



# Village Head's Leadership in Strengthening Multiple Case-Based Village Libraries in Java

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## KEYWORDS

Village Libraries

Village Leadership

Literacy Development

Community Empowerment

## ABSTRACT

This study examines the pivotal role of village heads in strengthening socially sustainable village libraries. It highlights how village heads act as facilitators of community solidarity, strategic policymakers in literacy development, infrastructure developers, and transformative leaders who actively engage younger generations. Employing a qualitative multiple-case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with village heads and library managers in three village libraries across Java. A cross-case thematic analysis was conducted to identify challenges, successes, and best practices in managing village libraries within diverse social and cultural contexts. The findings reveal that village heads play a crucial role in advancing community literacy and well-being. By fostering a strong sense of togetherness, they encourage active community participation in literacy programs. Their strategic decisions further contribute to the sustainability of village libraries through financial support and literacy-oriented policies. In addition, the involvement of village heads in infrastructure development ensures that libraries function as comfortable and inclusive spaces for learning and knowledge-sharing. Equally important, their leadership in fostering youth participation strengthens libraries' role as centers of innovation and lifelong learning. While this research provides valuable insights, its scope remains limited to specific regions and does not address the long-term impacts of village head leadership on literacy development. Future studies are therefore needed to examine village libraries within broader policy frameworks and to consider longitudinal approaches for evaluating sustainability and effectiveness. The study also offers practical recommendations for village heads to optimize their support and initiatives in strengthening village libraries. Reinforced policies and greater community engagement are expected to enhance local literacy efforts and foster grassroots community empowerment.

## KATA KUNCI

Perpustakaan Desa

Kepemimpinan Desa

Pengembangan Literasi

Pemberdayaan Perpustakaan

## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji peran penting kepala desa dalam penguatan perpustakaan desa yang berkelanjutan secara sosial. Penelitian ini menyoroti bagaimana kepala desa berperan sebagai penggerak fasilitator dalam solidaritas masyarakat, pembuat kebijakan strategis dalam pengembangan literasi, pengembang infrastruktur, serta memimpin transformatif yang aktif melibatkan generasi muda. Dengan pendekatan studi kasus ganda dalam penelitian kualitatif, penelitian ini mengumpulkan data melalui wawancara mendalam dengan kepala desa dan pengelola perpustakaan di tiga perpustakaan desa yang berada di Jawa. Analisis tematik lintas-kasus digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi tantangan, keberhasilan, dan praktik terbaik dalam pengelolaan perpustakaan desa di berbagai konteks sosial dan budaya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepala desa memiliki peran kunci dalam meningkatkan literasi dan



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kesejahteraan masyarakat. Dengan membangun rasa kebersamaan yang kuat, mendorong partisipasi aktif masyarakat dalam berbagai program literasi. Keputusan strategis yang diambil juga berkontribusi pada keberlanjutan perpustakaan desa melalui dukungan pendanaan dan kebijakan yang berpihak pada literasi. Selain itu, keterlibatan kepala desa dalam pengembangan infrastruktur memastikan perpustakaan menjadi ruang yang nyaman dan fungsional sebagai pusat pembelajaran dan berbagi pengetahuan. Yang tidak kalah penting, kepemimpinan kepala desa khususnya dalam merangkul generasi muda, memperkuat peran perpustakaan sebagai pusat inovasi dan pembelajaran sepanjang hayat. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan yang cukup mendalam, namun cakupannya masih terbatas pada wilayah tertentu dan belum mengkaji dampak jangka panjang kepemimpinan kepala desa terhadap pengembangan literasi. Oleh karena itu, penelitian di masa depan perlu melihat peran perpustakaan desa dalam konteks kebijakan yang lebih luas serta mempertimbangkan studi jangka panjang untuk menilai keberlanjutan dan efektivitasnya. Temuan ini juga memberikan rekomendasi praktis bagi kepala desa agar lebih optimal dalam mendukung dan mengembangkan perpustakaan desa. Penguatan kebijakan serta peningkatan keterlibatan masyarakat diharapkan dapat semakin memperkuat upaya literasi dan pemberdayaan komunitas di tingkat lokal.

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## 1. Introduction

Village-level libraries foster community development by enhancing local capacity and building social capital (Heuertz, 2009), thereby strengthening the community's intellectual and social resources. By strengthening the community's intellectual and social resources, these libraries can promote empowerment and encourage active participation in village development initiatives (Annan-Prah & Andoh, 2023). To maximize their impact, village libraries must be managed effectively. Success in library management depends not only on the availability of facilities and book collections but also on the active involvement of the village head, who serves as the primary decision-maker at the village level. Village heads who prioritize library development within the village agenda and actively participate in planning and resource allocation can significantly improve community access to information and educational resources. This highlights that the leadership and budgetary decisions of the village head are crucial to the effective management and success of village libraries (Dani & Mu'aimanah, 2024).

(Park et al., 2024) Also cited other research on the role of the village head. That effective village leadership can utilize the concepts of "power with" and "power to" to carry out collective actions and strengthen individual capacity, thereby transforming the village's social dynamics (Park et al., 2024). The application of collaborative leadership can be one of the keys to unlocking the potential, encouraging participation by various village community members in literacy programs, and supporting the use of local resources to maintain sustainability. Collaborative leadership by the village head not only strengthens the library's role as an information center but also makes the village library an inclusive public space that can help build social capital, expand literacy, and empower village communities sustainably.

In addition to the previously mentioned research, the collaborative leadership model can also be observed in several village libraries that have flourished due to the direct involvement of the village head. Examples include the Gampingan Gemar Reading Village Library in Malang Regency, East Java, the Muda Bhakti Village Library in Magelang, Central Java, and the Pabukon Saba Library in Pangalengan, Bandung, West Java. The achievements of these libraries demonstrate that the support of local leadership, particularly the village head, plays a vital role in strengthening and sustaining the development of village libraries.

Discussions regarding the role of the village head are significant, as the village head, as a leader, has the authority to formulate policies, allocate resources, and utilize village assets, such as land

and budgets, to support library development. Additionally, the village head possesses social networks that can serve as capital to increase community participation and foster collaboration with external parties to support the village library (Che & Mbah, 2021; Veselicz et al., 2022). However, the role of village heads in policymaking to ensure the sustainability of village libraries has not been fully systematized and often remains a low priority. In many cases, village libraries continue to rely on individual initiatives or external assistance, without a strategic plan integrated with village governance. Therefore, further research is needed to examine how village heads can strategically leverage village libraries to support broader village development.

This article examines the strategies employed by village heads in the three aforementioned villages to support their village libraries, including planning, budgeting, human resource management, and collaboration with external stakeholders. The research outcomes are expected to provide insights into the leadership role of village heads in enhancing the function of village libraries as centers for community empowerment. Moreover, the findings can serve as a foundation for policy development or guide village governments in better ensuring the sustainability of village libraries as integral components of inclusive and sustainable village development.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Village Library

Village libraries operate at the village level to support community activities, particularly in literacy, education, and overall community development. These libraries are public service institutions embedded within the village, developed by and for the community, aimed at providing services and fulfilling the informational, educational, scientific, and recreational needs of all residents (Sutarno, 2008, p. 9).

The role of a village library extends beyond providing reading materials. According to Griffis and Johnson (2014), rural libraries serve as centers for social interaction and information exchange, catering to both newcomers and minority groups. They act as symbols of local identity, strengthen community participation and independence, and facilitate broader networks connecting different community spaces.

Historically, village libraries were often neglected; however, as noted by Lutfiyana et al. (2022), they should be community-based, function as learning spaces, support education, and contribute to sustainable village development. By serving as learning centers and activity hubs, village libraries encourage active community engagement and foster villagers' literacy skills.

### 2.2. The Role of the Village Head in the Development of the Village Library

The village head, as the key authority within the village government, is responsible for fostering the village's development, including the village library. In supporting the growth and effectiveness of the village library, the village head can take on several key roles:

- 2.2.1. The village head plays a key role in ensuring that village libraries have sufficient infrastructure to function effectively. This includes maintaining the library building in good condition and providing the necessary facilities to support library operations and activities.
- 2.2.2. Funding for village libraries is also a key responsibility of the village head. The head must actively secure financial resources, whether from the village budget or external sources such as the district or provincial government, or non-governmental organizations. This effort is essential to ensure that the library has the necessary books and facilities to operate effectively. (Hilmawan et al., 2023).
- 2.2.3. Village libraries can play a vital role in sustainable development by enhancing the literacy and education of the local community. Therefore, the village head should view the library as a learning hub and assist in providing relevant reading materials and literacy programs that serve as a foundation for continuous knowledge development.
- 2.2.4. The village head, having an extensive network, can facilitate partnerships with other institutions, such as schools, NGOs, and government agencies, to support the

implementation of programs in the village library, including reading activities, technology training, and various community initiatives. (Adesipo et al., 2020; Zhang & Zhang, 2020).

The active participation of the village head in these areas can enhance the library's role as a hub for learning and community knowledge, thereby contributing to the village's overall development.

### 3. Research Methodology

This article employs a multiple case study approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of village heads in supporting the management and development of village libraries that implement socially inclusive library transformation programs. This approach is selected to obtain detailed information from multiple sources across different cases (Yin, 2018). Multiple case studies also allow for cross-case comparisons, which help determine whether the findings are unique to a specific case or can be generalized to other contexts (Yin, 2003). Using this methodology, the study can identify strategies or policies employed by village heads that influence village library management by analyzing in-depth data from each library (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2018).

His study was conducted in three villages on Java Island, each with a socially inclusive library: Gampingan Gemar Reading Village Library (Malang Regency, East Java), Muda Bhakti Village Library (Magelang Regency, Central Java), and Margamukti Village Library (Pangalengan, Bandung, West Java).

The villages were selected purposively based on two criteria: (1) the presence of an active and sustainable village library, and (2) support from the village government for library management. Data collection combined multiple sources (Denzin, 2017), including: (1) interviews with six key informants, consisting of village heads and library managers from the three villages, (2) direct observation of library activities and the village heads' involvement in supporting these activities, and (3) documentation and secondary data. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to determine the role of village heads in supporting village library management.

The data in this study were collected during fieldwork conducted in 2019 and 2020, so the results reflect the state of village libraries and village policies during those years.

Data analysis was performed using the coding techniques outlined by Corbin & Strauss (2015). The analysis was conducted systematically to identify the role of village heads in managing village libraries. The process involved three stages: first, open coding, where interview transcripts and observation notes were repeatedly reviewed to identify key concepts emerging from the data; second, axial coding, in which the categories identified during open coding were organized based on cause-and-effect relationships and connections between concepts, allowing for an in-depth examination; and third, selective coding, which aimed to integrate the main categories into a cohesive conceptual framework to explain the patterns of relationships observed in the research findings.

### 4. Research and Discussion Results

#### 4.1. Village Library Overview

##### 4.1.1. Gampingan Village Library Loves to Read

The Gampingan Gemar Reading Village Library is situated in Pagak District, Malang Regency, East Java, and was established in 2015. Initially, the library operated in a small room within the Gampingan village hall. Due to growing public interest, the Head of Gampingan Village supported relocating the library to a larger, separate space apart from the youth organization's activities. In 2017, the village head provided a dedicated building for the library, which the Pagak Sub-district officially inaugurated in September of that year. The new library building covers 199 square meters, is two stories high, and is strategically located along the edge of the Gampingan Highway.

##### 4.1.2. Library of Desa Muda Bhakti

The Muda Bhakti Village Library, situated in Ngablak Village, Magelang Regency, Central Java, was founded in 2000 by Endah Susanti as a community space for productive use of free time.

The library experienced significant growth under Mr. Muhadi's management. In 2010, the library became inactive due to the Mount Merapi eruption, but was revived in 2016. The Head of Ngablak Village officially re-inaugurated it, renaming it from Karang Taruna Muda Bhakti to the Bhakti Youth Library through Village Head Decree Number: 180.192/18/Kep/2016, appointing new administrators from the youth organization and the Ngablak BANANA Village Children's Forum (Barisan The Children of Ngablak).

#### 4.1.3. Pabukon Saba Village Library

The Pabukon Saba Village Library is located in Margamukti Village. In Sundanese, "Pabukon" refers to a place for storing library materials, while "Saba" means dynamic or active. The library was founded in 2007 and officially inaugurated in 2009 under the Village Head Decree No. 040/SK.8/I/2009. However, in the same year, a 7.2-magnitude earthquake struck Pangalengan, damaging the library. In 2010, the library was further affected by a flash flood, forcing it to relocate its operations to the village office complex temporarily. In 2013, the Margamukti village head supported the construction of a dedicated library building.

#### 4.2. *The Strategic Role of the Village Head in the Management and Development of the Village Library*

The Village Head holds a crucial role in overseeing the management of the village library as part of initiatives to foster community development. Based on interviews and the analysis of findings, the following presents the various roles, initiatives, and policies undertaken by village heads to support the sustainability and growth of village libraries.

**Table 1**

Summary of Interview Results of Village Head and Library Manager

Category	Key Findings	Respondent's Statement
<b>The Role of the Village Head in the Management of the Village Library</b>	The village head serves as a facilitator in building solidarity between the community and the village apparatus to support the village library.	<i>"Entering into the vision and mission, I used to run for office, so I did not stand alone, most of the time. In other villages, the library began on its own, then asked the village government for permission. If we were here at the beginning, we were together from the beginning."</i> (Village Library Manager A)
	Village libraries help improve access to education in areas with limited school facilities.	<i>"In the past, my vision and mission were to educate and focus on education, so when I took office at the beginning of the school, access was limited and far away, so if you want to build a school, it is not possible, so one of them is to establish a village library."</i> (Village Head B)
	The construction of the library is part of the village head's vision to improve the quality of human resources, especially the younger generation.	<i>"As soon as I took office, I went directly to Mr. Sam. Even in the past, when it was not built, we aspired to build a library building here first because we were concerned about improving human resources in the village community."</i> (Village Head C)
	The village library was built as part of the village head's vision	<i>"Entering into the vision and mission, I used to run for office, so</i>

and mission and is integrated with other village programs such as BUMDes and PKK.	<i>I did not stand alone, most of the time. In other villages, the library began on its own, then asked the village government for permission. If we were here at the beginning, we were together from the beginning.</i> (Village Library Manager A)
The village head applies an inclusive approach by involving the younger generation in the management of the village library.	<i>"The head of the village is mixed with the young ones because the management is still young on average."</i> (Village Library Manager B)
The village head plays an active role in supporting the library by allocating the budget and attending village library activities.	<i>"If so far it supports, provides financial assistance for building construction, if there are activities in the village library, it will also come."</i> (Village Library Manager C)

Source: Author's Processing, 2025

Based on interviews and observations, the Village Head plays several key roles in supporting village libraries. In Village A (Gampingan Gemar Membaca Library), the Village Head acts as a facilitator, fostering solidarity among the community, village officials, and library staff. In Village B (Muda Bhakti Village Library), the Village Head contributes to improving education by establishing a library in a community with limited access to schools and educational resources. Meanwhile, in Village C (Pabukon Saba Village Library), the Village Head integrates the library into village programs to enhance human resource development.

The first role of the Village Head is to facilitate. For example, in Gampingan, the Village Head emphasizes building cooperation between villagers, village officials, and library managers to ensure the library's sustainability. This approach aligns with the concept of Community Development, which highlights the importance of social capital in supporting ongoing community programs (Ife, 2010). Supporting evidence includes local leaders organizing monthly anti-malaria campaigns that saw high community participation (Bardosh et al., 2023) illustrating the facilitator's role in increasing engagement, including in library-related activities.

The second role of the Village Head is as a policy planner in human resource development. Rural communities often face challenges in accessing quality education due to limited resources and infrastructure (Heather D Hutto, 2023; Sharma et al., 2020), as seen in Ngablak village. The Muda Bhakti Village Library, re-established in 2016, was designed to provide much-needed access to education. The Village Head formulated policies aligned with their vision and mission, establishing the library as a free educational resource. Similarly, the Village Head in Pabukon Saba integrated the library into village initiatives to enhance the skills and education of the younger generation. These policies reflect participatory leadership, as defined by Arnstein (1969), by involving youth as library managers and strengthening community literacy.

The involvement of the Village Head in library management goes beyond technical policy implementation; it serves as a social inclusion strategy, positioning the library as an inclusive space for learning, networking, and enhancing community capacity, in line with the concept of social inclusion through libraries (Aabø & Audunson, 2012). A well-managed village library cannot be separated from the support and engagement of the Village Head, who recognizes that knowledge is a source of empowerment. Recognizing the library's vital role in educating the community, the Village Head engages stakeholders, raises awareness of the importance of literacy, and ensures the library functions as an inclusive and sustainable center for learning and community development.

#### 4.3. Funding, Resources, and Collaboration Strategies for Village Libraries

Funding, resources, and partnerships are key factors in ensuring the sustainability of village libraries. This section examines the strategies the three village libraries have implemented to secure funding, manage resources, and foster collaboration. The discussion begins with the village libraries' funding strategies, highlighting the role of the village head, the policies that guide budget allocation, and the various sources of financial support for library operations.

**Table 2**

Summary of Interview Results of Village Head and Library Manager (Funding)

Category	Key Findings	Respondent's Statement
<b>Village Library Funding Strategy</b>	Village library funding is sourced from the village budget and personal donations, with allocations for village library construction and activities.	<i>"It just so happens that the donor for this library is my husband, it is the old village head, twice the new harness just needs to continue, besides that, it is also from the village budget, usually if it is for activities or paying to take care of this library."</i> (Village Head A)
	The village head is committed to allocating village funds each year to the library.	<i>"For the budget, I have committed from the beginning of the campaign every year to budget village funds for activities in the village library."</i> (Village Head B)
	The village government allocates village funds for library operations, such as incentives for service officers.	<i>"Operations, although the number is not much, especially to the service officers who guard the library, are taken from the village budget."</i> (Village Head C)
	Village library funding is supported by a combination of the village budget and community contributions from agricultural products (Salak Pustaka) and book alms.	<i>"From the salak one, one salak farmer donated one of his salak trees to the library, continuing from the village fund budget as well. If we have a book alms, we have a book alms, one family, one book, but often the one that comes is even one cardboard."</i> (Village Library Manager B)
	Village library funding is sourced from village funds, CSR, and independent income through literacy cafés.	<i>"We have the largest budget from Star Energy Biopharma's CSR every year to provide financial assistance, from village funds, and also from the results of this literacy café.."</i> (Village Library Manager C)

Source: Author's Processing, 2025

Funding and budgeting are crucial components of the operation of village libraries. Based on interviews and observations, it can be concluded that all three village heads have implemented policies to allocate village funds for library support. The Head of Village A (Gampingan Gemar Reading Library) annually provides village funds for operational costs and staff incentives, previously supplemented by the former village head's personal funds. The Head of Village B (Muda Bhakti Village Library) demonstrates a commitment to allocating village funds for library purposes. It has also implemented a policy encouraging local salak farmers to donate one salak tree each to the library.

Meanwhile, the Head of Village C supports library operations and management incentives, with additional funding for Library B sourced from CSR programs and a literacy café. The village heads' dedication to annual budget allocation is vital to sustaining village libraries. These funding practices align with the concept of community-based resource mobilization, which emphasizes the importance of local contributions to sustainability and underscores the notion that organizations can thrive through mutually beneficial relationships with external stakeholders, including companies implementing CSR initiatives (Clarke et al., 2023; Murray et al., 2020).

Furthermore, this section discusses the results of interviews and analyses regarding resource support for libraries and the extent to which these resources enable village libraries to function optimally. It presents data on the various forms of support, including facilities and infrastructure.

**Table 3**

Summary of Interview Results of Village Head and Library Manager (resource)

Category	Key Findings	Respondent's Statement
<b>Resource Support for Village Libraries</b>	<p>The construction of the village library is supported by the personal assets of the previous village head's family.</p> <p>Library development is carried out in stages, starting from training, building construction, and increasing book collections through various strategies.</p>	<p><i>"If we do, this library building happens to have the family of my husband's MBA, the previous village head." (Village Head A)</i></p> <p><i>"We budgeted 25 million for books, from competition and socialization activities, and finally, the National Library began to look here." (Village Head B)</i></p>
	<p>The construction of the village library building is the result of collaboration between the village government and the library manager's initiative.</p>	<p><i>"We help with the construction of the library building into two floors, but we help with the lower floor, if the upper floor is the initiative of the chief manager." (Village Head C)</i></p>

Source: Author's Processing, 2025

Resource support is essential for maintaining the quality and effectiveness of services provided to the village community. According to the interview findings, the village libraries receive various forms of support from both the village head and personal donors, including the provision of library buildings, assistance with construction, facilities and infrastructure, and policies that provide incentives for library staff.

Additionally, this section presents the results of interviews and analyses on collaboration with external parties, a key strategy for strengthening the role of village libraries as community activity centers. The section highlights various forms of partnerships between village libraries and external stakeholders.

**Table 4**

Summary of Interview Results of Village Head and Library Manager (Collaboration)

Category	Key Findings	Respondent's Statement
<b>Collaboration with External Parties</b>	Village heads and village library managers build networks with stakeholders at the sub-district and district levels.	<i>"But we do have to be close to the official people, to the sub-district, to the people in the district, we are all close and have acquaintances there." (Village Head A)</i>

<p>Village libraries build strategic cooperation with various parties to support literacy activities and mobile library services.</p>	<p><i>"If the cooperation is mostly, for example, if we want to make activities, we need resource persons, for example, activities about disaster training, yes, we have gone to BMKG to invite cooperation, we need resources, we also have an MOU with farmer groups to borrow tosa for mobile libraries." (Library Manager B)</i></p>
<p>The village library received support from various parties, including the government, the private sector, and the local community.</p>	<p><i>"If from the outside, we are from CSR from Star energy bioparma, continue with the library service, the livestock service, the library service as well, schools around here, if from the village itself with PKK women and youth organizations" (Library Manager C)</i></p>

Source: Author's Processing, 2025

Libraries cannot meet all their needs independently, so collaboration is essential to support village libraries as centers for literacy, education, and community empowerment. Based on interview results, each village library reported partnerships with the local community, government agencies, and private institutions. These collaborations include financial support, training programs, provision of resource persons, and facility assistance.

Funding is a critical factor in sustaining library activities. In Indonesia, villages have the autonomy to manage their financial resources, which can be used to invest in infrastructure and human resource development (Rammohan & Tohari, 2023). The village government has the authority to regulate its budget, and the Regulation of the Minister of Villages PDTT No. 11 of 2019 stipulates that village funds can be allocated annually for building village libraries and acquiring reading materials. However, this provision has not been widely implemented by all village heads, and according to interviews with the three village heads in this study, Villages A, B, and C reported that their village budgets support the library. The allocation of funds is twofold: first, for the physical construction of the library, and second, for operational activities, including training programs, purchasing book collections, and providing incentives for library administrators.

In addition to funding from the village budget, village libraries also rely on community support to remain sustainable. Adopting a community-based approach and fostering partnerships are essential strategies for ensuring the long-term viability of local libraries. Engaging and empowering the community helps secure continued support over time (Sejie & Mahomed, 2023). The three village libraries studied have implemented similar strategies. For example, despite receiving village budget allocations, Village Library B supplements its resources through community contributions, such as a grant of one salak tree provided via the "Salak Pustaka" program.

Funding for village libraries can also originate from private institutions or businesses. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs are one strategy for generating such support, as partnerships with companies can provide financial backing for library projects (Clarke et al., 2023; Sejie & Mahomed, 2023). This is what the library of Village C does; for instance, Village Library C aligns its activities with the Sustainable Development Goals, such as literacy programs, chayote farming empowerment, and poultry farming, to attract funding from Star Energy Company Bioparma.

Beyond funding, collaboration with external parties is a strategic measure undertaken by village heads and libraries to ensure sustainability. This includes establishing partnerships with

stakeholders and relevant agencies. For example, the Head of Village A works with the tourism office to use the library as a training venue to support local tourism. Village Library B collaborates with BMKG as a resource for disaster mitigation, while Libraries B and C engage with nearby schools. Such collaborations strengthen libraries' roles and demonstrate the principle of collaborative leadership. Village heads play a pivotal role in mobilizing community resources and fostering partnerships with external parties, including local governments and NGOs, to advance development initiatives. Transformational leadership by village heads enhances stakeholder engagement and promotes more effective outcomes for community development (Yunas et al., 2025).

#### *4.4. The Impact of Village Head Involvement on the Success of the Village Library*

Village libraries can operate independently with support from private institutions and other partners. However, the village head, as the local leader, holds the authority to allocate village funds, set policies, and mobilize community involvement in library activities. By implementing policies that allocate a portion of the village budget to book collections, infrastructure, and literacy or skills-training programs, village heads can help the library become an inclusive learning hub for the community. Furthermore, the village head's commitment to supporting library management and development encourages community members to actively participate in library services, including educational activities, outreach, and skills training, thereby enhancing knowledge and capabilities. With this support and strategic policies, village libraries can further foster community capacity in areas such as entrepreneurship, agriculture, technology, and vocational skills, ultimately contributing to the welfare and overall quality of life of village residents.

#### *4.5. Village Library Strengthening Strategy: Good Practices by Village Heads*

Village libraries play a crucial role in enhancing literacy and access to information for village communities, while also serving as centers for learning that contribute to broader social development. Research indicates that literacy skills and access to information resources positively impact the social and economic advancement of communities (Jun, 2020; Lund et al., 2023). Libraries fulfill this role by providing a range of literacy materials, both print and digital, and, within social inclusion based library transformation programs, they also support the development of community skills.

To realize this potential, support from the Village Head is essential, as they hold a strategic responsibility to ensure libraries are managed effectively and sustainably while providing tangible benefits to the community. Effective strategies implemented by the Village Head in library management include (1) Collaborative and inclusive leadership. The village library acts as a facilitator, promoting solidarity among village officials, residents, and the younger generation to support the library jointly. Village Heads who adopt an inclusive approach by engaging multiple stakeholders help increase community participation and ensure the sustainability of library programs. (2) Integration of libraries with village programs. Aligning library activities and policies with broader village programs, particularly those related to education, is effective, especially when these initiatives align with the Village Head's vision and mission. (3) Sustainable and creative funding Policies that allocate a portion of the village budget regularly or partially for library activities are an effective strategy for sustaining the library. Collaboration with external parties also provides additional funding opportunities, while innovative initiatives, such as the *Salak Pustaka* program, offer alternative sources of support. (4) Provision of infrastructure and resources. Assistance from the Village Head, such as funding for library buildings through the village budget or independent initiatives, helps strengthen library management. Additional support, including book collections, facilities, infrastructure, and incentives for library staff, can further enhance the library's operations and sustainability.

### **4. Conclusion**

The Village Head holds a strategic role in managing village libraries with a focus on social inclusion. In this capacity, the Village Head acts as a facilitator, fostering community solidarity, encouraging active participation, and serving as a strategic policymaker, formulating regulations and allocating budgets to support library development. Additionally, the Village Head drives the development of library infrastructure to ensure optimal services for the community and engages

the younger generation, recognizing them as essential for the library's sustainability. This transforms the village library into not only a place for reading but also a hub for social interaction and community activities.

While this study provides detailed insights into the Village Head's role in village library management, it has several limitations. First, the research is confined to specific areas, limiting its ability to represent the conditions of village libraries in other locations fully. Second, it does not deeply explore the long-term impact of the Village Head's policies from the perspectives of library users and the wider community.

This study, however, opens avenues for further research on the effectiveness of village literacy programs in empowering individuals and on the contribution of village libraries to social and economic development. Future studies could expand the scope by including more respondents from the village community or by broadening the research's geographical coverage.

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