



Original Article

Traditional Leadership of Kasepuhan Ciusul, Citorek Village, Cibeber District, Lebak-Banten Regency

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the structure, function, and role of traditional leadership in Citorek Village, especially in Ciusul Village, Cibeber District, Lebak Regency. The main focus of this research is to uncover the decision-making process carried out in the context of customary leadership and village government. Traditional leadership in Ciusul has a crucial role in maintaining the social and cultural balance of the local community. The method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collection techniques in the form of interviews, observations, and documentation analysis. The results of the study show that customary leadership contributes significantly to maintaining the culture and traditions inherited by previous ancestors, while the role of formal government in customary leadership is to support the sustainability and recognition of indigenous peoples. The existence of this collaboration is very effective in maintaining and preserving both culture and nature. This research provides insight into the sustainability of the customary leadership system in the midst of modernization and has the potential to contribute to the development of policies that support the preservation of local culture in Indonesia.

Keywords: Traditional Leadership, Decision Making, Cultural Preservation

Introduction

Indonesia is a country rich in cultural diversity and indigenous peoples. Indonesia has more than 300 ethnic groups or ethnic groups and more precisely 1,340 ethnic groups in the country according to the BPS census in 2010 (Indonesia.go.id). Each society in a region has unique characteristics, in terms of language, customs, arts and even the government system. The system of government in traditional indigenous communities usually has an important role in regulating the social, cultural, and economic life of their people. One example of an indigenous people who still maintain this tradition is the Ciusul Indigenous Tribe of Citorek Village, Cibeber District, Lebak Regency, Banten Province. Geographically, Ciusul Village hills and fertile valleys. Its location far from the city and at the foot of Mount Halimun Salak has a significant influence on the traditional leadership system that they run. This geographical location allows the people in Ciusul to



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maintain s occupies a mountainous area with unique topographic characteristics, such as undulating trong customary leadership, in regulating the relationship between humans and humans, the relationship between humans and nature and the relationship between humans and their God.

Ciusul Village is a village located in the western part of Citorek Village, the Kasepuhan custom in this village has a difference in terms with other Kasepuhan customs in Citorek village. In the structure of customary leadership in Ciusul itself, it is led by the traditional head of the kasepuhan, known as Aki Calo. Aki Calo has an important role in informal leadership which has a great responsibility in maintaining and preserving the traditional values of the ancestors. Aki Calo leads the community by adhering to traditions and rules that have been passed down from generation to generation, and ensuring that all actions taken reflect justice and balance and that there is no partiality to any particular person. In his position, Aki Calo is not only a decision-maker, but also a respected and appreciated person so that he becomes a mediator in various matters that arise in society. His highly respected role makes him a reliable figure in maintaining social and cultural stability in the community (Irwan, 2017).

According to [Wijarnako \(2013\)](#), the Customary Head has an important function in maintaining social relations, preserving customary culture, and managing natural resources through applicable customary rules. In addition to carrying out the rules that have been set, the leaders of Kasepuhan consist of Aki Calo, Baris Kolot, Juru Basa and Amil where these leaders are responsible for passing on traditional values to the next generation, ensuring that traditions are maintained. With the preservation of culture, cultural values have great potential in strengthening the identity and character of the nation ([Sholehah et al., 2022](#)). Sacred decisions are taken through a customary deliberation process involving traditional leaders, based on traditional values and local wisdom, so that they have strong legitimacy in the eyes of the community. The community's trust in Kasepuhan as a wise figure made the decision well accepted.

Traditional leadership in Ciusul Village, Citorek Village, Cibeber District, Lebak Regency, is a form of collaboration between traditional leadership and formal leadership that still survives today. The structure and function of this customary leadership plays an important role in society, including in the decision-making mechanism in determining customary holidays, religious holidays and so on which positions the Kasepuhan as a central figure in the government in Ciusul Village ([Mayrudin et al., 2020](#)). The interaction between the customary leadership system and the formal leadership system, such as the village head, is also an interesting aspect to analyze. The relationship between these two systems creates a good synergy in contributing to the harmonization of social relations, cultural preservation, utilization of natural resources and sustainable management of people's lives.

Ciusul traditional leadership has an important side both in terms of academics and practicality. Academically, this research can enrich the study of customary leadership or informal leadership in Indonesia which is increasingly marginalized by the dominance of the formal government system. Most of the existing research focuses more on modern state government, so the understanding of how customary government functions in the context of local culture is often less explored. By delving deeper into the structure, processes, and values contained in the customary governance system in Citorek, this research can contribute to the broader study of customary governance, as well as enrich theories about community participation, decision-making, and cultural sustainability.

This research is very important because it provides an in-depth understanding of customary leadership in creating social harmony and preserving culture and tradition in the midst of the challenges of globalization and modernization. Ciusul Traditional Leadership has proven to be effective in preserving customs, regulating social and cultural

life by paying attention to local values and wisdom. This research has a close relationship with previous research conducted by [Pudjiastuti et al. \(2023\)](#), which revealed the importance of the decision of indigenous heads in maintaining culture in the midst of the dynamics of the times. The study emphasizes how communities can adapt to changes without losing their cultural identity, which is in line with the findings of this study regarding the function and role of traditional leadership in Ciusul Village, which maintains and maintains the customs that have been inherited by previous ancestors.

The focus of this research is to analyze the structure, function, and role of traditional leadership in Ciusul Village, Citorek Village, Cibeber District, Lebak Regency, which still survives in the modernization era. In this context, customary leadership has a strategic role in regulating social life, as well as preserving culture and the environment. This raises questions related to the interaction between customary leadership carried out by the traditional head of kaspeuhan and formal leadership carried out by the village head. Therefore, this study seeks to explain how the structure, function, and decision-making process in the customary system contribute to the social and cultural harmonization of the local community. The results of this study are expected to be a reference for the preservation of indigenous leadership in inclusive national policies, as well as a consideration for the government in formulating policies that respect cultural diversity and the rights of indigenous peoples.

Methods

The research site was conducted in Ciusul Village, Citorek Village, Cibeber District, Lebak Regency, with a focus on the Indigenous people of Ciusul Village. The subjects of the study include traditional leaders, village leaders, community leaders and local residents.

The design of this study uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to describe the structure, function, and role of the Kasepuhan traditional leadership in Ciusul Village. In addition, this research also seeks to uncover the decision-making process carried out by both traditional leaders and village heads in maintaining cultural traditions and the sustainability of community life. The qualitative research method aims to describe the complex reality and meaningful understanding of the leadership of the Kasepuhan Ciusul Customs in a natural context in depth through the researcher's interpretation of the data collected ([Sugiyono, 2017](#)).

The data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, which aimed to identify the main themes that emerged from the data. According to [Sugiyono \(2017\)](#), thematic analysis is the process of organizing and analyzing data by grouping information based on certain categories that are relevant to the research objectives. This analysis process is carried out in several stages, namely: (a) Data Reduction This process involves filtering the data that has been collected to select information that is relevant to the focus of the research. Irrelevant data will be removed, while relevant data will be categorized based on emerging themes. (b) Presentation of Data Data that has been selected and grouped is then presented in the form of a descriptive narrative. The presentation of data is carried out by organizing information systematically to facilitate further analysis. (c) Drawing conclusions. Once the data is presented, the next step is to draw conclusions based on thematic analysis. The researcher will identify the main patterns, interthematic relationships, and relationships between traditional leadership structures and village governments in decision-making ([Miles and Huberman Model in Sugiyono, 2017](#)).

Results

Structure, Role and Function of Traditional Leadership of Kasepuhan Ciusul

Traditional leadership in Ciusul Village, Citorek Village, has a unique structure and is greatly influenced by long-standing norms and traditions. This leadership system plays an important role in maintaining traditional traditions, community culture and the local environment. In this customary leadership structure, there are several positions, each of which has a clear function and role in carrying out the traditional life of the Ciusul village community. The structure of customary leadership in Kasepuhan Ciusul Customs is as follows:

1. Traditional Leaders

The traditional government system in Ciusul Village, Citorek Village, Cibebur District, Lebak Regency, Banten, has a traditional leader known as Aki Calo. This traditional leader is the highest leader who serves as the traditional head, the traditional head as a traditional or informal leader always tries to preserve these activities ([Irwan, 2017](#)). As a leader, Aki Calo holds the main responsibility in maintaining the sustainability of customs and cultural values that have been passed down from generation to generation. As the supreme leader, Aki Calo plays a very strategic function in regulating people's lives, preserving traditions, and protecting the social harmony that exists in indigenous peoples.

In the traditional kasepuhan of Ciusul, Aki Calo plays a role in maintaining the life of his community in accordance with the rules, values and norms that have existed since ancient times. In addition, Aki Calo also plays an executive role in various traditional professional activities, such as seren taun, harvest rituals, and other traditional ritual events that are an important part of the identity of the people of Ciusul Village. With his authority, Aki Calo ensures that customs are still carried out according to ancestral norms and continue to be passed on to future generations, even though they are faced with the challenges of modernization. In addition, Aki Calo plays a role in protecting customs and their people, maintaining traditions in the midst of social change, managing internal conflicts in society, and bridging the relationship between customary and formal governments. With these efforts, Aki Calo has become an important figure in preserving cultural heritage and balancing traditional values with modern demands, this makes customs the main pillar in the life of the indigenous people of Ciusul Village.

2. Outdated Row

The old line, also known as Rengrengan, is an advisory group in the traditional institutional structure of Kasepuhan Village, Ciusul Village. This old-fashioned line functions as a firm holder of customary rules ([West Java Cultural Value Preservation Agency, 2020](#)). Rengrengan is responsible for supporting Aki Calo as the highest leader in Kasepuhan. The role of Rengrengan is to provide the direction, input, and considerations needed to help Aki Calo to carry out their responsibilities properly. As part of the traditional leadership structure, Rengrengan plays an important role in ensuring that decisions taken are in accordance with traditional values and the needs of the community.

3. Juru Basa

Juru Basa is a liaison between the outside party and the Kasepuhan in Ciusul Village. The interpreter functions as an entrance for outsiders when they want to meet Aki Kolot, [Mulyadi \(2013\)](#) mentioned that this interpreter is the first person that must be met by outsiders before contacting the chief. Juru Basa has a role to receive guests or representatives from outside the community, to also ensure that relations with outside parties remain in line with the interests of the indigenous community and do not conflict with the values upheld by the Kasepuhan Adat. In addition, Juru Basa also plays an active role in carrying out various traditional processions, such as Seren Taun or other ceremonies. In this case, the task of the Juru Basa is to coordinate activities involving

indigenous peoples and outside parties to ensure that everything runs in accordance with customary rules.

4. Amil

Amil is a traditional kasepuhan figure who plays the role of an expert in the religious field (Mulyadi, 2013). The religion adopted by the Kasepuhan Adat of Kampung Ciusul is Islam. Amil has a role in maintaining the continuity of religious processions in indigenous peoples so that they run well and in accordance with the teachings of Islam. In Kasepuhan, Amil plays a role in carrying out various important rituals and processions in the lives of indigenous peoples, such as leading ceremonies related to birth, marriage, circumcision, recitation, and death which are not only considered a tradition but also part of religious practices. Amil also acts as a community guide by providing advice in the religious field, teaching moral values and becoming a reference in solving problems in the religious field. This amil serves to maintain tradition and religion so that they go hand in hand.



Figure 1. The Heads of Ciusul

Decision-Making Process

Based on the results of the interview that has been conducted with Mr. Tri Wahyu (Secretary of the Citorek Village Government), the process of making customary decisions in Ciusul Village is as follows:

1. Preparation

This preparation is led by community leaders or traditional leaders, such as Aki Calo or other traditional officials. Leaders are responsible for finding important issues that must be discussed in deliberations. For example, the traditional procession of the year seren, mipit, information related to the harvest season or environmental conditions will be collected in advance. The preparatory stage has a very important role in achieving the goals of deliberation. Through careful preparation, deliberation is sure to be able to produce decisions that are in line with the noble values of the Caspeuhan Customary of Ciusul Village.

2. Implementation of deliberations

The implementation of Deliberations in the Ciusul Traditional District can be carried out openly or closed. The implementation of open deliberations is carried out at the time of resolving resident conflicts and so on. Meanwhile, closed deliberations are carried out at the time of decision-making related to the customs of the implementation process only involving traditional devices such as Aki Calo, Baris Kolot, Juru Basa, and Amil. Even so, this kasepuhan custom still reflects the principle of togetherness and traditional democracy which is the basic value in decision-making.

3. Results

The results of the agreement in the Kasepuhan Ciusul customary deliberations reflect

the principle of justice which is highly upheld by the indigenous people. The decisions resulting from the open deliberation process aim to meet the interests of all parties without causing harm to anyone.

4. Verification

After an agreement is reached, the decision is usually outlined in the form of regulations or guidelines that bind all members of the community. However, in the Kasepuhan Customary Village of Ciusul, there is no formal written regulation. Instead, society strictly adheres to unwritten norms known as "pamali". Although it is not documented, pamali serves as a concrete reference for the community to follow. The application of pamali ensures that all societies adhere to pamali, each individual knows what is expected of them and how they should behave in a customary context.

5. Decision Implementation

The implementation of the agreed decision is an important step in ensuring that the results of the deliberations are applied and implemented in daily life by the community as a form of concern in preserving their customs and culture. After the decision is taken, every community is expected to follow the results of the decision that has been set. If there is a violation of the decision, the community will again use the deliberative mechanism to solve the problems that arise. This process allows community members to discuss and find solutions together. Thus, the existence of deliberation is an important tool in maintaining the sustainability of the implementation of decisions and ensuring shared responsibility for the agreements that have been made.

The decision-making process in the Ciusul Traditional District is in collaboration with the formal government, it's just that for sacred parts, usually only the kasepuhan can decide without interference from any party, including the formal government. Even so, both the kasepuhan and the government go hand in hand to maintain customs and preserve the culture that has been inherited by the ancestors.



Figure 2. Kepala Desa dan Sekretaris Desa

The Role of Formal Government in the Kasepuhan Ciusul Customs

1. Providing Legal Recognition

The Lebak Regency Government gave official recognition to the Kasepuhan Customary in Citorek Village through Regional Regulation No. 8 of 2015. This recognition is an important step to protect the rights of indigenous peoples, including the rights to land and natural resources that they have managed for generations. With this recognition, indigenous peoples can exercise their autonomy in managing their social and cultural lives, so that they have the power to determine the direction of development in accordance with the values and

traditions adhered to. This not only supports the sustainability of local culture, but also contributes to the well-being of the community as a whole.

2. Supporting the Kasepuhan Traditional Leadership

The formal government has a role in strengthening the leadership of the Kasepuhan Ciusul custom. Village heads and village officials work closely with traditional leaders, such as Aki Calo, as well as their apparatus (Jaro Adat, Baris Kolot, Penghulu, and others) to ensure that decisions taken in customary deliberations are respected and properly implemented. This cooperation has an important role in building synergy between customary law and government policies, so that the community can obtain policies from these two systems. With this collaboration, the decisions produced are not only customary legal, but also in the government system so that they are able to support the social and economic development of the community while preserving existing traditions.

3. Empowering the Community

Through economic empowerment programs, the formal government helps the Kasepuhan Indigenous people to improve their welfare. For example, the management of the country's tourism area on the clouds of Gunung Luhur which was handed over to indigenous peoples aims to increase local income through the tourism sector, which at the same time provides opportunities for the community to promote their culture and traditions. In addition, the government also supports training and education to increase public awareness of their rights, so that people are better able to participate in decision-making processes related to daily life. With this initiative, the community not only gets economic support, but also strengthens their capacity to maintain and preserve cultural heritage.

4. Collaboration in Decision-Making

The formal government is also actively involved in the decision-making process and deliberations organized by the traditional leaders of the kasepuhan. This is done to support traditional values and listen to the aspirations of the Kasepuhan indigenous people, so that the policies taken by the government can reflect the needs and expectations of the community. In this context, the village head serves as a mediator between the government and indigenous peoples, helping to bridge communication and ensure that the voice of the community is well heard. With this collaboration, the community can convey their problems and proposals directly, so that the government can formulate policies that are more relevant and do not contradict customs.

5. Cultural Protector

The formal government is responsible for protecting the traditions, culture and environment in the Citorek district. One form of support is the implementation of traditional ceremonies such as Seren Taun. Seren Taun is an important part of the cultural identity of the indigenous people of Kasepuhan Citorek. By providing support with activities like this, the government not only helps in preserving traditions that have been inherited by ancestors but also helps in raising awareness to the younger generation in the importance of maintaining and preserving local traditions and culture. Through this support, the government has contributed to the sustainability and maintaining a balance between the development of an increasingly modern era and the preservation of traditional values.

The formal government participation in the Kasepuhan Indigenous community in Ciusul Village is very important to protect and preserve their culture and environment. Through participation in decision-making, providing support for indigenous activities such as Seren Taun, and economic empowerment programs, the government not only ensures that the policies taken reflect the needs of the community, but also strengthens identity and

solidarity. Thus, collaboration between the government and indigenous peoples plays a crucial role in maintaining the sustainability of traditions and improving community welfare, thereby creating harmony between modern development and the preservation of local values.

Conclusion

The results of this study can be concluded that the structure and role of the leadership of the Ciusul kasepuhan customs in maintaining customs and the sustainability of culture and tradition. Traditional leadership, led by Aki Calo as the supreme leader along with other traditional apparatus such as Rengrengan, Jaro Adat, and Amil, plays an important role in regulating people's lives, maintaining traditions, and functioning as a liaison between indigenous peoples and the outside world.

The decision-making process in the Traditional Village of Ciusul Village is carried out through closed and open deliberations involving all members of the community, reflecting the principles of justice, solidarity, and compliance with customary norms. Decisions are taken based on consensus and implemented through pamali, which is an unwritten norm. The decisions taken through this deliberation ensure the sustainability of customs and traditions without ignoring the changing times.

The role of formal government is also very important in supporting the sustainability of the customary leadership system. Through legal recognition, economic empowerment, and support for cultural activities, the government collaborates with indigenous peoples to create a good relationship between tradition and modernization. This collaboration can strengthen the cultural identity of the indigenous people of Kasepuhan in Ciusul village, improve welfare and ensure the preservation of traditional values that are irreplaceable despite the challenges of modernization.

Suggestion

1. There needs to be a comparative study on the structure and function of customary leadership in Ciusul Village with other indigenous peoples in Indonesia. This provides insight into the diversity of the customary leadership system as well as the preservation of local traditions and culture
2. The research was conducted to see the role of women in traditional leadership, this was carried out to see how gender dynamics are in the context of Kasepuhan culture and traditional traditions in Ciusul Village.
3. It is necessary to conduct research on the impact of modernization on the implementation of traditional leadership values. This research was conducted to see how the young generation in Ciusul Village responded to social and economic changes caused by modernization.

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