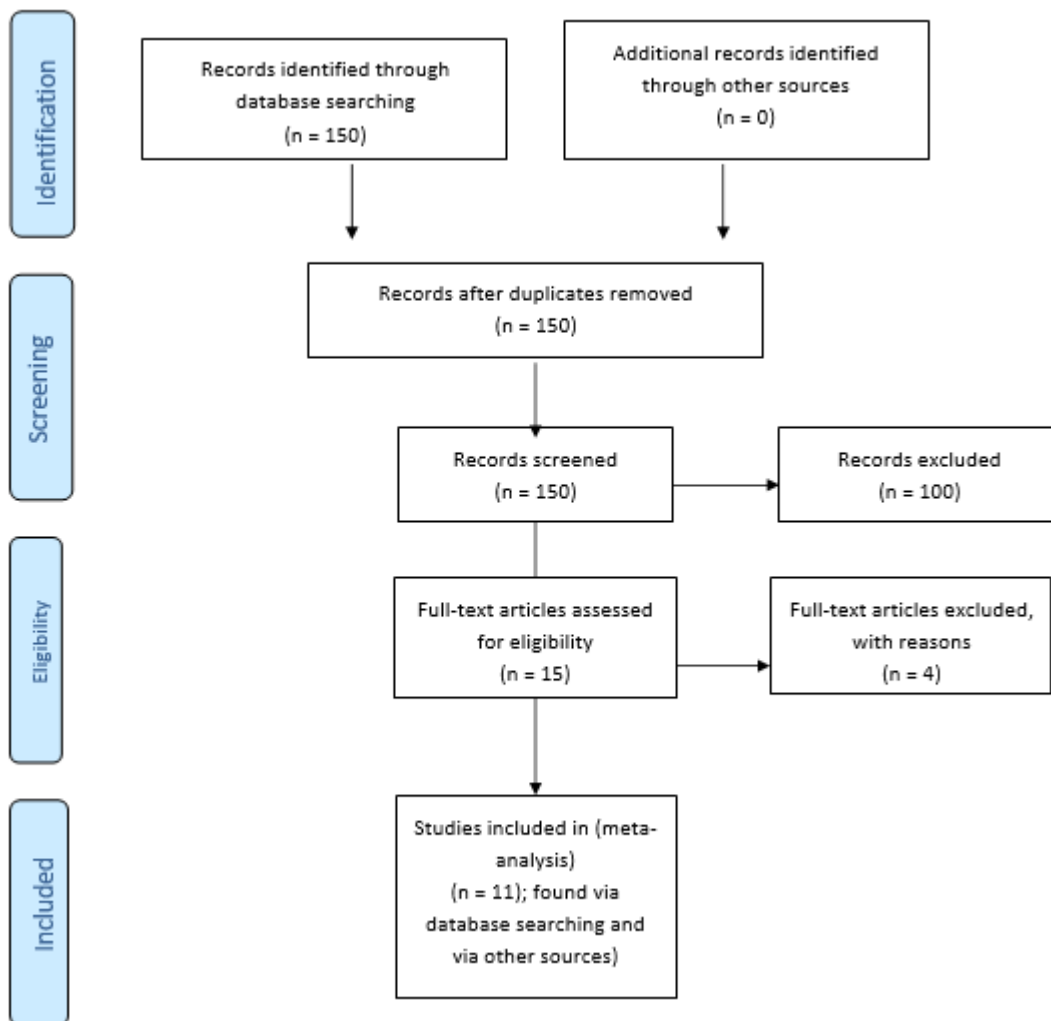


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram representing the flow of information (Moher et al. 2009).

**Table 1. literature selection process**

Keyword Search		
No	Keyword Search	Number of Articles
1	"Limit to Articles in Educational Journals"	150
2	Limit to Articles Focused on "Leadership Styles" AND "Social Cohesion" AND "Rural Communities"	50
3	Limit to Articles Focused on "Leadership Styles" AND "Social Cohesion" AND "Rural Communities" AND "Preservation of Cultural Values"	20
4	"Screen Manually for Relevance"	15
5	Manually Screened	11

Based on the initial literature search, 150 articles were identified that discussed leadership styles in rural community settings and their influence on social cohesion, community participation, and the preservation of cultural values. The first stage of the selection process involved screening titles and abstracts, which allowed the researchers to exclude articles that did not meet the inclusion criteria. As a result, 50 articles were identified as potentially relevant for further analysis. These articles were then re-evaluated according to the inclusion criteria, focusing on studies that specifically examined how transformational, paternalistic, and participative leadership styles influence social harmony and cultural preservation within rural communities. After this re-evaluation, 20 articles met the inclusion criteria.

Out of these 20 articles, 11 were selected for in-depth analysis as they provided the most comprehensive and methodologically rigorous examinations of leadership styles in rural settings. These studies were assessed for their empirical contributions, focusing on measurable outcomes related to the effectiveness of leadership in fostering social cohesion, promoting active community participation, and preserving local cultural values. The analysis then concentrated on identifying common themes and highlighting the benefits and challenges associated with implementing different leadership styles in rural contexts.

The review revealed that while transformational, participative, and paternalistic leadership styles have the potential to significantly enhance social harmony and community participation, rural leaders often face challenges such as limited institutional support, resource constraints, and resistance to change. Additionally, the preservation of cultural values was found to be closely tied to leadership practices that align with local wisdom and traditions. Leaders who successfully

integrated cultural values into their leadership strategies were more effective in fostering social cohesion and ensuring that development initiatives were supported by the community. However, challenges such as rigid social hierarchies and the pressures of modernization must be addressed to ensure the sustainability of leadership practices in these settings.

By adapting this process to the specific context of leadership in rural Indonesian communities, this systematic review contributes to the broader discourse on how leadership styles can support both development and cultural preservation. The findings suggest that with culturally responsive leadership practices and appropriate support, leaders in rural areas can play a crucial role in strengthening social harmony and maintaining the cultural identity of their communities amidst the challenges of modernization.

### **C. Results and Discussion**

This systematic review synthesizes findings from seven key studies that examine the relationship between leadership styles and their impact on social cohesion and community development in rural Indonesian communities. The review specifically focuses on how different leadership approaches—transformational, paternalistic, and participative—affect social harmony, community participation, and the preservation of cultural values. These findings illuminate the complex interplay between leadership, traditional cultural norms, and the unique challenges posed by modernization. The results, summarized in the table below, underscore the importance of culturally responsive leadership in fostering sustainable development and social harmony in rural areas.

Author(s) (Year)	Title	Sample	Methodology	Findings	Challenges
Rezkiawan et al. (2023)	Paternalistic Leadership Style in Traditional Communities	100 Village Heads in Gorontalo	Descriptive Research	Paternalistic leadership influences innovation management by reinforcing moral values, virtue, and authority, promoting village productivity.	Limited flexibility for innovation due to strong adherence to traditional values.
Siti Hajar et al. (2024)	The Impact of Transformational Leadership on Village Apparatus Performance	24 Village Apparatus in West Aceh	Quantitative Method (SPSS Analysis)	Transformational leadership enhances work discipline and performance through clear communication and strong motivational influence.	Low education levels and lack of consistent discipline among village apparatus.
Zulkarnain et al. (2024)	Leadership Styles in BUMDes Management in Lalang Luas Village	Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) Leaders	Qualitative (Descriptive)	Ineffective decision-making and lack of experience hinder optimal management of village-owned enterprises (BUMDes).	Insufficient leadership training and low community participation in management activities.
Indri Dwi Cahyanti et al. (2019)	Village Head Leadership and Community Participation in Village Development	Village Mulyoagung, Malang	Qualitative (Descriptive)	Participatory leadership enhances community involvement in development projects but faces limitations due to work schedules and low education.	Limited time for community involvement and lack of understanding of development projects.

Mika Puspitasari et al. (2022)	Transformational Leadership and Accountability in BUMDes Management	Village- Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) in Central Java	Qualitative Approach (Interviews)	Transformational leadership improves financial accountability and transparency in BUMDes management.	Corruption risks and difficulties in maintaining accountability across multiple stakeholders.
Fatyah Qonita Umar et al. (2023)	Political Leadership in BUMDes Kerto Raharjo and Community Welfare	Boon Pring Eco-tourism, Malang	Qualitative (In-depth Interviews)	Positive political leadership contributes to community welfare and effective management of eco-tourism enterprises.	Balancing administrative duties with entrepreneurial efforts in village business management.
Miranda Dwi Setyaningrum et al. (2022)	Transformational Leadership in Developing Independent Tourism Villages	Village Sekapuk, Gresik	Qualitative (Observations, Interviews)	Transformational leadership fosters innovation in tourism development, empowering local communities economically.	Ensuring sustainable tourism development without compromising cultural and environmental values.
Farida Hanum et al. (2017)	Effectiveness of Village Head in Building Community Harmony to Enhance Development	Village Wonokoyo, East Java	Quantitative Descriptive	Effective leadership builds community harmony, which in turn increases participation in local development initiatives.	Overcoming cultural sensitivities and fostering collaboration in diverse community settings.
Muhamad Abid et al. (2022)	The Role of Village Head in Village	Village Sagaranten, Kuningan	Qualitative Research (Descriptive)	Village heads play a critical role in fostering superior human resources by incorporating	Adapting leadership approaches to align with technological advancements

	Development to Enhance Human Resource Quality			cultural values into village management practices.	and changing community dynamics.
Putu Budi Anggiriawan, et al. (2023)	The Effect of Leadership Style and Organizational Culture on Organizational Performance with Good Governance as a Moderating Variable	LPD (Village Credit Institutions) in Badung Regency, Bali	Quantitative (Regression Analysis)	Leadership style and organizational culture significantly influence organizational performance, moderated by good governance practices.	Mismanagement and inconsistencies in leadership styles across LPDs pose challenges to sustainable organizational performance.
Orina Kogoya, et al. (2023)	Participatory Leadership Style of the Village Head in Sario Kotabaru, Manado	Village Head and Apparatus of Sario Kotabaru Village, Manado	Qualitative (Descriptive, Observations, Interviews)	Participatory leadership style positively impacts public service performance, leading to better community involvement and responsiveness.	Ensuring continuous community engagement and adapting to the diverse needs of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious urban community.

One of the key findings from this systematic review is the crucial role that different leadership styles play in fostering social cohesion and participation in rural communities. This directly addresses the research question: How do different leadership styles affect social cohesion and participation in community development? The studies consistently reveal that leadership styles such as transformational, paternalistic, and participative leadership significantly influence the extent to which social harmony is achieved and sustained in rural settings. For example, Rezkiawan et al. (2023) demonstrated that paternalistic leadership reinforces moral values, virtue, and authority within traditional communities, which in turn fosters social stability and productivity. However, this leadership style also limits flexibility and innovation due to its adherence to rigid hierarchical structures. This finding suggests that leadership styles that promote authority and tradition can be effective in maintaining social harmony but may hinder progress and adaptation in a rapidly changing world.

Transformational leadership, in contrast, has been shown to enhance both social cohesion and participation by motivating individuals to contribute to the broader goals of the community. As highlighted by Siti Hajar et al. (2024), transformational leadership significantly improved work discipline and performance among village apparatus in West Aceh. This leadership style fosters unity and collective action by inspiring community members to transcend their personal interests for the benefit of the community. However, the effectiveness of transformational leadership is often constrained by factors such as low education levels and inconsistent discipline, which limit the ability of leaders to fully implement these approaches. This finding emphasizes that while transformational leadership has the potential to drive community development, its success is contingent on addressing structural challenges that may inhibit its impact.

Participative leadership, which emphasizes inclusive decision-making and the active involvement of community members, emerged as a particularly effective approach in fostering social cohesion and participation. According to Cahyanti et al. (2019), participative leadership in Village Mulyoagung, Malang, led to greater community involvement in development projects. This leadership style aligns well with rural communities' traditions of communal governance, where decision-making is often shared among community members. However, practical limitations such as work schedules and low levels of education can restrict full participation, highlighting the need for leaders to consider the socio-economic realities of their communities when implementing participative approaches.

### **Challenges and Limitations in Leadership Implementation**

The second major finding from the review addresses the research question: *What are*

*the challenges and limitations faced by rural leaders in implementing these leadership styles?* While leadership is critical to fostering social harmony, rural leaders often face significant challenges that limit the effectiveness of their leadership approaches. One of the most pervasive challenges is the lack of resources and institutional support in rural areas.

Transformational and participative leadership styles, which rely on continuous community engagement and capacity building, are often difficult to sustain due to the limited availability of resources. Siti Hajar et al. (2024) found that low education levels and a lack of consistent discipline among village apparatus impeded the successful implementation of transformational leadership, despite its potential benefits. Similarly, participative leadership, though aligned with communal traditions, is often hampered by time constraints and socio-economic challenges that limit the ability of all community members to engage fully in the decision-making process.

Another significant challenge lies in the resistance to change that is often prevalent in rural communities. Traditional societies are generally characterized by strong adherence to established cultural norms, making it difficult for leaders to introduce new ideas or approaches to community development. This resistance is particularly evident in communities where paternalistic leadership is dominant, as these communities tend to prioritize stability and continuity over innovation. As noted by Rezkiawan et al. (2023), while paternalistic leadership effectively maintains social harmony by reinforcing traditional values, it also limits the community's ability to adapt to new circumstances and embrace more progressive leadership styles.

In addition to these structural challenges, the rigid social hierarchies that exist in many rural areas further complicate the implementation of leadership styles that emphasize inclusivity and innovation. In many rural communities, leadership is closely tied to social status, lineage, and age, making it difficult for younger or less established leaders to introduce new approaches. Paternalistic leadership often reinforces these rigid hierarchies, as community members are accustomed to following the guidance of elder leaders who are seen as moral authorities. This dynamic can hinder the implementation of transformational or participative leadership styles, which require more fluid social structures that allow for greater community input and shared responsibility.

### **The Influence of Local Wisdom and Cultural Norms**

The third major finding of this review explores the research question: *To what extent do local wisdom and cultural norms influence the effectiveness of leadership in promoting social harmony?* The studies reviewed consistently emphasize that local wisdom and cultural norms are integral to the effectiveness of leadership in rural communities.

Leaders who align their leadership practices with local cultural values and traditions are generally more successful in promoting social harmony and securing community participation in development initiatives. For instance, Zulkarnain et al. (2024) highlighted that leaders in BUMDes management who incorporate cultural values into their leadership practices are better able to foster trust and participation within the community, resulting in more effective management of village enterprises.

The importance of aligning leadership with local wisdom is particularly pronounced in rural Indonesian communities, where cultural traditions and communal values are deeply embedded in daily life. Leaders who demonstrate respect for these traditions, such as by involving elders in decision-making processes or adhering to communal rituals, are more likely to gain the trust and support of their communities. This alignment between leadership and cultural values not only promotes social harmony but also ensures that development initiatives are carried out in a way that respects and preserves local traditions. However, as noted by Purnama et al. (2023), the challenge for rural leaders lies in balancing the preservation of local wisdom with the demands of modernization, which often requires leaders to adopt new approaches that may not fully align with traditional cultural practices.

In conclusion, this systematic review highlights the critical role that leadership plays in building social harmony and promoting community development in rural Indonesian communities. While transformational, participative, and paternalistic leadership styles each have their strengths, their effectiveness is often contingent on the leader's ability to navigate the unique challenges posed by rural settings, including resistance to change, rigid social hierarchies, and limited resources. Moreover, the success of any leadership approach in rural communities is closely tied to the leader's ability to integrate local wisdom and cultural norms into their practices, ensuring that development initiatives are both effective and culturally respectful. By addressing these challenges and aligning leadership practices with the values and traditions of rural communities, leaders can foster greater social cohesion and support sustainable community development.

The results of this systematic review highlight the central role that leadership plays in shaping the development and social cohesion of rural communities in Indonesia. Across the studies reviewed, it is evident that different leadership styles whether transformational, paternalistic, or participative can have a profound impact on community participation, the preservation of cultural values, and the success of development initiatives. However, each style also presents unique challenges that must be navigated by rural leaders, particularly in light of modernization pressures and shifting socio-economic dynamics.

Transformational leadership consistently emerges as a driving force for innovation and accountability in community and economic development. Leaders who adopt transformational approaches inspire collective action, enhance financial transparency, and support long-term sustainability within village enterprises, as seen in the studies by Siti Hajar et al. (2024) and Setyaningrum et al. (2022). Yet, the limitations of this leadership style become apparent when faced with deeply rooted traditional hierarchies and educational barriers that limit the capacity for wide-scale change in rural settings. For transformational leadership to be truly effective in these environments, greater investment in education and leadership training is needed.

Paternalistic leadership, while effective in maintaining social order and reinforcing moral values, tends to restrict innovation by relying on rigid hierarchies. Rezkiawan et al. (2023) demonstrate that this leadership style can foster productivity within traditional communities but often at the expense of flexibility and community-led innovation. Rural leaders who rely on paternalistic methods may struggle to adapt to the demands of modernization, as these methods prioritize stability over progress. Participative leadership, with its emphasis on communal decision-making and inclusivity, has proven effective in encouraging community involvement in development projects. However, as highlighted by Cahyanti et al. (2019) and Kogoya et al. (2023), this approach can be hindered by practical limitations such as time constraints, low levels of education, and the need for continuous engagement with diverse community groups. Ensuring that participatory approaches remain inclusive and culturally sensitive is essential for their success (Anggiriawan, et al., 2023).

Overall, this review underscores the importance of culturally responsive leadership in rural Indonesia. Leadership practices that align with local wisdom and cultural values are more likely to gain community trust and support, as demonstrated across the studies. However, leaders must also navigate the complex challenges posed by modernization, economic pressures, and the need for innovative solutions to foster sustainable development.

In conclusion, this systematic review highlights the nuanced relationship between leadership styles and community outcomes in rural Indonesia. Effective leadership must balance traditional values with the demands of modernization, ensuring that communities remain cohesive, culturally grounded, and engaged in their development.

#### **D. Conclusions**

This systematic review highlights the critical role that leadership plays in fostering social harmony and promoting community development within rural Indonesian communities. Across the studies analyzed, it is evident that

leadership styles transformational, paternalistic, and participative each have distinct impacts on the social fabric and development of rural areas. Transformational leadership has been shown to inspire innovation and drive collective action, yet it often struggles to overcome structural challenges such as low levels of education and rigid social hierarchies that hinder widespread change. Paternalistic leadership is effective in maintaining stability and reinforcing moral values, but it tends to restrict flexibility and innovation, making it less adaptable to the demands of modernization. Participative leadership, which emphasizes inclusivity and shared decision-making, holds significant potential for enhancing community involvement and ensuring development initiatives are supported by all members of the community. However, it is often constrained by practical challenges such as limited resources and time, particularly in communities with low levels of education or socio-economic development.

Moreover, this review underscores the importance of local wisdom and cultural norms in shaping the effectiveness of leadership in rural settings. Leaders who align their practices with local traditions and values are more likely to gain the trust and support of their communities, thereby fostering greater social cohesion and participation in development initiatives. However, the challenge remains in balancing the preservation of cultural traditions with the need for modernization and innovation in rural areas. Rural leaders must navigate these competing demands, ensuring that their leadership styles are both culturally responsive and forward-looking.

In conclusion, effective leadership in rural Indonesia requires a nuanced understanding of local cultural dynamics and the socio-economic realities of rural communities. By integrating cultural values into leadership practices, leaders can foster social harmony and sustainable development that respects the traditions and needs of rural populations. Future leadership practices and policies should prioritize culturally sensitive approaches that enhance community participation, support innovation, and preserve the rich cultural heritage of Indonesia's rural communities.

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