

Implementation of Ethical Leadership in Supporting the Performance of Employees in the Setiabudi District of South Jakarta Administrative City

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the application of ethical leadership in Setiabudi District, South Jakarta, and its implications for civil servant performance and the quality of public services. In this research, ethical leadership is defined as a leadership pattern based on moral principles, ethics, and integrity, which aligns with the concept of ethical leadership and the values of BerAKHLAK for Civil Servants. The research approach used is qualitative with a narrative method, where data is collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies to explore the experiences and views of informants. The research findings indicate that the practice of ethical leadership in Setiabudi District is realized through increased community involvement, the application of the principle of openness, and the strengthening of the values of honesty, responsibility, empathy, and concern in governance. Community involvement in the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages of policies contributes to increased public trust and improved service quality. However, the implementation of ethical leadership still faces several obstacles, including pressure from political interests, the dynamics of organizational culture, and oversight mechanisms that are not yet optimally implemented.

INTRODUCTION

Moral leadership is a concept of leadership that emphasizes morality, ethics, and integrity as the primary foundation for carrying out leadership functions. In contemporary leadership theory, this concept is frequently examined through the concept of ethical leadership, which emphasizes that the leader must demonstrate ethical behavior in accordance with ethical standards and actively promote ethical behavior to others who follow them. According to Michael E. Brown, Linda K. Treviño, and David A. Harrison (2019), ethical is determined by the consistency of moral principles, leadership actions, and leadership the system of pricing and sanctions that are implemented in organizations. As a result, moral leadership is both personal and institutional.

The public sector often faces challenges such as weak bureaucracy, limited innovation, and low employee motivation (Efendi, 2024). This can reduce the effectiveness of public services. Leadership that does not focus on moral values can exacerbate the situation. The public sector plays a strategic role in providing basic services to the community and supporting national development goals. However, in practice, this sector often faces various complex challenges, one of which is rigid bureaucracy.

Procedural and rigid bureaucracy makes the delivery of public services difficult, unresponsive, and inefficient (Zacharias, 2025). As a result, this causes dissatisfaction among the community as service users. When the bureaucracy cannot align itself with the needs of the community, the services provided become irrelevant and of poor quality.

In addition to bureaucratic issues, the public sector also faces a serious challenge in the form of low levels of innovation. Many government institutions still maintain traditional work patterns and tend to be reluctant to implement innovation. This condition is generally influenced by an organizational culture that does not support creativity, limited human resource capacity, and minimal encouragement from leaders. Yet, amidst technological developments and increasingly complex societal demands, innovation is a crucial element in creating effective, efficient, and accurate public services. Without continuous innovation, the public sector risks falling behind the more adaptive and dynamic private sector.

Another problem affecting the quality of public services is low work motivation among government officials (Nasir, 2024). This low motivation is reflected in a lack of initiative, a weak sense of responsibility, and a minimal commitment to providing the best possible service to the public. Factors contributing to this condition include an unfair reward system, an unsupportive work environment, and a leadership style that fails to provide clear inspiration and direction. When employees feel that their contributions are unappreciated or that their work is meaningless, the performance and quality of public services will decline significantly.

Leadership that ignores moral values has the potential to worsen the situation (Bahasoan, 2024). Leaders who are authoritarian, closed-minded, and fail to set ethical examples can lower employee morale and work enthusiasm. Conversely, leadership that upholds the values of integrity, responsibility, and

concern for subordinates can create a healthy and productive work environment (Boniran, 2024). Therefore, leaders in the public sector need to focus not only on achieving results but also on a leadership process based on moral values, so that bureaucratic challenges, innovation, and work motivation can be addressed sustainably.

Moral Leadership is a crucial foundation for shaping the character and behavior of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) in Indonesia. These values are designed to serve as ethical and moral guidelines in carrying out their duties as public servants. In the context of a modern bureaucracy that demands greater responsiveness and professionalism, Moral Leadership must be concretely embodied in the attitudes and actions of leaders, particularly at the sub-district level, which serves as the vanguard of public service.

Service-Oriented Values emphasize the importance of responsiveness and accuracy in meeting community needs (Yukanissa, 2025). Leaders who internalize these values will encourage employees to make community satisfaction a primary performance indicator. Meanwhile, Accountability requires leaders to be accountable for every policy and action taken, ensuring that public services are carried out transparently and in accordance with procedures (Astuti, 2024).

The Competent Value requires leaders to possess adequate technical and managerial skills to effectively manage an organization. Competent leaders are able to provide strategic direction, develop employees, and resolve various organizational issues appropriately. Furthermore, the Harmonious Value emphasizes the importance of mutually respectful working relationships, both among employees and between the government and the community, to create a conducive and collaborative work environment.

The Loyalty, Adaptability, and Collaboration values complement the BerAKHLAK leadership framework. Loyalty reflects commitment to the organization and the nation, adaptability demonstrates the ability to adapt to change, including the digitalization of services, while collaboration emphasizes the importance of cross-sector cooperation to improve the overall quality of public services.

The role of leadership is crucial in instilling a work culture of morality within the government (Tanjung, 2025). Through exemplary behavior, effective communication, and supportive policies, leaders can shape a healthy organizational culture oriented toward public service. Work culture is not formed instantly, but rather through a continuous process guided by consistent leadership behavior.

Exemplary behavior is the most fundamental element in building a work culture of morality (Parpatih, 2025). Leaders who demonstrate behavior consistent with moral values will serve as role models for employees, so that these values are naturally internalized. Furthermore, open, two-way communication allows leaders to clearly convey the organization's vision and values, while also providing a space for employees to express their aspirations and provide feedback.

Organizational policies also play a crucial role in strengthening the implementation of BerAKHLAK values (Wijayanti, 2021). These policies can include reward systems, work ethics training, and fair and transparent oversight mechanisms. Thus, BerAKHLAK values are not merely slogans but are integrated into the organization's work systems.

Employee performance is a key indicator of the success of implementing BerAKHLAK leadership (Arnanda, 2024). Optimal performance reflects the synergy between effective leadership, a positive work culture, and employee competence. In public services, performance is measured not only by the quantity of work completed but also by the quality of service, timeliness, and level of public satisfaction.

The implementation of BerAKHLAK values by leaders encourages employees to work professionally, ethically, and responsibly (Shalsabila, 2025). Employees working in an adaptive and collaborative leadership environment will be more motivated to improve their competencies and be open to change. The ultimate impact is increased public trust and satisfaction with government services (Buchori, 2025).

Setiabudi District, as an urban area with high community mobility and diverse population characteristics, faces complex public service challenges. This situation demands leadership capable of responding quickly and appropriately to community needs. Therefore, the implementation of BerAKHLAK leadership in Setiabudi District is highly relevant for improving employee performance and the quality of public services.

By consistently internalizing BerAKHLAK values, leadership in Setiabudi District has the potential to become a model for other districts, particularly in urban areas. Leadership based on moral and ethical values not only improves organizational performance but also strengthens the relationship between the government and the community, resulting in high-quality, equitable, and sustainable public services.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed qualitative research methods, as proposed by Saksitha (2024). Qualitative methods were chosen because this study focuses on uncovering meaning and gaining in-depth understanding from the perspectives of the informants. Qualitative research is used to examine phenomena in their natural settings, with the goal of understanding the background of informants' behavior, including their ways of thinking, feelings, and actions.

The data obtained was then analyzed through a process of collecting, categorizing, and simplifying relevant information. These stages were carried out to identify patterns, themes, and meanings contained in the informants' experiences, which were then interpreted and concluded by the researcher as the research findings.

This study employed a narrative approach, which places the informants' experiences and stories as the primary source of data. Through this approach, the researcher strives to present a complete and in-depth picture of the research

object, allowing readers to feel directly involved in the context and situation being studied.

RESEARCH RESULT

South Jakarta is an administrative region within the Jakarta Province, located in the southern part of the capital. This region enjoys a strategic position, directly bordering Bogor Regency and Depok City in West Java Province to the south. To the west, South Jakarta borders West Jakarta, while to the east, it borders East Jakarta. Meanwhile, to the north, it borders Central Jakarta. This geographic location provides South Jakarta with excellent connectivity, both with other areas within Jakarta and with the surrounding buffer zones.

In terms of physical conditions, South Jakarta is dominated by relatively higher plains and hilly terrain, differing from North Jakarta, which is generally lowland and coastal. This region is also known for its significant amount of water catchment areas and green open spaces compared to other areas in Jakarta. The presence of city parks and green areas is an important characteristic of South Jakarta, although on the other hand, the region still faces urban issues such as traffic congestion, especially in areas that are centers of residential, office, and commercial activities.

In addition to its geographical characteristics, South Jakarta also serves as a hub for economic activity, education, and residential development in Jakarta. This area is heavily populated by professionals, businesspeople, and middle- to upper-class residents, including international residents residing in certain areas such as Kemang, Cipete, and Pondok Indah. The surrounding area is also home to numerous nationally renowned higher education institutions. With these diverse potentials, South Jakarta plays a significant role in supporting Jakarta's economic, social, and cultural dynamics.

Table 4.1
Population

No	Subdistrict	Number of People
1	Kebayoran Baru	300,000 people
2	Kebayoran Lama	350,000 people
3	Pasar Minggu	400,000 people
4	Pancoran	200,000 people
5	Cilandak	350,000 people
6	Mampang Prapatan	350,000 people
7	Jagakarsa	350,000 people
8	Tebet	350,000 people
9	Setiabudi	250,000 people
10	Sukmajaya	200,000 people
	Jumlah	3.1 billion people

The ethical leadership implemented in Setiabudi District, South Jakarta, places community involvement as a strategic element in the public policy formulation process. Citizen participation is not viewed as merely an administrative formality, but rather as a manifestation of the leader's moral responsibility to uphold justice, openness, and respect for community rights. The sub-district government develops participatory mechanisms grounded in ethical values such as honesty, transparency, and accountability, providing the community with ample space to express aspirations, criticize, and monitor policies implemented at the local level.

Through this participation model, residents of Setiabudi District are given the opportunity to actively participate in the decision-making process. This involvement ensures that the resulting policies are not elitist or biased towards certain interests, but rather aligned with the real needs of the community. A statement by the Head of Setiabudi District, Iswayudi, S.Sos., M.Sc., emphasized that community participation is an important means for residents to provide input, exercise social control, and help determine the direction of public policy. This approach demonstrates that ethical leadership positions the community not as an object of policy, but as a subject with a strategic role in the formulation and evaluation of government policy.

The importance of community participation was also emphasized by the Head of Government Affairs, Supeno, who stated that citizen involvement is a key factor in realizing targeted and transparent policies. By involving the community, sub-district governments are able to produce policies that are more responsive to the real needs of residents. Furthermore, open information and intense communication between the government and the community contribute to increasing public trust in governance. This trust serves as a crucial social capital in creating a conducive work climate and supporting sustainable leadership based on moral values.

The commitment to community participation is also reflected in policies that are responsive to community concerns, such as environmental security through neighborhood watch (*siskamling*) activities and supervision of hotel businesses based on community reports. The Secretary of the Setiabudi Sub-district Head, Muhammad Nur, explained that every policy formulation always begins with an effort to gather community aspirations before implementation. This practice demonstrates that citizen participation is not merely symbolic but makes a real contribution to improving the quality of public policy.

To expand access to participation, the Setiabudi Sub-district government provides various communication channels, both through formal forums such as the Development Planning Deliberation (*Musrenbang*) and village coordination meetings, as well as through digital media such as public complaint applications and social media. This innovation demonstrates the sub-district government's efforts to create an inclusive and adaptive communication space, allowing people from various backgrounds to express their aspirations more easily and quickly. This utilization of technology also reflects the ability of moral leaders to adapt to current developments to improve the quality of public services.

The role of the RT and RW (neighborhood associations) is also a crucial component in bridging communication between the community and the sub-district government. As the structures closest to residents, the RT/RW functions to absorb community aspirations and systematically convey them to the sub-district. Marlinawati, S.E., Head of the Program and Budget Sub-Division, emphasized that the involvement of the RT/RW can prevent residents' aspirations from being hampered by complex bureaucratic procedures, allowing for more effective and efficient participation.

In addition to formal mechanisms, the Setiabudi Sub-district Head also actively conducts field visits to establish direct communication with the community. This approach allows leaders to gain a more concrete understanding of issues on the ground and demonstrates the government's commitment to listening to and responding to community aspirations. The direct presence of leaders within the community reinforces the principle of transparency and demonstrates that policies are formulated not only administratively but also based on the realities faced by the community.

Public participation is also demonstrated through involvement in the monitoring and evaluation of implemented policies. The Setiabudi Sub-district Head emphasized that ethical leadership is not only oriented towards decision-making but also towards establishing a fair, transparent, and ethical work culture. Involving the public in policy evaluation provides crucial feedback for the government to assess policy effectiveness and make necessary improvements.

According to Muhammad Nur, public participation in policy evaluation helps ensure that implemented programs remain relevant to the needs and expectations of citizens. Information obtained from the public serves as valuable evaluation material for improving policy effectiveness and the quality of public services. As a commitment to transparency, the sub-district government also follows up on all public input in a measurable manner and monitors its results.

Transparency and accountability are strengthened through the publication of follow-up actions to public aspirations. Riris Teti Humisar stated that providing information regarding policy follow-up is an important means of demonstrating the government's commitment to responding to public input. This practice enhances public trust because citizens can see that their aspirations are truly being addressed in the decision-making process.

Community involvement in policy evaluation also contributes to the increased professionalism of sub-district officials. Anang, a resident of Setiabudi District, stated that the evaluation mechanism encourages employees to be more responsive, improve work procedures, and enhance service quality. Thus, community participation serves as both a social control mechanism and a learning tool for government officials.

Overall, community participation in the process of policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation in Setiabudi District is a crucial foundation for realizing ethical leadership that is transparent, fair, and accountable. Through active community involvement, both directly and through digital media, the sub-

district government is able to ensure that the resulting policies truly favor the public interest and are oriented towards improving service quality.

Leadership in Setiabudi District is also characterized by the strengthening of moral values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and concern in every aspect of government administration. Honesty is reflected in the transparency of information and decision-making based on data and facts. This honesty builds government credibility and strengthens the relationship between leaders, officials, and the community.

The value of responsibility is reflected in the leadership's readiness to be accountable for every policy they take, including facing the risks and consequences. Meanwhile, empathy and concern are the foundation for building harmonious relationships with the community and officials, thus creating a humanistic and collaborative work climate. This combination of values enables leadership in Setiabudi District to create a government that is responsive, professional, and oriented toward the welfare of the community.

The implementation of ethical leadership is supported by a strong commitment from leaders, ongoing education, and efforts to build an organizational culture that upholds ethics. However, challenges such as political pressure, an organizational culture that is permissive of ethical violations, and weak oversight remain obstacles that must be wisely managed. Therefore, strengthening the shared commitment between leaders, officials, and the community is key to ensuring the consistent and sustainable implementation of ethical leadership within the Setiabudi District government.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the practice of ethical leadership in Setiabudi District, South Jakarta, is reflected in the strengthening of community involvement at every stage of public policy, from the planning process and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. Community involvement is not interpreted solely as an administrative procedure, but rather as a moral responsibility of leaders to uphold the values of honesty, openness, justice, and respect for citizens' rights. Through the use of deliberation forums, digital channels, the active role of neighborhood units (RT) and neighborhood units (RW), and direct interaction between leaders and the community in the field, residents are given ample opportunity to express their aspirations and exercise control over the course of government, so that the resulting policies are more adaptive and aligned with the real needs of the community.

Leadership in Setiabudi District is also underpinned by strong moral values, particularly honesty, responsibility, and empathy and caring. Honesty plays a role in building transparency and increasing public trust in the government, while responsibility encourages consistency and professionalism in policy implementation. Furthermore, empathy and caring foster a more humanistic approach to service, both to the public and to officials. The integration of these three values creates a leadership pattern that is not only effective administratively but also possesses strong social and ethical dimensions, thereby improving the quality of public services and sustainable citizen participation.

However, the implementation of ethical leadership in Setiabudi District is inseparable from the influence of various supporting and inhibiting factors. Leadership commitment to ethical values, capacity building through continuing education, an organizational culture that upholds integrity, and an effective oversight system are crucial elements in supporting the success of ethical leadership. Conversely, pressure from political interests, a work culture that tends to be permissive of ethical violations, and weak oversight mechanisms have the potential to hinder the consistent implementation of these values. Therefore, continuous efforts and collective commitment between leaders, officials, and the community are needed to ensure that ethical principles can be consistently maintained and implemented in a transparent, accountable, and welfare-oriented government.

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