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The Influence of Participatory Leadership and Community Empowerment on Good Village Governance Through Community Participation in Village Government

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze the influence of participatory leadership and community empowerment on good village governance, analyze the influence of participatory leadership and community empowerment on community participation, analyze the influence of community participation on leadership good village governance, and analyze the influence of participatory leadership and community empowerment on good village governance through community participation. The study population consisted of all residents of Malang Regency, totaling 2,734,898 people. The Slovin formula was used for sampling, resulting in a sample size of 157 individuals. Data analysis used AMOS software. The results of the analysis indicate that participatory leadership and community empowerment influence community participation. Community participation influences good village governance. Community participation mediates the influence of participatory leadership and community empowerment on good village governance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Village governance is the primary foundation for implementing development and public services at the local level. As the government entity closest to the community, villages play a crucial role in addressing citizen needs, increasing public participation, and strengthening grassroots democracy (Irawan, 2017). In relation to the implementation of Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, in which villages are given broader authority to regulate and manage their own households based on the principles of recognition and subsidiarity, good village governance is the main key so that authority can be exercised effectively and not misused (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2014). Village Law No. 6 of 2014, which was later amended by Law No. 3 of 2024, gives villages the authority to regulate their own governance and development processes based on local initiatives, customs, and participatory democracy. This law mandates democratic principles such as village deliberations, inclusive participation in development planning, and community oversight of village budgets and programs.

Good village governance has a direct impact on the quality of life of village residents, especially in terms of access to basic services such as education, health and infrastructure (Asadi, 2023; Handayani et al., 2023). Villages that implement good governance tend to have more equitable development outcomes and a high level of public trust in the government (Stoker, 1998;Neumayer, 2003). Therefore, building village institutional capacity and strengthening the leadership of village heads are strategic steps in realizing independent, democratic, and equitable villages.

This research was conducted in Malang Regency. It was chosen as the research location because it is one of the regencies with the largest number of villages in East Java Province, reaching 378 villages spread across 33 sub-districts (BPS Malang Regency, 2023). The social, geographic, and institutional capacity diversity among villages in Malang Regency creates variations in the application of good governance principles at the village level, particularly in terms of transparency, accountability, and effectiveness of government management (Aspinall et al., 2025; Rosyadi et al., 2024; Asep et al., 2025). In addition, the Malang Regency Government has also encouraged the use of information technology and public transparency through the Village Financial System (Siskeudes) and the Village Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBDes) transparency platform, as a form of

improving the quality of village governance, particularly village fund governance (Ramadhani et al., 2026). The Village Financial System has proven to play a role in realizing the principles of transparency and accountability in the entire Village Fund management cycle, starting from the planning, implementation, administration, reporting, to accountability stages, in accordance with the provisions of Law Number 6 of 2014 and Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs Number 20 of 2018. The phenomenon of village fund governance is interesting to explain its implementation in the context of good village governance in Malang Regency.

The selection of the good village governance variable in this study is motivated by the significant challenges faced by village governments in managing village funds with the principles of transparency, accountability, and effectiveness with social justice (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2018). Since the enactment of Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, village governments have been given significant authority to plan and implement development based on local needs, supported by the disbursement of Village Funds from the central government (Village Law, 2014). In 2023, Malang Regency received Village Funds with a total value of more than IDR 400 billion spread across 378 villages, demanding a strong and integrated governance system (Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023). Village Fund management is a strategic government instrument in encouraging village development and improving community welfare, but the effectiveness and efficiency of its utilization remain challenges, particularly related to transparency, accountability, and human resource capacity at the village level.

Ansell & Gash (2008) explain that village governments must be able to demonstrate accountability for the use of public funds through reporting, citizen participation, and local community-based oversight. Good village governance can be realized through leadership with integrity, because the integrity of leaders plays a vital role in building accountability, transparency, and public trust in the implementation of village governance (OECD, 2000; Sososutiksno, 2023; Hidayati et al., 2023). One leadership style that is relevant in modern organizations is participative leadership, where leaders involve team members in the decision-making process to increase commitment, sense of ownership, and collective performance (Yukl, 2013). Participatory leadership has an important role in government organizations because it can increase member involvement, the quality of decision-making, and the effectiveness of public organization performance (Yukl, 2013; Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015).

The concept of participatory leadership reflects democratic values in the organization by involving subordinates in decision-making in an open and egalitarian manner (a principle that emphasizes the equality and rights of every individual in society), thereby strengthening trust, cooperation, and a sense of shared justice (Wang et al., 2014). Participative leadership style emphasizes openness, involvement, flexibility, and delegation of authority (Yukl, 2013). In practice, participative leadership involves subordinates in the organizational decision-making process, which ultimately effectively increases employees' sense of ownership of their work and the organization (Wang et al., 2014). The implementation of participatory leadership by the village head in the decision-making process focuses on three main aspects, namely: attitude and awareness, communication, and community participatory skills. Village community participation is an important indicator in realizing democratic and inclusive governance. The implementation of participatory leadership in government bureaucracy is very relevant to the spirit of bureaucratic reform that prioritizes responsive, accountable, and participatory public services. The government can no longer rely on a top-down authoritarian style, but must encourage the active involvement of subordinates in the development process (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). What is meant by these subordinates are the Village Secretary; Head of Government, Development, and Community Affairs; Hamlet Head and Village Treasurer led by the Village Head, who coordinates with the Head of the BPD (Village Consultative Body), the Head of the LPMD (Village Community Empowerment Institution), the Head of the PKK (Family Empowerment and Welfare) Driving Team, the Head of the Karang Taruna, and the Head of the BUMDes (Village-Owned Enterprises) as regulated in Government Regulation (PP) No. 43 of 2014 (amended by PP No. 47 of 2015).

The relationship between participatory leadership and good village governance is supported by various studies which show that the involvement of leaders in encouraging the participation of subordinates and the community has a positive influence on good village governance (Simanungkalit et al. 2024; Hayati, 2019).Participatory leadership enables the process of village financial planning, implementation, and accountability to be more open and collaborative, thereby improving the quality of village governance. This confirms that village head leadership encourages the involvement of subordinates in financial planning, implementation, and accountability, which can directly improve the effectiveness of village financial governance. Similarly, research Beer (2014) this demonstrates that participatory leadership is a crucial foundation for good village governance, fostering accountability, transparency, and collaboration in village development. Village heads who adopt a democratic and

participatory leadership style emphasize collective decision-making, prioritizing consensus, and encouraging community involvement in every stage of government, which forms the foundation for better village governance.

Achieving good village governance in village government requires effective and inclusive leadership, involving the participation of organizational members regardless of background, ability, and status, and being democratic. One leadership style considered relevant is participatory leadership, a leadership style that encourages the involvement of subordinates and stakeholders in the decision-making process (Yukl, 2013). This type of leadership is crucial in village environments due to the collective and cultural characteristics of village communities, necessitating a leadership approach that actively accommodates the aspirations of residents (Roberts, 2004).

Various studies have shown that participatory leadership has a positive influence on the quality of good village governance, especially because it is able to increase accountability, transparency and openness in the public service process (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2013). Leaders who adopt a participatory approach in village governance tend to be better able to build trust and collaboration with the community (Khan & Krishnan, 2021). Thus based on thought Khan & Krishnan (2021) the role of community participation is essential to realizing good village governance. Capacity imbalances, limited access to information, and suboptimal facilitative leadership are factors that hinder effective collaboration between village governments and communities, resulting in suboptimal community involvement in village policy planning and oversight.

The phenomenon of the important role of community participation in Malang Regency has shown significant progress in involving village communities in realizing good village governance. This is evident in the active participation of residents, seen in community involvement in Village Deliberations (Musdes), where the community plays a role in determining the priority use of village funds. Data from the Malang Regency Community and Village Empowerment Office (DPMD) in 2022 recorded that 85% of villages in Malang Regency had held Musdes with a resident attendance rate of 60–70%. Malang Regency residents also participate in development monitoring through groups such as the Village Anti-Corruption Volunteer Team (TRAKODES). In Pujon Kidul Village, for example, residents successfully identified irregularities in infrastructure projects and reported them to the Village Consultative Body (BPD). Furthermore, community organizations such as the LPMD and the PKK (Family Welfare Movement) have become important platforms for economic and social empowerment. Tumpang Village, for example, utilized the PKK group to improve financial literacy through digital-based MSME training.

Even though community participation is quite high, challenges such as low human resource capacity and dependence on district governments are still found (Waheduzzaman et al., 2018). Participatory theory emphasizes that leaders can only achieve collective success if citizens are actively involved in the decision-making process and implementation of development programs (Arnstein, 1969). In this framework, participatory leadership will be effective in realizing good governance if accompanied by substantial and sustainable community participation (Rowe & Frewer, 2000). The role of community participation is so important that it has strategic potential for the implementation of a participatory leadership style by village heads to realize good village governance.

Community participation is defined as the active involvement of citizens in the decision-making process, implementation, and supervision of village development to realize good governance, and community participation can be measured in several aspects such as participation in decision-making, program implementation, utilization of results, and program evaluation (Cohen & Uphoff, 1980). This concept emphasizes that participation is not merely physical presence, but includes the contribution of ideas, energy, and resources to achieve collective goals (Arnstein, 1969). Participation reflects the role of the community in decision-making and in the implementation of participatory and democratic development (Pretty, 1995). In the context of good village governance, community participation is key to ensuring the principles of accountability, transparency, consensus, and justice are met (UNDP, 2015). Accountability and transparency have a positive and significant impact on the management of village fund allocations, and community participation has a positive impact on the management of village fund allocations, which overall contribute to the realization of good village governance.

The implementation of good village governance requires not only active community involvement in the village development process but also support from community empowerment programs as a key pillar in building good governance. Effective empowerment emphasizes capacity building, access to information, and strengthening social control (Ife, 2013; Narayan-Parker, 2002). Through various forms of empowerment such as skills training, education, and institutional strengthening, village communities can have the ability to participate substantially in development decision-making (Mansuri & Rao, 2013; Antlöv et

al., 2016). Village community empowerment institutions play a vital role as a link between communities and local governments in providing access to basic public services, such as education and health, as well as through skills training programs aimed at improving human resource capabilities and encouraging the growth of micro-enterprises in rural communities.

Community-based development-oriented community empowerment creates a space for equal dialogue between village officials and residents, enabling better implementation of the principles of transparency and accountability. This encourages the creation of a responsive, participatory, and inclusive village government in accordance with the principles of good governance (Fitriani et al., 2020). Without structured and sustainable community empowerment, village communities tend to lack bargaining power to articulate their interests. This leaves village governance vulnerable to domination and abuse of power by local elites (elite capture) (Dasgupta & Beard, 2007; Antlöv et al., 2016). Therefore, community empowerment is not merely a complementary approach, but rather the primary foundation for realizing good village governance.

Community participation is an important part of democratic and sustainable village development (Dwiyanto, 2008). Participation does not just appear, but requires a structured empowerment process (Ife & Tesoriero, 2006). In the context of good village governance, community empowerment is a primary prerequisite for villagers to have the capacity, courage, and sufficient knowledge to be actively involved in decision-making and village government oversight (Ife, 2013).

Community empowerment encompasses the process of increasing the capacity of villagers to understand their rights, including acquiring the knowledge, skills, and access to public information necessary to participate in village governance (Ife, 2013; Narayan, 2002). Empowerment also strengthens the community's ability to control village policies and demand accountability from the village government, which is an essential part of maintaining good governance principles such as transparency, accountability, participation, effectiveness, and inclusiveness (Mansuri & Rao, 2013). Furthermore, community empowerment at the village level is an important strategy in increasing local capacity and social resilience, enabling communities to build independence as a foundation for inclusive and sustainable village governance (Antlöv et al., 2016). With a structured empowerment program, community participation can grow critically and independently in overseeing village governance to achieve community welfare (Dasgupta & Beard, 2007). Therefore, community participation is an integral part of empowerment in realizing good village governance.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Population and Sample

The population in this study was all residents of Malang Regency, totaling 2,734,898 people. The sample size used guidelines from Hair et al. (2019) which explains that the appropriate sample size for SEM analysis ranges from 100-200 respondents. To obtain the minimum sample size from the existing population, the Slovin formula was used. Thus, the sample size was 157 people, which met the requirements for SEM analysis. The sampling technique used in this study is simple random sampling..

2.2 Operational Definition of Variables

Participatory leadership is a leadership style in which the leader involves group or community members in the decision-making, planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs or activities that are a shared responsibility. Indicators of participatory leadership are as follows: openness, involvement, flexibility, and delegation of authority.

Community empowerment is the level of ability of village communities to access resources, increase their knowledge and skills, develop independence, and evaluate and control village development policies and programs. Indicators of participatory leadership are as follows: access to resources, increased knowledge capacity, increased independence, and accountability evaluation.

Community participation is the active involvement of individuals or groups in the decision-making, planning, implementation, and evaluation of policies or programs related to the common good, with the aim of improving the quality of social, economic, and political life in a community or region. The indicators used in this study are as follows: participation in decision-making, participation in program implementation, participation in the utilization of results, and participation in program evaluation.

Good village governance is the process of planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the use of funds allocated for village development and community empowerment. Indicators for measuring this variable include transparency, accountability, and social justice.

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2.3 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive analysis and statistical analysis with the multivariate statistical method Structural Equation Modeling / SEM (Simultaneous Equation Model) with the AMOS software application..

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Respondent Characteristics

The respondents in this study numbered 157 people, consisting of village officials, members of the Village Consultative Body (BPD), community leaders, and members of the community involved in village governance in Malang Regency, East Java Province. The characteristics of the respondents in this study are presented to provide an overview of the general conditions of the respondents based on age, gender, education level, and occupation.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

No	Respondent Characteristics	Amount	Percentage (%)
	Age (years)		
1	25 – 40	46	29.3
2	41 – 56	85	54.1
3	57 – 72	26	16.6
	Gender		
1	Man	73	46.5
2	Woman	84	53.5
	Education		
1	Elementary School	5	3.2
2	Junior High School	31	19.7
3	Senior High School	78	49.7
4	Diploma	7	4.5
5	S1	26	16.6
6	S2	9	5.7
7	S3	1	0.6
	Work		
1	Teacher	1	0.6
2	Housewife	41	26.1
3	Village Cadres	1	0.6
4	Health Cadres	2	1.3
5	Private sector employee	34	21.7
6	Village head	19	12.1
7	Police	1	0.6
8	Trader	4	2.5
9	Village Apparatus	19	12.1
10	Nurse	1	0.6
11	Farmer	5	3.2
12	Breeder	3	1.9
13	civil servant	3	1.9
14	TNI AD	1	0.6
15	Self-employed	22	14.0

Source: Processed primary data, 2026.

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3.2 SEM Analysis Results

In this study, inferential analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). This analysis involves a step-by-step estimation process. The first step in SEM analysis is Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The results of this stage are presented below.

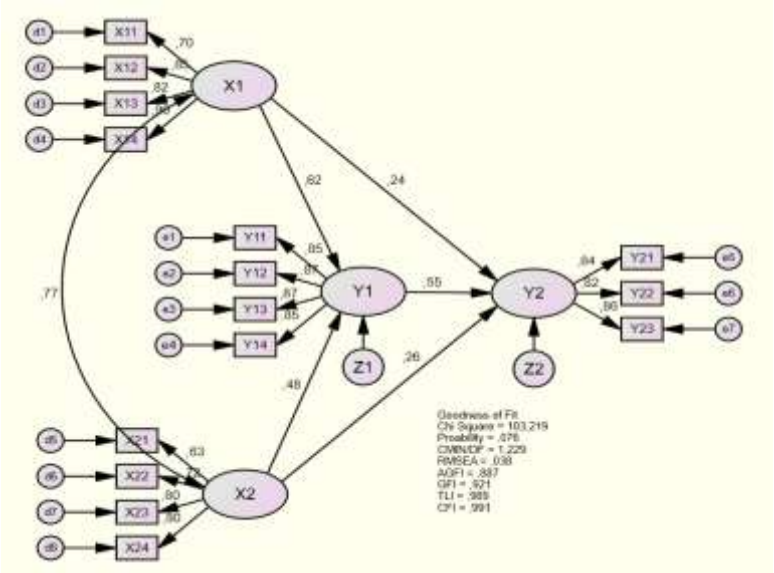

Figure 1. SEM Analysis Results

3.3 Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis testing in this study uses the probability value (p) as a reference. If the p-value is less than or equal to 0.05, it indicates a significant effect of one variable on another. A p-value of less than 0.05 indicates that the test results are statistically significant, thus the hypothesis can be accepted.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing

Independent Variables	Intervening Variables	Dependent Variable	Direct Effects	P value	Indirect Effect	P value	Results
Participative leadership	-	Good Village Governance	0.24	0.018	-	-	Supported
community empowerment	-	Good Village Governance	0.26	0.002	-	-	Supported
Participative leadership	Community Participation	-	0.62	0,000	-	-	Supported
community empowerment	Community Participation	-	0.48	0,000	-	-	Supported
-	Community Participation	Good Village Governance	0.55	0,000	-	-	Supported
Participative leadership	Community Participation	Good Village Governance	0.24	0.018	3,571	0,000	Supported
community empowerment	Community Participation	Good Village Governance	0.26	0.002	3,099	0.001	Supported

3.4 Discussion

The Influence of Participatory Leadership on Good Village Governance

The results of the study indicate that Participatory Leadership has a positive and significant impact on Good Village Governance in village government in Malang Regency, East Java Province. This finding indicates that the better the implementation of

participatory leadership by the village head, the better the village governance is reflected in transparency, accountability, and social justice. These results confirm that participatory leadership is an important factor in encouraging the realization of open, responsible, and community-oriented village governance. This finding can be explained through the perspective of Social Capital Theory as the main theoretical basis of the study. Social capital refers to resources formed through social relationships, networks, trust, and shared norms that enable individuals and groups to take collective action. Bourdieu (1986) views social capital as a resource that can be obtained through ownership of a relatively sustainable network of social relationships. Coleman (1988) explains that social capital facilitates individual action through obligations and expectations, information channels, and social norms and sanctions. Meanwhile, Putnam (1993) emphasizes the role of trust, norms of reciprocity, and networks of citizen involvement in supporting coordination and cooperation to achieve common goals. Based on this view, the quality of village governance is not only related to the existence of administrative rules and procedures, but is also influenced by the quality of social relations between the village government and the community.

The results of this study are consistent with those of Simanungkalit et al. (2024), who concluded that participatory leadership positively impacts the quality of governance by increasing transparency, accountability, and community involvement. Hayati's (2019) research also found that village heads who implement participatory leadership are better able to create democratic governance that is responsive to community needs. Furthermore, research by Ahn & Bessiere (2022) shows that participatory leadership improves governance quality by strengthening collaboration processes, enhancing decision-making effectiveness, and increasing public trust in the government. From the perspective of village governance in Indonesia, these results also align with the mandate of Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, which emphasizes that village governance must be implemented based on the principles of openness, participation, accountability, professionalism, effectiveness, and efficiency. As government leaders, village heads are responsible for establishing open communication with the community, involving the community in the formulation of village policies, and ensuring that all development processes are carried out transparently and responsibly.

The Influence of Community Empowerment on Good Village Governance

Community Empowerment has a positive and significant impact on Good Village Governance in village government in Malang Regency, East Java Province. This finding indicates that the better the implementation of community empowerment, the better the application of Good Village Governance principles, which are reflected through transparency, accountability, and social justice in the implementation of village government. These results indicate that the success of village governance does not only depend on the capacity of village government officials, but is also determined by the ability of the community as the subject of development. Communities that have knowledge, skills, access to resources, and the ability to make independent decisions will be better able to participate in the development process, monitor the implementation of village government, and provide constructive input on policies taken by the village government. Therefore, community empowerment is one of the strategic instruments in realizing effective, transparent, accountable, and community-oriented village governance.

The research results can be explained through Social Capital Theory, proposed by Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988), and Putnam et al. (1994), explains that social capital in the form of trust, social networks, shared norms, and reciprocity are important resources capable of increasing the effectiveness of collective action in a society. Community empowerment in the context of village government aims not only to improve individual capabilities but also to strengthen the community's social capital, thus creating closer relationships between the community and the village government and among fellow citizens.

Through empowerment programs, communities have the opportunity to increase their knowledge, skills, and independence, enabling them to build broader collaborative networks, strengthen mutual trust, and increase their commitment to village development. Communities with strong capacity and social capital will more easily collaborate in overseeing governance, expressing their aspirations, and participating in development program implementation. This will strengthen the implementation of the principles of transparency, accountability, and social justice, the main indicators of Good Village Governance.

This view aligns with Bourdieu's (1986) assertion that social capital is the accumulation of resources acquired through a network of sustainable social relationships. In village governance, communities with strong social networks will more easily collaborate with the village government in formulating and implementing development policies. Coleman (1988) also explains that social capital functions to facilitate collective action through trust, information channels, and social norms that develop within the

community. Meanwhile, Putnam et al. (1994) assert that the success of a government is greatly influenced by high levels of social capital, reflected in public trust, strong social networks, and high levels of citizen participation in public life.

The results of this study align with Chambers (1997) theory of community empowerment, which states that empowerment is the process of providing communities with opportunities to gain greater control over resources, decisions, and various aspects of life that affect their well-being. According to Chambers, empowerment is not simply about providing assistance to communities, but rather a process of building community capacity to determine their own future. In the context of village governance, empowered communities will be better able to oversee government operations, control the use of village resources, and ensure that development truly serves the community's interests.

The findings of this study also support the Community Empowerment theory put forward by Perkins & Zimmerman (1995) as well as Zimmerman (2000) which explains that empowerment is the process of increasing the capacity of individuals and groups to gain control over their social, economic, and political lives. Communities with high levels of empowerment will have self-confidence, problem-solving skills, and the courage to participate in public decision-making processes. Therefore, community empowerment is a crucial foundation for realizing democratic and accountable village governance.

The results of this study are also consistent with the concept of Good Governance proposed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1997), which states that good governance requires community participation, transparency, accountability, effectiveness, responsiveness, and justice. Empowered communities will have easier access to public information, understand their rights and obligations as citizens, and have the courage to oversee the running of village government. Thus, community empowerment will strengthen the implementation of the principles of Good Village Governance in a sustainable manner. The results of this study support Sumarni (2019) who concluded that community empowerment has a positive influence on the quality of village governance by increasing community capacity in managing development and supervising the implementation of village government.

From a national policy perspective, the results of this study align with Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, which emphasizes that village community empowerment aims to improve knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviors, abilities, awareness, and resource utilization through the establishment of policies, programs, activities, and mentoring tailored to the needs of the village community. This mandate demonstrates that community empowerment is an integral part of efforts to achieve good village governance.

The Influence of Participative Leadership on Community Participation

Participatory Leadership has a positive and significant impact on Community Participation in village governance in Malang Regency, East Java Province. These results indicate that the better the implementation of participatory leadership by the village head, the higher the level of community participation in the administration of village governance and development. This finding implies that the leadership of the village head plays a very important role in building community awareness and willingness to be involved in every stage of village development. Participatory leadership is not only oriented towards completing government tasks but also able to build partnerships between the village government and the community. Village heads who provide opportunities for the community to express opinions, accommodate aspirations, and involve the community in decision-making will be able to increase the sense of ownership of each village development program. This condition encourages the community to participate voluntarily because they feel part of the development process, not just objects of government policy.

The results of this study support the theory of Participative Leadership proposed by Yukl (2013), which explains that participatory leadership is characterized by openness, member involvement in decision-making, consultation, providing opportunities to express opinions, and delegation of authority. According to Yukl, member involvement in the decision-making process will increase commitment to the resulting decision because each individual feels they have contributed to the decision. In the context of village government, community involvement in village deliberations, the preparation of the Village Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMDes), the Village Government Work Plan (RKPDes), and development evaluation are real implementations of participatory leadership.

The findings of this study also reinforce the theory of collaborative governance proposed by Ansell & Gash (2008). According to collaborative governance theory, successful collaboration between the government and the community begins with facilitative leadership that creates space for dialogue, builds trust, resolves conflicts, and encourages all stakeholders to

participate in the decision-making process. Village heads who implement participatory leadership act as facilitators, bridging various community interests, thus creating broader and more quality participation.

Furthermore, the results of this study align with the theory of community participation proposed by Cohen & Uphoff (1980), which explains that community participation encompasses involvement in decision-making, program implementation, utilization of development outcomes, and development evaluation. All forms of participation require leadership support capable of opening up communication and providing equal opportunities to all members of the community. Therefore, the higher the quality of participatory leadership, the higher the level of community participation in all stages of village development.

A village head who prioritizes dialogue, deliberation, and joint decision-making will create a healthy democratic climate at the village level. In such an environment, the community will not only participate in deliberations but also become partners with the village government in formulating policies, implementing development, monitoring budget use, and evaluating development outcomes. Thus, the resulting community participation will be not only quantitative but also qualitative, grounded in awareness and a sense of responsibility for village development.

The results of this study are consistent with research by Iskandar et al. (2023), which concluded that participatory leadership has a positive effect on community participation in village development. This study showed that village heads who are open to community aspirations are able to increase community involvement in village deliberations and development activities. These results also align with research by Ahn & Bessiere (2022), which states that participatory leadership increases community participation through open communication, public trust, and collaborative decision-making. Furthermore, research by Latif & Irwan (2019) also found that participatory leadership has a significant effect on increasing community involvement in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of village development.

The Influence of Community Empowerment on Community Participation

Community Empowerment has a positive and significant impact on Community Participation in village governance in Malang Regency, East Java Province. These results indicate that the higher the level of community empowerment, the higher the community participation in governance and village development. The findings of this study imply that community participation is not only influenced by the availability of opportunities to participate, but also greatly determined by the community's ability to utilize those opportunities. Communities with knowledge, skills, access to resources, and a high level of independence will be more confident in participating in the planning, implementation, utilization of results, and evaluation of village development. Conversely, communities without adequate capacity tend to be passive even though the village government has opened up broad spaces for participation. Therefore, community empowerment is the main foundation in building quality community participation.

The results of this study support Chambers (1997) theory of community empowerment, which states that empowerment is the process of empowering communities to control their own lives and determine the direction of their own development. According to Chambers, communities should not be positioned merely as objects of development, but rather as subjects empowered to plan, implement, and evaluate development according to their needs. Therefore, the higher the level of community empowerment, the greater the community's ability to participate in every development process.

The findings of this study also align with the theory proposed by Ife (2013), which explains that community empowerment is the process of increasing the capacity of individuals and groups to identify needs, develop potential, solve problems, and make independent decisions. Ife (2013) emphasizes that empowerment is not only related to improving the community's economy but also includes increasing social, political, and institutional capacity. In the context of village governance, empowered communities will have the courage to express their aspirations, provide constructive criticism, and actively participate in various decision-making forums.

The results of this study also support Zimmerman (2000) and Perkins & Zimmerman (1995), who explain that empowerment will increase self-efficacy, perceived control, and critical awareness of various public issues. Communities with high levels of empowerment will participate more actively because they feel they have the ability to contribute to village development. Conversely, low levels of empowerment will lead to a lack of self-confidence in communities, leading to a tendency to hand over the entire development process to the village government.

Furthermore, the results of this study also reinforce Ansell & Gash's (2008) theory of collaborative governance, which explains that successful collaboration between government and communities requires adequate community capacity. Village government leadership can create opportunities for participation, but without empowered communities, these opportunities will not be optimally utilized. Therefore, community empowerment is a crucial factor in improving the quality of collaboration between village governments and communities, ensuring effective and sustainable community participation.

The results of this study also align with the concept of community participation proposed by Cohen & Uphoff (1980), who explain that community participation includes involvement in decision-making, program implementation, utilization of development outcomes, and development evaluation. These four forms of participation require communities to possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to contribute actively. Therefore, community empowerment is an essential prerequisite for achieving quality community participation. The results of this study align with research by Zubaidah et al. (2024), which shows that community empowerment has a positive and significant impact on community participation in village development. This study explains that increasing community capacity through education, training, mentoring, and strengthening community institutions can increase critical awareness and community courage in expressing aspirations.

The Influence of Community Participation on Good Village Governance

Community Participation has a positive and significant impact on Good Village Governance in village government in Malang Regency, East Java Province. These results indicate that the higher the level of community participation in village governance, the better the implementation of Good Village Governance principles, which include transparency, accountability, and social justice. The findings of this study imply that the community not only plays a role as a beneficiary of development but also as a key actor that helps determine the quality of village governance. Community participation in every stage of development allows the village government to obtain more objective input regarding community needs, while also improving oversight of policy implementation and village budget utilization. This community involvement will create a more transparent, accountable, responsive, and public interest-oriented village government.

The results of this study align with those of Wardani et al. (2019), who concluded that community participation positively contributes to increased transparency and accountability in village governance. Communities who actively participate in the development process will more easily obtain information regarding the use of village funds and are able to provide oversight of government operations. These findings also align with research by Sulaeman et al. (2019), which shows that community involvement in village development implementation can increase the effectiveness of development programs and the quality of public services because the community shares responsibility for the success of the programs implemented.

The results of this study support the research of Purba & Djamin (2015), which demonstrated that community participation positively influences the realization of more democratic, transparent, and responsive governance. The study explained that active community participation strengthens government accountability because every policy and use of public resources receives direct public oversight. This creates a more open government and increases public trust in the village government.

The Influence of Participatory Leadership on Good Village Governance Through Community Participation

Community Participation can mediate the influence of Participatory Leadership on Good Village Governance. This finding implies that the success of participatory leadership in realizing Good Village Governance occurs not only directly through the village head's ability to run a transparent, accountable, and responsive government, but also through increased community participation in village governance. The more participatory the village head's leadership style, the higher the community involvement in every stage of village development. This increased community participation further strengthens the implementation of Good Village Governance principles.

The results of this study indicate that participatory leadership is a factor capable of creating a democratic governance environment through open communication, community involvement in decision-making, providing space for the expression of aspirations, and delegation of authority in the implementation of village development. When the community feels valued and given the opportunity to participate, a sense of ownership will grow in every village development policy and program. This condition encourages the community to participate in monitoring the course of government, supporting the implementation of development programs, and maintaining the sustainability of development outcomes, thereby improving the quality of village governance.

The partial mediation role of Community Participation indicates that Participatory Leadership still has a direct influence on Good Village Governance, but some of this influence is channeled through increased Community Participation. This means that the success of village heads in realizing good village governance cannot rely solely on the quality of their leadership, but must also be able to mobilize the community to be actively involved in the village development process. The higher the level of community participation, the greater the contribution of participatory leadership to improving the quality of Good Village Governance.

The village head's openness in conveying information, accepting criticism, and accommodating community aspirations is a key entry point for increasing community participation. Communities who receive open information will have a better understanding of village development goals and thus be more motivated to participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. Thus, openness not only improves leadership quality but also strengthens community participation, ultimately improving the quality of Good Village Governance.

The findings of this study support the Participative Leadership theory proposed by Yukl (2013), which explains that participatory leadership encourages the involvement of organizational members in the decision-making process, thereby increasing commitment, ownership, and responsibility for the resulting decisions. Village heads, in the context of village government who implement participatory leadership, are able to create harmonious relationships with the community, thus encouraging them to actively participate in village development. This participation subsequently becomes a factor that strengthens the success of village governance.

The results of this study also support the Collaborative Governance theory by Ansell & Gash (2008), which explains that successful governance depends on a collaborative process between the government and the community, built through dialogue, trust-building, shared commitment, and collaborative decision-making. In this model, leaders act as facilitators, creating spaces for collaboration and encouraging the involvement of all stakeholders. Participatory leadership is a factor that encourages increased community participation, while community participation serves as a mechanism that strengthens the success of village governance.

This finding also aligns with the concept of Good Governance proposed by the UNDP (1997), which places participation as one of the main principles of good governance. Public participation enables transparency, accountability, effectiveness, and government responsiveness to community needs. Therefore, participatory leadership that enhances public participation will contribute significantly to the realization of Good Village Governance compared to leadership that focuses solely on the administrative aspects of government.

The results of this study reinforce those of Iskandar et al. (2023), who found that participatory leadership can increase community participation in village development. Research by Ahn & Bessiere (2022) also showed that participatory leadership improves the quality of governance by increasing community involvement and the effectiveness of decision-making. Similarly, research by Latif & Irwan (2019) demonstrated that openness and community involvement by village leaders can increase community participation in various village development programs. These findings demonstrate that community participation is a crucial mechanism explaining how participatory leadership can produce better governance.

The Influence of Community Empowerment on Good Village Governance Through Community Participation

Community Participation can mediate the influence of Community Empowerment on Good Village Governance. The results of this study indicate that community empowerment not only has a direct impact on improving the quality of village governance but can also improve the quality of Good Village Governance through increased community participation. This means that communities with abilities, knowledge, skills, access to resources, and a good level of independence will be more encouraged to participate in the administration of village government. This increased participation further strengthens the realization of transparent, accountable, responsive, and equitable village governance.

The partial mediation role indicates that community empowerment still has a direct influence on Good Village Governance, but some of this influence is channeled through Community Participation. This condition indicates that the success of an empowerment program is measured not only by increased community capacity, but also by the extent to which that capacity encourages them to actively participate in the village development process. In other words, an empowered community will more easily take advantage of opportunities provided by the village government to be involved in development planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

The findings of this study support Chambers (1997) theory of community empowerment, which explains that empowerment is the process of increasing a community's ability to control resources, decision-making, and development that impact their lives. According to Chambers, empowered communities are better able to determine development priorities, identify problems, and independently seek solutions. In the context of village government, this will improve the quality of community participation, thereby making governance more democratic and accountable.

The results of this study also support Ife's (2013) theory of Community Development, which states that empowerment is the process of building community capacity to independently manage local potential through increased knowledge, skills, self-confidence, and strengthening community institutions. Ife (2013) emphasized that the primary goal of empowerment is not merely to improve economic well-being, but to build a community capable of actively participating in every development process. Thus, empowerment is a crucial prerequisite for the growth of quality community participation.

The findings of this study also support those of Zimmerman (2000) and Perkins & Zimmerman (1995), who explain that empowerment increases self-efficacy, perceived control, and critical awareness of various public issues. Communities with high levels of empowerment feel empowered to contribute to development, thus being more motivated to participate in decision-making and village development implementation. This participation, in turn, strengthens the quality of village governance.

The results of this study reinforce the research of Zubaidah et al. (2024), which showed that community empowerment significantly influences community participation in village development. The study explained that increasing community capacity through training, mentoring, institutional strengthening, and increased access to resources can increase community awareness to participate in village development. The findings of this study are also consistent with research by Sumarni (2019), which concluded that community empowerment positively influences the quality of village governance because empowered communities are better able to oversee government operations and contribute to the development process.

4. CONCLUSION

Participatory leadership and community empowerment play a role in improving the quality of good village governance. Open leadership, community involvement, flexibility in responding to aspirations, and empowerment of residents support better village governance. Similarly, community empowerment through expanded access to resources, capacity building, increased independence, and evaluation and accountability support the realization of transparent, accountable, and equitable village governance. These findings underscore the importance of strengthening community leadership and capacity as part of efforts to improve village governance in Malang Regency.

Participatory leadership and community empowerment play a role in increasing community participation in village governance. Of these two variables, participatory leadership demonstrates the most dominant influence on community participation. These findings confirm that village leaders' openness to aspirations, citizen involvement in decision-making, and the provision of space and authority to the community are crucial aspects in encouraging citizen involvement. Therefore, village governments need to develop leadership styles that open up dialogue and provide real opportunities for the community to play a role in village development.

Community participation plays a role in improving the quality of good village governance. Community involvement in decision-making, program implementation, utilization of development outcomes, and program evaluation supports more transparent, accountable, and socially just village governance. These findings indicate that communities play a role not only as beneficiaries of development but also as stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and oversight of village governance. Therefore, strengthening community participation is a crucial component of improving the quality of village governance.

Community participation mediates the influence of participatory leadership and community empowerment on good village governance. These findings indicate that participatory leadership and community empowerment can support the quality of village governance, both through direct influence and through increased community participation. Leadership that is open, responsive to aspirations, and empowers residents can encourage more active community involvement. At the same time, empowerment that strengthens community capacity and independence can increase residents' ability to participate in village governance. This participation, in turn, supports the realization of transparent, accountable, and socially just good village governance in Malang Regency, East Java Province.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Rendyta Witrayani Setyawan: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing,Original Draft Preparation.

Grahita Chandrarin: Supervision, Methodology, Validation, Writing, Review & Editing.

Harianto Respati: Conceptualization, Supervision, Validation, Writing, Review & Editing.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

ETHICS STATEMENT

This study involved a survey of residents in Malang Regency, Indonesia, to examine participatory leadership, community empowerment, community participation, and good village governance. Ethics approval was not required for this study, subject to applicable institutional policies and regulations. Participation in the survey was voluntary, with informed consent obtained from respondents.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to applicable ethical and confidentiality requirements.

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