


Exploring Kang Dedi Mulyadi's Strategic Leadership Model As Governor of West Java

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: Strategic leadership, Dedi Mulyadi, Sun culture Public policy.</p>	<p>This study aims to explore the concept of strategic leadership through the leadership practices of Kang Dedi Mulyadi as Governor of West Java. The research approach used is descriptive qualitative with a literature study method, through searching various scientific sources and public policy documentation related to Dedi Mulyadi's leadership style. The analysis was conducted by comparing strategic leadership theories from various experts, such as Hughes, Yukl, and Suhardono, with the strategic practices and policies implemented by Dedi Mulyadi during his leadership. The results of the study show that Dedi Mulyadi's leadership is highly relevant to the characteristics of strategic leadership. This is reflected in his ability to formulate a long-term development vision, reprioritize pro-people budgets, implement innovative policies in the fields of infrastructure, education, and culture, and utilize social media as a means of public communication and social education. In addition, his leadership approach based on Sundanese local wisdom makes his public policies more humanistic, participatory, and rooted in the social values of the community. The conclusion of this study confirms that the strategic leadership practices implemented by Dedi Mulyadi are relevant to contemporary strategic leadership theory, particularly in terms of courage in decision-making, ability to manage change, focus on long-term results, and integration of cultural values into governance strategies. This leadership model can serve as an example of the application of contextual and locally-oriented strategic leadership in regional governance in Indonesia.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Today's strategies no longer have the same form or function as before. Over the past two and a half decades, strategy has been treated and understood as an analytical problem to be solved, like a rational exercise that emphasizes logic and linear thinking. (Leader, 2009). Johannes, (2019) emphasizes that the failure of an organization to achieve its goals is due to the failure of the strategy itself.

Cynthia A. Montgomery (2009) said that fifty years ago, strategy was taught as part of the general management curriculum in business schools. Both in academia and in practice, strategy was identified as the most important task of a chief executive officer (CEO)—the person responsible for determining the overall direction of the company and ensuring its

implementation. This vital role encompasses both formulation and implementation: integrated thinking and action.

The application of strategic leadership by individuals and teams is reflected in their thinking patterns, actions, and influence to drive the achievement of sustainable competitive advantage within the organization. (Hughess, 2005).

Strategic leadership means a leader's ability to manage strategy. (Ahmad Musyarofi et al., 2024) According to Suhardono (2024) Strategic leadership is a leader's ability to see the big picture, plan, direct, and maximize the use of available resources to implement organizational strategies effectively and successfully..

Strategic leadership differs from leadership strategy, which encompasses talent identification and development, effective communication, decision-making, motivation, and inspiration. (Darmaesti et al., 2023).

In line with the dynamics of the times, public expectations of local government performance are increasing, particularly in terms of public services, access to education, health, and economic welfare. In this context, governors are required to respond to these needs through innovative and targeted policies. In addition, regional heads also have a responsibility to ensure that all development programs implemented are able to provide benefits fairly and evenly to all levels of society, thereby minimizing the potential for social and economic disparities in their regions of government. (Rahmi et al., 2024).

In economic development, the governor is tasked with directing strategic policies in line with the region's potential and needs. This role includes formulating regional development plans, managing budgets, and developing leading sectors that can drive economic growth. In the context of local government strategic policy, over the past year the Indonesian people, especially those in West Java, have been treated to a variety of "attractive" strategic policies from Governor Dedi Mulyadi, who is fondly known as KDM. KDM's distinctive leadership style, based on Sundanese culture and a humanistic approach to his constituents, seems like an oasis in the desert, where there are still leaders/public officials who are deceitful to their people.

As quoted from the news published on the ppidjabar website, (<https://ppid.jabarprov.go.id/pages/berita/300>) it is stated that the strategic policy that has recently been implemented KDM has had a positive impact on the community. Some of these policies include the demolition of tourist attractions, the elimination of motor vehicle tax arrears and fines, compensation for owners of non-motorized vehicles, and the acquisition of land along riverbanks. These policies have succeeded in significantly increasing tax revenue. Based on data from the West Java Regional Revenue Agency (Bapenda), tax revenue increased by IDR 5.5 billion, from IDR 19 billion to IDR 25 billion. This increase came from the payment of taxes on 50,300 motor vehicles in one day after the policy was implemented..

However, on the other hand, there were also several KDM policies that were controversial and attracted public opinion, as well as sharp criticism from several education observers, economic observers, and political observers. As summarized from Tempo news <https://www.tempo.co/politik/7-kebijakan-dedi-mulyadi-yang-menjadi-sorotan-warga-jawa-barat-1314630> There are at least seven controversial KDM policies, including: 1)

Prohibition of study tours and dismissal of school principals who violate this policy; 2) Demolition of recreational facilities owned by regionally-owned enterprises; 3) The prohibition of highway tolls; 4) The elimination of graduation ceremonies from kindergarten to high school; 5) The plan to send delinquent children to military barracks; 6) Regional budget and environmental policy restructuring; 7) The evaluation of mines and the Anti-Thuggery Task Force.

Based on this data and information, the policy adopted by KDM is as follows Some are popular, but others are not popular in the eyes of the public, so it is necessary to conduct further observation to determine whether KDM's strategic leadership practices are relevant to the concept of strategic leadership.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used a descriptive qualitative approach. Data was obtained through literature study with analysis techniques using the narrative review model. The structure of the narrative review began with presenting a summary, interpretation, and descriptive analysis of the literature, compiling academic storytelling based on the author's perspective.

This study is still limited to exploring Kang Dedi Mulyadi's leadership model in relation to strategic leadership models. Using a narrative review model, this research model serves only as a starting point for further research. Future research should focus on the impact of Kang Dedi Mulyadi's policies on the progress of West Java province.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Theoretical Review

According to Gary Yukl (2013) states that there are several characteristics of strategic leadership, namely: Having the courage to take decisive action A strategic leader is characterized by courage in making decisive decisions, especially when facing crisis situations that could potentially threaten the stability of the organization.

1. Having the competence to make lasting changes

A strategic leader is required to have strong competencies in initiating and managing sustainable change.

2. Have a deep understanding of the situation at hand

A strategic leader must possess analytical skills and a deep understanding of the dynamics of situations and events occurring within both the internal and external environments of the organization.

3. Rewarding good performance

A strategic leader needs to show appreciation for positive performance within the organization and avoid the tendency to blame external factors when faced with a decline in performance.

Meanwhile Masoud & Basahal (2023) states that there are six characteristics of public sector leaders (regional leaders), namely 1) Passion and Altruism, 2) Organizational

Advocacy, 3) Instilling Community Support, 4) Focus and Strategy, 5) Trust and Delegation, and 6) Continuous Self-Learning and Agility.

The Sundanese people have a strong attachment to the traditional values of their ancestors, which shape their identity and personality through culture, customs, and life lessons. One expression that reflects this value is "Hirup sauyunan," which conveys a sense of togetherness and mutual cooperation. Sundanese proverbs also include sayings such as "Sareundeuk saigel, sabobot saphanean. Ka cai jadi salewi, ka darat jadi salebak," which emphasizes the importance of solid and harmonious cooperation in community life. This expression reflects the principles of life based on responsibility, togetherness, and social solidarity within the family and community. In addition, interpersonal relationships in Sundanese society are based on the philosophy of "silih asah, silih asih, jeung silih asuh," which describes the importance of social relationships that involve educating (asah), helping (asih), and guiding (asuh) one another as a form of harmony in social life.(Pratama et al., 2022).

Review of Previous Research

Table 1. The following are 10 studies relevant to strategic leadership:

No.	Researcher	Research Title	Research Results
1	Amelia Margono, Setiawan (Amelia, Margono Setiawan, 2019)	Strategic leadership and strategic plan: their influences on strategic policy and employee performance.	The results of the study show that strategic leadership has been proven to directly improve employee performance and strategic planning..
2	Lailatul Isnaini (Isnaini et al., 2020)	21st century leadership strategies: visionary, creative, innovative, and emotionally intelligent	One important characteristic that a leader must have is the ability to be creative and innovative in developing their organization, as well as the organization's readiness to face the challenges and dynamics of the 21st century.
3	Febri Fajar Pratama; (Pratama et al., 2022)	Study of Local Wisdom Character Values of the Sundanese People in Shaping Moral Attitudes of Citizenship	The results of this study reveal that the character of Sundanese local wisdom has a very deep meaning.
4	Nany Widiastuti, (Widiastuti & Tuti, 2022)	Strategic leadership in COVID-19 pandemic response in Bali Province	The results of the study show that the Governor of Bali has successfully implemented strategic leadership through countermeasures based on traditional values and the concept of Tri Hita Karana, which serves as a guideline for the Balinese people..
5	Regi Refian Garis, Diah Suciati, Andi Wardani, Rusli	Leadership challenges in the regions	Collaboration between the central and regional governments can help improve government performance in

	(Refian Garis et al., 2023)		terms of public services and better decision-making.
6	Rola Younis Masoud, Abdulrahman S. Basahal (Masoud & Basahal, 2023)	Leadership Competencies in Non-Profit Organizations: Insights from Qualitative Research	The study identified six key competencies that leaders in the nonprofit sector must possess..
7	Ahmad Musyarofi ; (Ahmad Musyarofi et al., 2024)	Strategic Leadership in Creating Learning Organizations and Ethical Organizations	Strategic leadership, involving emotional intelligence, competency development, and ethical values, can guide organizations toward sustainable excellence..
8	Reda Abdelfattah Mohammad · (Mohammad et al., 2024)	Linking strategic intelligence, strategic leadership, strategic planning, and strategic thinking and business performance: the moderating effect of strategic flexibility	This study emphasizes the importance of structured planning in dealing with unstable environmental conditions and leadership in various organizational contexts..
9	Muchsin al-Fikri (Alfikri, 2024)	Dedi Mulyadi's cultural communication style in realizing a special West Java	Dedi Mulyadi has successfully won the sympathy of the West Java public in the 2024 West Java gubernatorial election by applying a Sundanese communication style that is warm, friendly, and down-to-earth..
10	Alya Rahmi Ariyantika Br Ginting; (Rahmi et al., 2024)	The Urgency of the Governor's Role in the Government System: Maintaining Regional Political and Economic Stability	Analysis shows that sound political and economic stability is highly dependent on the governor's ability to innovate and build synergy with stakeholders..

(source: elaborated, year 2025)

Kang Dedi Mulyadi's Leadership Style

Quoted from the website <https://www.unpak.ac.id/rubrik/belajar-kepemimpinan-dari-sosok-dedi-mulyadi-mahasiswa-wajib-tahu> There are several leadership styles applied by Dedi Mulyadi:

1. Leadership Based on Local Culture

Dedi Mulyadi is known as a leader who emphasizes Sundanese cultural values in his leadership practices. He does not merely use culture as a ceremonial symbol, but as a foundation for ethics and morals in formulating and implementing public policy. In this context, a visionary and principled leader needs to have a strong identity, understand, and love local culture as the basis for shaping his character and leadership direction.

2. Close to the People, Not Just Symbolically

Various video content shows that Dedi Mulyadi often appears in person among the community. He goes out into the field, visiting traditional markets, residents' homes, and even remote rural areas without social distancing or excessive protocols. These actions reflect his view that the essence of true leadership lies in the ability to listen to the aspirations of the people directly, rather than simply giving orders from a position of authority.

3. Be consistent and brave in defending the weak

Dedi Mulyadi is known as a consistent and vocal figure in fighting for the interests of the common people, even though his views often clash with those of the political elite. He shows determination by not being easily influenced by political pressure or public opinion. This attitude reflects the integrity and moral commitment of a leader in defending marginalized communities, while also serving as an example of the importance of consistency in fighting for social justice.

4. Utilization of Social Media for Education

One of Dedi Mulyadi's strengths lies in his ability to effectively utilize social media as a means of leadership and public communication. Through various platform digital platforms such as YouTube and TikTok, he conveys messages of humanity, social criticism, and cultural education in a way that is easy to understand and relatable to the public. In today's digital age, the ability to utilize communication technology is an important tool for leaders to build closeness, transparency, and constructive influence with the public..

5. Leadership that Prioritizes Conscience

Dedi Mulyadi is known as a leader who is oriented towards vulnerable groups, such as farmers, small traders, and the elderly. In implementing policies, he does not rely solely on data and statistical analysis, but also considers human values as the basis for decision making. His character shows that leadership qualities are not determined by social background or family status, but rather by character, moral values, and the courage to fight for the interests of the community in a tangible way..

Kang Dedi Mulyadi's Communication Style

The Sundanese culture-based communication approach applied by Dedi Mulyadi has proven effective in building emotional closeness with the community, which has contributed significantly to his success in gaining public support in the 2024 West Java gubernatorial Election (Pilgub Jabar). The people of West Java expressed a longing for a leader who is *loma* (generous), warm, and has a genuine closeness to the people. This hope was reflected in the high level of support for leaders who are caring and have a strong social conscience..

Political communication strategies rooted in Sundanese cultural values have proven effective in reaching voters from various social strata. This is evidenced by the 62 percent vote share, or more than 14 million votes, obtained by the Dedi Mulyadi–Erwan Setiawan ticket, which also confirms the effectiveness of cultural communication approaches in building public trust at the local level. (Alfikri, 2024)

Analysis Results

Based on the synthesis of the above data, it was found that Dedi Mulyadi's leadership practices have a strong correlation with strategic leadership theory, but with modifications to the cultural approach..

1. Strategic Vision and Resource Reprioritization

Suhardono (2024) Emphasizing the importance of optimizing resource use to achieve sustainable development. In his view, efficient resource management is essential to promote economic growth and social progress.

Kang Dedi Mulyadi applied this principle by strategically reorganizing regional budget priorities, focusing on an approach oriented towards the interests of the community. He shifted funds from less urgent sectors to vital areas such as infrastructure and education, ensuring that public resources were directed towards initiatives that had the most significant impact on community welfare and long-term development. This approach not only improves the effectiveness of government spending but also promotes equitable growth by meeting the needs of underserved populations.

Prioritizing infrastructure development facilitates connectivity and economic activity, while investing in education builds human capital, which is the foundation for a nation's progress. Overall, these strategies reflect a comprehensive understanding of resource optimization as a means to promote inclusive growth and sustainable development.

Empirical Evidence: The policy of eliminating motor vehicle tax arrears has shown tangible results. This policy has effectively reduced tax arrears, thereby increasing revenue collection and compliance among vehicle owners.

Strategic Impact: This initiative has led to a significant increase in daily tax revenue, from IDR 19 billion to IDR 25 billion. In addition, this initiative has also increased compliance rates, with 50,300 vehicles complying with tax regulations every day. These results reflect a deep understanding of the underlying issues and demonstrate the ability to turn a crisis into a revenue-generating opportunity, in line with the principles outlined by Yukl (2013).

2. Courage to Make Decisions (*Decisiveness*)

The characteristic of courage in taking decisive action, as described by Yukl (2013), demonstrating the courage to make controversial but necessary decisions in order to achieve long-term goals. This action reflects a firm and bold attitude in facing challenges, as well as demonstrating commitment to long-term principles and vision.

Examples of controversial policies include banning field trips, dismantling recreational facilities owned by state-owned enterprises, and plans to send delinquent children to military barracks. These policies may draw criticism and opposition from various parties, but behind it all, they demonstrate the courage of leaders in taking decisive steps to enforce discipline and efficiency.

Analysis of these actions shows that despite criticism, they reflect courage and decisiveness in enforcing rules and discipline. In addition, these actions also demonstrate consistency in defending the interests of the grassroots and prioritizing the public interest over the interests of the elite or commercial interests alone. This courage is important in the context of bold and risky decision-making, but aims to achieve greater long-term benefits.

3. Cultural Integration as an Organizational Strategy

One unique finding in this review is the use of local culture not only as a symbolic element, but as a core strategic approach. This highlights the importance of cultural identity in shaping effective policies and community engagement.

Philosophy

Sundanese values, such as "Silih asah, silih asih, silih asuh" (mutual encouragement, mutual care, and mutual guidance) and "Hirup sauyunan" (living in harmony or mutual cooperation), serve as basic ethical principles that guide policy formation and implementation. These values foster a sense of shared responsibility and social cohesion within the community.

Implementation

The communication style used is informal and friendly, using Sundanese language, including traditional expressions, in official speeches. This approach helps build emotional closeness and trust with the community, thereby strengthening the legitimacy of government actions and policies.

Relevance

This strategy is in line with the theory proposed by Masoud & Basahal. (2023) , which emphasizes the importance of "community support" competencies. By integrating local culture into communication strategies and policies, authorities can effectively mobilize public participation and foster a sense of ownership among community members. Overall, utilizing local cultural values as a strategic tool demonstrates a deep understanding of community dynamics and highlights the importance of a culturally sensitive approach to public governance and administration.

4. Public Communication and Education in the Digital Age

Strategic leadership in the modern era requires the ability to adapt to technological developments. Kang Dedi Mulyadi utilizes social media such as YouTube and TikTok not only as a tool for image building, but also as a platform for social education and an effective means of transparency.

The main function of using this media is to build transparency and provide direct access for the public to convey their aspirations. This approach reflects the characteristics of adaptive leadership and responsive to the needs of society and developments over time.

CONCLUSION

This literature review confirms that Kang Dedi Mulyadi's leadership style, as Governor of West Java, is a clear manifestation of culturally contextualized strategic leadership. This approach shows that success in leading a region depends not only on administrative strategies, but also on a deep understanding of the local cultural values that form the identity of the local community. Theoretically, Kang Dedi Mulyadi's leadership practices meet the main criteria in leadership theory, such as decisiveness, long-term vision, and the ability to manage strategic resources effectively. This shows that his leadership is not only pragmatic but also oriented towards sustainable development based on the cultural and social values

of the community. One innovative aspect of this leadership model is the integration of Sundanese local wisdom as the main foundation for policy-making. Cultural values not only serve as cultural identity, but also as strategic instruments capable of building public trust and increasing the effectiveness of governance. This approach shows that success in regional governance is greatly influenced by the ability of leaders to adopt and integrate local values into development policies and programs. The implications of this model confirm that strategic leadership at the regional level cannot be generic or universal. Instead, its success is highly dependent on the cultural roots and social values of the local community. Therefore, the successful implementation of policies is greatly influenced by the level of community participation and the suitability of policies to the local cultural context. Although some of the policies adopted sparked controversy, overall this approach proved that a balance between strategic assertiveness and cultural humanism is key to successful regional governance in the modern era. This approach emphasizes the importance of regional leaders being able to integrate cultural and strategic aspects in order to achieve sustainable and equitable development.

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