

# The Influence of Youth Leadership in Strengthening Local Wisdom in The Millennial Generation : Case Study of Bangkalan District, Jawa Timur

Ahmad Luthfi

*National Resilience Study –The Leadership Development*  
Universitas Indonesia  
Jakarta, Indonesia  
luthfi.ciluth@gmail.com

Syaiful Rohman

*National Resilience Study –The Leadership Development*  
Universitas Indonesia  
Jakarta, Indonesia  
syaifulrohman71@gmail.com

Margaretha Hanita

*National Resilience Study –The Leadership Development*  
Universitas Indonesia  
Jakarta, Indonesia  
margaretha.hanita@gmail.com

**Abstract**—The euphoria of the regional and the national leadership change resulted in youth leadership: the recruitment of regional leaders through local elections became the entrance for all elements to run for office. They were elected to be the leaders of their region, and this also included the youth taking part in the election of regional heads through political elections. It was noted that there were two regional heads and one deputy regional head elected at the age of less than 30 years: Makmun Ibnu Fuad in Bangkalan, M Syaharial in Tanjung Balai, and M. Nurul Arifin in Trenggalek. Youth leaders becoming regional heads is an important emerging trend and has become an alternative for managing the nation and the state better. The Bangkalan region is led by Makmun Ibnu Fuad, a 26-year-old man officially appointed in 2013 when he won the election in the same year. Policies related to the millennial generation, the realization of youth leadership in Bangkalan, and strengthening local wisdom in millennials amidst the flow of information society will be explored in this research. The research also seeks to identify the challenges and expectations of the community toward youth leadership. Scientific recommendations are absolutely necessary in evaluating youth leadership and establishing a benchmark for the phenomenon of the presence of youth leaders, a topic that has received little attention from academics.

**Keywords**—youth, leadership, youth leadership, millennial, local wisdom

## I. INTRODUCTION

A political communication expert (Heryanto, The Alumni of Young Politicians Training 2016) stated that we should reflect on the emergence of the youth's spirit and strength. They are one important component of the development of the Indonesian nation. Being an actor from any age is a characteristic of Indonesian youth, and important events such as the national awakening movement, the youth oath, the proclamation, and the reform provide concrete evidence that the youth are the hope to achieve something better for this nation. However, studies of leadership have always referred to old charismatic figures and the famous, and only a few discuss the role of youth in Indonesia's national movement. An interesting study of youth leadership at the local level

was carried out by Nico Schulte Nordholt in Central Java and was later published as a monograph entitled: "Ojo Dumeh": Local Leadership in the Rural Development (1987). The study discusses the role of the sub-district, the district, and government officials within the development. A similar study by Heather Sutherland also discussed the leadership of the old aristocracy in the colonial bureaucracy in Java and its traditional sources of leadership, in a book entitled *The Making of Bureaucratic Elite: The Colonial Transformation of the Javanese High Social Rank People* (Priyayi, 1979). Furthermore, Kasali (2018) claimed that youth must be a "driver" and in the national interest becomes the term "driver [of] a nation," since a large nation is measured not just from the size of the population, but from its having an independent life that fosters hope for the people to inspire other countries. The driver nation itself can only be done by people who have driver principles. This is because young people must be aware that they are the ones who receive the responsibility of a nation and state to make changes for the better.

After implementing the democratization carried out by the youth, starting in 1998, and the introduction of district-based regional autonomy, local leadership has emerged from the youth. This has occurred in addition to the return of some old leadership structured eliminated on the local socio-political stage. Nowadays, the term "child or millennial generation" refers to the young generation who grew up during the democratization era and within the era in which the information technology of the digitalization developed. This generation has its own character in the local socio-political stage: some of them choose to be social-political-democratic actors, others choose to be "consumers" of democracy, and some choose to become religious actors, the latter being a trending sector in Indonesia. In a fast and massive information flow economy, youth leadership forms everywhere, in various sectors: in the capital city, in the province, in the cities, and even in the villages. Now, in this digital era, there is no more inequality of information between city people and villagers. Youth leadership has quickly taken over older leadership. A number of political leaders and local governments have emerged everywhere,

and they have held positions in the executive and in the legislative branches.

The young people are the recipients of national leadership: they will sooner or later carry out the mandate to take part in the development of the nation and the state, with all the resources they possess. Of course there are many things they could do. A lot of dynamic things may be faced by the youth, including those things mentioned above, e.g., the youth must be able to use and utilize the flow of technological developments and information media. There are things that cannot be abandoned and not all things must be followed because Indonesian people have local wisdom and culture that must be preserved and guarded, especially by the millennial generations. There is a need to combine local wisdom and culture with the development of technology and information media. Young people who know and undergo the development of information technology and media as well as parts of the community who understand local culture and certainly deserve special treatment in undergoing both. This is because Indonesia is a nation that is diverse in culture but that also accepts the development of technology and information media to decorate the Indonesian people. According to Youth Law, young people are those between 16-30 years old, the most sacred example to date is that there are three who represent the youth leaders who has been appointed as the head or the deputy regional head at the age of under 30 years. These are: M. Syharia (the Mayor of Tanjung Balai, North Sumatra) who became mayor at the age of 26 years, M. Nurul Arifin (the Deputy Regent of Trenggalek East Java) who was inaugurated at the age of 26, and Makmun Ibnu Fuad (the Regent of Bangkalan, East Java) who also was appointed at the age of 26. These records will certainly continue to grow with the opportunities and the democracy running in Indonesia.

The opportunity must be answered by the youth to continue the struggle of the young people who have established this nation to protect and “decorate” the Indonesian people so that they advance. The problem they will face is certainly very complex; the most serious is the corruption and drug abuse occurring throughout the Indonesia. But nothing is impossible: the young people who have the mandate to lead show that young people are capable of making Indonesia more respectable. Among the three regions mentioned above, Bangkalan is one of the districts in the East Java Province located on the Madura Island. Bangkalan has a fairly complex problem in the dynamics of youth leadership that has finished its period of office. Bangkalan also cannot escape the large currents of democracy, information, and digitizing information. The millennials also grow there. Understanding the millennial or generation Y is a group of people born after generation X, the generation born between 1980-2000. This indicates that the millennial generation is the generation aged 18-38 years in 2018. This generation is different other generations. They are superior in technology, information, and are more critical. The millennial generation conveys positive new things to advance the surrounding environment (Sunajarko, 2016). The millennial generation is considered capable of processing their respective resources with their breakthroughs to meet the changing dynamics of the times, especially the local wisdom and the national culture of Indonesia, which is very strong. The young people and millennials might fill strategic positions. They are expected to be able to answer the anxiety with the phenomenon of the

erosion of the local wisdom that has become a characteristic of the Indonesian people.

Because of the current possibility of the millennial period being led by the same generation, there will be compromises regarding how to answer the question of the influence of youth leadership in the development of the millennial local wisdom. It is certainly interesting to consider a joint study. The problem now is how much the youth leadership of the millennial generation who think logically toward modernism can strengthen local wisdom, which is traditional and ancient, so that it can be a reference in millennial political socio-leadership itself. Makmun Ibnu Fuad, who served as the Bangkalan Regent in the 2013-2018 period, represented the millennial generation who emerged as local political leaders. We must consider the extent to which Ibnu Fuad and the youth leadership in Bangkalan became socio-political actors in consolidating local democracy in Bangkalan, especially in maintaining local wisdom in the swift flow of the technological and information developments in today's era.

The next issue arises due to the fact that the regent of Bangkalan called to be the representative of the young leaders and the millennial generation and who has the heredity of respected people (ulama and kyai) in Bangkalan. Makmun Ibnu Fuad is the son of Fuad Amin who was the previous regent of Bangkalan. Is there a correlation to the continuity of the leadership of Makmun Ibnu Fuad both from the policy framework or the individual nature between Makmun Ibnu Fuad and Fuad Amin? This might greatly influence the leadership process that has been running.

## II. SCOPE OF PROBLEM

This research will limit the problems the researcher attempted to elaborate in the introduction section. The following are the limitations of this research:

- The realization of youth leadership in Bangkalan Regency.
- The dynamics of Youth leadership in Bangkalan Regency.
- Youth leadership maintaining local wisdom in the flow of technological and information development.
- Youth leadership policy in maintaining local wisdom in the millennial generations.

## III. WRITING SYSTEM

This research is divided into ten sections, namely abstract, introduction, research objectives, systematics of writing, literature review, techniques, data analysis, discussion, research results, and conclusions and references.

## IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Leaders and youth are important to explain, according to Keneth Boulding (The image: Knowledge in life of society, 1991). Leaders become ideal by developing from an independent learning process, training, education, and never-ending experience. There is a kind of guide that demands to continue to grow because leaders do not rely on the victory that has been obtained. The youth are verbally explained as the young people aged between the children and adults and the people who start adulthood.

Leaders are absolutely needed for every organization, association, or any other things meant to be the same as an organization or association. Leaders are the first persons, who are captains of the ships who direct the ships to sail. Leaders are the individuals who must have the nature of leadership. Churchill said that leadership is the ability and skills, (Nawawi, 2006) to direct the activities and the effectiveness of an organization. Another opinion expressed by Robbins (1991, p. 354) is that leadership is the ability to influence a group toward achieving goals. It was also a similar thing to what was stated by Gibson et al., (1997, p. 344) that leadership is an attempt to use various types of influence that are not coercive to motivate the organizational members to achieve certain goals.

The leaders and leadership described above are the form of the individuals and the nature of the individuals. Meanwhile, an individual is limited by the age dimension, which has boundaries in each dimension. One is the age dimension for individual leaders that is the youth. According to the law concerning youth, that is, Number 40 of 2009 article 1 paragraph 1 explains that youth are any Indonesian citizens who belong to an important period of growth and development aged sixteen (16) to thirty (30) years. Youth and leadership are strongly attached to the meaning of the Indonesian people. Anderson stressed that the Indonesian revolution was not determined by the alienated scholars, nor by the oppressed classes, but by the young people. At that time, the youth awareness determined the typical direction of the revolution in Indonesia. The young people who had upheld the coherence through idealism of every political change from the independence struggle to the fall of the authoritarian regime in Indonesia.

There were political changes and democratization after the fall of Soeharto, and the young people previously on the extrapartimentary route decided to join political parties to participate in the elections, and they were elected to become members of parliament and even held executive positions. The youth with phenomena like the above are certainly not new in Indonesia. That is because ever since the beginning of the republic, they have become an important part in the national awakening, the youth oath, the proclamation until the reform and the post-reform.

From now on, it must be stated that the youth is a community and an important part of Indonesia in relation to the leadership agendas. The youth must capture them to make democracy and politics meaningful for society and the citizens. As a feature of the youth, it must be based on current conditions and contemporary things. The youth must gather themselves not only to be part of a change in the political period, which is usually oriented only to the struggle for power and change, but also young people must encourage political and leadership change by giving more emphasis on structural transformation and power relations. Further, the young people strongly emphasize current situations and current conditions because they are sensitive to any rapid changes in the development the world of information and technology. The youth, as part of millennial society, still have to maintain the cultural values and local wisdom even though they consider current things and present conditions.

In the study conducted by Ward and Ellis (2008), the knowledge of characteristics that provide professional youth service do so by focusing their energy and resources to help the young people who tend to be the leaders so that they can

lead appropriately and effectively. It is a kind of a consolidation of the fellow youths to help each other in everything, also in terms of leadership, the young people tend to be more comfortable helping their peers. Brendt (1989 - Characteristics of Youth Leadership that Influence Adolescent Peers to Follow) said that support can be a positive feedback, a helpful piece of advice, an encouragement of support for success, and use of self-promoting words and actions. Any young people who give positive support to other young people will be able to promote among each other (Klau, 2006), due to their having a division to categorize leaders. Civil leadership focuses on interests engaging with broad community issues, charismatic leadership is a way of influencing through enthusiasm and creativity with various versions, formal leadership conditions achieved by formal policies of a business or organization. Rational leadership influences dynamics toward better conditions, leadership of service is a leader who is committed to engage in activities that are beneficial to those who are in need and underserved, and intellectual leadership refers to influencing spiritual and moral leadership committed to justice.

The correlation between the leaders and others who are at the outside but able to gain power is explained in A New Institutional Theory (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Di Maggio and Powell, 1983 - Characteristics of Youth Leadership that Influence Adolescent Peers to Follow), which supports the view that organizations that are under great pressure to adopt practices and policies are legitimate in the eyes of external resource providers. The organization is not expected or allowed to be smart, innovative, or distorted. Instead, they are expected to conform to the norms and the conventions that apply, as well as the profile of industry leaders. More details are explained by Miller et al., (2007 - Characteristics of Youth Leadership that Influence Adolescent Peers to Follow) with the general definition of "family" control, and a description of the categories of entrepreneurial control with the family control, and furthermore. Their research shows that differences are essential for differences in performance between "family companies" broadly defined and regular public companies.

## V. DATA ANALYSIS AND TECHNIQUES

In this study, the researcher used qualitative research methods to produce descriptive data concerning verbal and written words and observable behavior of the people being studied (Taylor and Boggdan, 1984 - Characteristics of Youth Leadership that Influence Adolescent Peers to Follow). The ethnographic approach was used to explore more complete data with the consequences of active participation from the researcher. Data analysis using a descriptive approach was used so that it could be documented with the concept of writing to describe the object of research, and the system of data collection used both structured and unstructured interviews. Sources were selected based on research needs (purposive sampling), the observation in the study area (primary data), and secondary data (library and audio-visual products, documents, and others).

After conducting the observations on the object of the research, there were many ways to respond to the problems referred to above, e.g., Bangkalan as the district level of government and Makmun Ibnu Fuad as the regent for the

2013-2018 period. It is a unity in the objects to be explored, some backgrounds, and the youth figures asked for opinions to answer the problem constraints.

In the 2012 local election (Pilkada), Bangkalan Regency had three pairs of candidate. These were Makmun Ibnu Fuaddan with Ir Mondir Rofii, KH Imam Buchori Cholil with RH Zainal Alim, and the pair Nizar Zahro with Zulkifli. The result was that the candidate of Makmun Ibnu Fuaddan with Ir Mondir Rofii who won the elections held in December 12, 2012 was officially inaugurated by the Governor of East Java on April 3, 2013. With the taking of oaths for their leadership led by Soekarwo as the Governor of East Java; Bangkalan officially had a Regent and a Deputy Regent for the 2013-2018 period. Interestingly, Ra Makmun was the youngest regent in Indonesia, aged 26 years old when inaugurated, thus Ra Makmun was still classified as a youth, referring to the Youth Law, Number 40 of 2009 stating that youth are those aged 16-30 years. The next young person selected Ra Makmun was M. Syaharial who was the Regent of Tanjung Balai North Sumatra aged 26 years old and M. Nurul Arifin as the Deputy Regent of Trenggalek accompanying Emil Dardak. The age of M. Syaharial and M. Nurul Arifin were also the same when elected; at that time both were elected in December 2015.

The realization of the youth leadership in Bangkalan at that time was certainly a new thing in democracy in Indonesia because young people could win and be elected to the electoral politics called pilkada, which eventually became an inspiration and example for other young people to gain equal opportunities in leading. In essence, youth leadership, including the chosen Makmun Ra in Bangkalan Regency, should be conducted to the wishes and will of young people themselves, but there are few exceptions for Ra Makmun because Makmun Ibnu Fuad who was familiarly called Ra Makmun is a representation of a young leader in Bangkalan. Ra Makmun was prepared by his father to be a leader by becoming a Bangkalan DPRD member and nominated as regent in 2012. Ra Makmun, as most people recall, was the son of Fuad Amin who was none other than the previous Bangkalan Regent, Imron Rosyadi-Chairperson of Bangkalan DPRD. He was young, energetic, and his mindset and leadership were very different from Fuad Amen because his young soul was still growing. Most people knew Ra Makmun was the descendant of Bangkalan Religious leader (ulama), namely, Kyai Cholil. Ra Makmun was considered by young people as not ready to become a leader. The proof was that there were many problems in Bangkalan that could not be solved by Ra Makmun. The above findings such as the theory and the reality that could not be met. That leaders with other parties were at the outside but they able to rule is explained in A New Institutional Theory from (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Di Maggio and Powell, 1983 - Characteristics of Youth Leadership that Influence Adolescent Peers to Follow). The organization was not expected nor even permitted to be smart, innovative, or distorted. Instead, they were expected to conform to the norms and the conventions that apply.

Although it was acknowledged that Ra Makmun was a young figure who was also a descendant of a great "ulama" in Bangkalan, the dynamics of the leadership process of Ra Makmun were still heavily associated with Fuad Amin (Bajjuri Alwi-PMII Bangkalan). He was influenced by his father and family leadership practices such as the example in

Bangkalan of their often being called dynasties, and these were none other than in other places such as Banten Province. Almost all cities and districts in Banten leadership regeneration dwelled in the Ratu Atut Chosiyah dynasty. The conditions in Bangkalan and in Banten were certainly different because in Bangkalan young leaders could be found, while in Banten there could be no young leaders according to Youth Law, Number 40 of 2009 since they had to comprise those who are 16-30 years old. There were people who did not agree with the political terms of the dynasty in Bangkalan, (Ra Lathif Fuad Imron) that the people in Bangkalan were still trustful with the ulama and the kyai. Even Jawara believed that the ulama or kyai could be trusted as leaders on the basis of obedience and listening to the ulama and kyai. Ra Makmun as a family of ulama was said to be able to win in the election because he was also able to be a family of ulama or kyai.

The leadership of Ra Makmun in Bangkalan fits the dynamics of youth leadership in Indonesia. Born from a family of Kyai, Ra Makmun was prepared by his father to become a leader, this condition made Ra Makmun actively involved in the government since becoming a Bangkalan Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) member. As a young leader, Ra Makmun was known to be popular youth. A real example was when there was a motorbike race titled the Cup Regent, in context of there being many young people who liked to race wild on the streets. Many professional youth services focus their energy and resources to help young people who tend to be leaders so that they can lead appropriately and effectively. Such consolidation among the young people to help each other in all things, and also in terms of the leadership, makes the young people tend to be more comfortable in helping others who are of the same age. Moreover, in his leadership period, he was also able to initiate to build a race circuit that had been stated in the budget discussion, but until the period was over, the race circuit had not been elicited. His soul as a young leader was deeply felt by government colleagues, it was mentioned (Imron Rosyadi-DPRD Bangkalan) when meeting with the DPRD with a schedule of the Regional Government Budget (APBD) discussions, Ra Makmun squirmed several times and it almost caused riots, even though it was finally muted.

The dynasty mentioned above explains that Ra Makmun is the son of Fuad Amin, the relevance of both is only to the strategic policy-making process. Meanwhile, in terms of personality and individual matters, it is very different. When the leadership of Fuad Amin seemed authoritarian, there was no demonstration by the community, but Fuad Amin led in mature and experienced conditions. Besides that, Fuad Amin was well-known for his discipline and often held meetings with his staff. This condition was inversely proportional to Ra Makmun, an open government made the climate of demonstration increase. Another reason was that Ra Makmun led in conditions that were not ready yet because he was still young and still in the shadow of his father, Umar Faruq, the Village Chief. He was often not in office and closed to the ranks of the government because they rarely held meetings and were not disciplined.

In the context of the culture, Ra Makmun was said to have succeeded in preserving the culture of Bangkalan, Bangkalan City of Dhikr and Shalawat, which was signed through the Regent's Decree in 2016. As such, he was part of the future, and was from the initiative and contrasting

Bangkalan became part of the future part. Two strategic policies in the cultural field showed that cultural obedience in Bangkalan was still very high.

When the assessment of the community was uniform with the lack of optimal leadership, the reason was that the leadership during Makmun's time looked like chaos, the community also understood in his leadership there was no idea of himself, and that he was not able to manage government management. Also his was a stagnant government, and there was no good coordination from the legislative-executive, and there was no policy leading to love of Bangkalan. This made the community of Bangkalan feel traumatized having a young leader because the young leader who was desirable turned out not to meet the expectations of the community.

The leader after the Ra period had homework that was complicated enough with the first being to restore public trust in the government. This was so whoever would be elected, whether the young leader was re-elected or the senior who would replace Ra Makmun. However, indirectly the leaders expressed the hope that the youth could learn from today's events. On the contrary, to be able to become the inspiration, the challenge was definitely to restore public confidence enabling young people to lead, like an optimistic leader works because the true young graduate is fresh and has a high working spirit.

The incident in Bangkalan made young people learn a valuable lessons, because in fact the youth must be ready to lead, because the role of youth is increasing from the village to the district level and even at the national level. The current youth lead today, and the leader must include a lot of youth in the process of policy-making, and also through the leader's participation in youth activities. The youth are supposed to be more effective and more enthusiastic. The negative traits of the youth that sometimes are not consistent and have to be shunned is because the youth excel in progressiveness, the quality of their knowledge is broader, and the period is now dominated by the youth.

## VI. CONCLUSION

A few young people have had the opportunity to become leaders in Indonesia, a general view in the context of youth leadership, though there are of course other versions that could explain the form of youth leadership. Ra Makmun was one example of a young leader in Indonesia with a journey of leadership that was an easy process but that went through a variety of twists and turns. His father's influence was still

more dominant than what he produced himself. The young people must be able to do new things to answer the challenges of the times: a culture that has begun to erode with the development of technology and information media must be carried out in a balanced manner, so that it can work together in preserving culture and keeping up with the times. The millennial factors certainly also must be considered because the millennial generation is the most dominant generation expected to be able to carry out the task of maintaining local wisdom and keeping up with the times. of course, there are many more Indonesian youth leaders who will develop to jointly maintain local wisdom and follow the directions of development at the same time for much better conditions for nation and state. They should not forget the reflection of history and local wisdom as well as the ability to think ahead to follow the development of the world.

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