# Folklore As A Mirror of Women's Leadership: A Review of Kasavinaya's Diplomatic Strategy In Dealing With Enemies In Central Sulawesi

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## ABSTRACT

Folklore plays an important role in portraying cultural narratives, societal values, and leadership roles in various communities. This research aims to analyze the representation of women's leadership through diplomacy in Central Sulawesi folktales, focusing on the character of Kasavinaya. This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach by analyzing three versions of Kasavinaya folklore through thematic analysis. This method aims to identify key themes related to diplomacy strategies, women's leadership roles, and conflict resolution. Data were obtained from the transcribed folklore texts and analyzed based on the frequency of occurrence of relevant themes. The results show that Kasavinaya is positioned as a strong leader, prioritizing negotiation and deliberation over violence. Kasavinaya's leadership, which is based on wisdom and diplomacy, challenges traditional narratives centered on male leadership that emphasizes physical strength. The findings of this study reveal that folklore can serve as a medium to reconstruct gender roles in leadership, reinforcing the idea that women can become leaders through non-aggressive approaches. This research contributes to the discourse of women's leadership by offering a more inclusive and diplomacy-based leadership model. The implications of this research suggest that negotiation-based leadership models can be applied in modern leadership contexts, creating more cooperative and collaborative practices. Future research is expected to extend this study to other cultural contexts to enrich the understanding of women's leadership in traditional narratives.

**Keywords:** Folklore, women's leadership, diplomatic strategy, Kasavinaya, Central Sulawesi

## INTRODUCTION

Folklore plays an important role in understanding cultural narratives, societal values, and leadership roles in various communities. As containers of traditional knowledge and beliefs, folklore reflects the complex dynamics between gender, power and authority and provides important insights into how societies conceptualize leadership (Nath Pathak, 2024; Papailia, 2024). By examining the interaction between oral traditions and written literature, scholars such as (Gogiashvili (2023) emphasize how these narratives shape perceptions of gender and power in various cultural contexts. Historically, folklore has often celebrated male heroism, highlighting physical strength and courage. However, recent research has begun to explore the important role of women in leadership through alternative strategies such as diplomacy and negotiation (Mulamba, 2013; Veissière, 2018). Sayao's (2024) research supports this view by revealing how traditional narratives often ascribe leadership roles to men as active agents, while women are placed in more passive and emotional roles. This suggests that cultural context plays an important role in shaping gender representations in folklore and how these stereotypes can be reinforced or challenged.

In tracing this shift, it becomes clear that folklore not only serves as a reflection of societal values, but also as a mechanism that shapes those values, especially in relation

to leadership and gender roles. For example, folklore from various cultures shows that women often assume leadership roles not through physical dominance, but through wisdom and diplomatic negotiation (Gogiashvili, 2023). This trend is seen in various cultural contexts, such as in the African folklore highlighted by Mulamba (2013), where women are portrayed as peacekeepers and negotiators who challenge the male-centered leadership paradigm. Asamoah-Poku's (2024) research also highlights the importance of oral traditions in preserving cultural values, including leadership dynamics related to gender and power. Veissière (2018) emphasizes this point by exploring how narratives of masculinity in folklore contribute to social expectations regarding gender roles and leadership, further reinforcing the importance of exploring these narratives in various contexts.

One of the main issues raised in this research is the lack of representation of female leadership, particularly through diplomacy, in Indonesian folklore. Much of the existing literature focuses on male-centered leadership narratives, which depict men as heroic figures who gain power through acts of bravery and combat. This focus on male leadership has obscured the representation of female figures, especially in contexts where women lead through non-aggressive methods such as strategic diplomacy and negotiation (Musyarrof et al., 2023; Nuratin & Sudaryanto, 2024). McDonald & Piatak (2022) in their research highlighted how traditional gender-related narratives still influence perceptions of leadership in political contexts, showing that gender stereotypes continue to shape public acceptance of women's leadership roles, which is relevant in understanding Kasavinaya's position as a female leader.

To address this issue, a common solution proposed is to expand the study of leadership in folklore to include nonviolent leadership models commonly represented by women. Recognizing that leadership can manifest not only through physical strength, but also through wisdom and negotiation, allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the role of women in traditional narratives. The story of Kasavinaya, a female leader from Central Sulawesi, offers an alternative leadership model. Kasavinaya's approach to resolving conflicts and maintaining peace through diplomacy contradicts the conventional image of male warriors and provides a new perspective on leadership in a patriarchal society (Nahdi et al., 2024; Youpika et al., 2024). Attom et al. (2021) also assert the importance of inclusive narratives that recognize women's leadership roles, showing how Kasavinaya's diplomacy strategy can be considered a legitimate form of leadership in traditional contexts.

Based on this understanding, the specific solutions identified in the literature focus on exploring stories such as the Kasavinaya, which illustrate leadership through diplomacy and negotiation. This alternative form of leadership not only challenges traditional male-centered narratives, but also highlights the importance of peaceful conflict resolution methods in traditional societies. Previous research by (Anwar et al., 2023; Musyarrof et al., 2023a) emphasizes that women in folklore often play an important role in maintaining social stability through peaceful strategies, which contribute to the prosperity and unity of their communities. In this context, Telban, (2023) mentions that historical changes in narrative culture in Istria suggest that these narratives dynamically

reflect society's changing perceptions of gender and authority, which may provide additional insights in understanding how Kasavinaya used diplomacy as a leadership tool.

In addition, it is important to recognize that non-aggressive forms of leadership, despite their important role in some cultures, are still underrepresented in folklore studies. Research by Khachmafova et al., (2023) on Russian and Chinese folklore and by Niba (2022) on African folklore supports the idea that women have historically played significant leadership roles by using diplomacy to build alliances and maintain peace. This research further reinforces the importance of researching Indonesian folklore, where women leaders such as Kasavinaya have not received much scholarly attention, even though their contributions to governance and stability through non-violent approaches are significant.

A review of related literature shows several studies that explore the theme of nonviolent leadership in folklore from other cultural contexts. For example, Khachmafova et al. (2023) explored the role of negotiation in Russian and Chinese folklore, where women often resolve conflicts through diplomatic means. Similarly, Niba (2022) analyzes African folklore that portrays women as key figures in maintaining peace and stability through diplomatic strategies. However, while these studies provide valuable insights, they primarily focus on non-Indonesian contexts, leaving a significant research gap on women's leadership through diplomacy in Indonesian folklore. This highlights the need for further research on how women like Kasavinaya lead through diplomacy within Indonesian cultural frameworks.

The purpose of this research is to analyze representations of female leadership, particularly through diplomacy and conflict resolution, in Central Sulawesi folklore, with a focus on the Kasavinaya figure. This research offers a new perspective by highlighting non-aggressive leadership strategies used by women, which challenge traditional narratives centered on male heroism and combat. By focusing on the under-explored stories of female leaders like Kasavinaya, this research aims to fill a critical gap in the current literature. The scope of this research includes a qualitative analysis of the narrative structures, themes, and cultural contexts that shape Kasavinaya's portrayal of leadership. Through this analysis, the research is expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of gender roles and leadership dynamics in Indonesian folklore, as well as offer new insights into how these narratives reflect broader societal values.

## METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the representation of women's leadership through diplomacy in Central Sulawesi folklore, focusing on the **Kasavinaya** character. The main data sources are three sources of Kasavinaya folklore obtained from oral transcriptions, folklore tek, and folk songs that allude to the character Kasavinaya and her leadership. Each text was read in depth and transcribed into digital format to facilitate analysis. The data analysis process was conducted using **thematic analysis** method, following the stages of familiarization with the data, initial coding, finding themes, and developing main themes. The themes identified included the

diplomatic strategies, leadership roles, and conflict resolution undertaken by Kasavinaya. Each narrative was analyzed to find patterns related to diplomacy and gender roles, which were then arranged based on their frequency of occurrence. To ensure validity, triangulation was conducted by comparing three different versions of the story to strengthen the interpretation results. This analysis provides insight into how folktales reflect women's leadership roles, especially in the context of peaceful conflict resolution. This method is designed to be replicated by other researchers interested in similar studies in different cultural and narrative contexts.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

An analysis of the dialogue and narrative in **Kasavinaya**'s folktale shows that the narrative offers an in-depth perspective on women's leadership**,** diplomacy, gender roles and cultural values. Kasavinaya, as the main character, is not only portrayed as a strong leader, but also as a figure who prioritizes negotiation and unity in every action of her leadership. In a society that usually emphasizes male leadership, Kasavinaya's role as a successor challenges patriarchal norms and shows the significant role of women in power.

Kasavinaya relied on diplomacy and symbolism as the main strategies to resolve conflicts, leaving violence as a last resort. This approach reflects her strategic thinking, where words and symbols are used first to overcome challenges. In terms of gender, Kasavinaya not only highlights her diplomacy skills, but also demonstrates fighting skills that transcend traditional norms, which usually limit physical strength to men.

In addition, negotiation is the main way in which Kasavinaya leads. Deliberation and discussion are considered more effective for solving problems than violence. This approach also highlights the importance of cultural value-based leadership, where Kasavinaya made unity a source of strength to maintain the welfare of his people. By placing unity above all else, he showed how local cultural values strongly influenced his every decision. In addition, the variety of stories about Kasavinaya shows the flexibility in interpreting leadership in various social contexts. Some versions of the story indicate that his leadership did not continue after his death, which opens up room for various interpretations. As such, the following table and diagram provide a brief visualization of the research findings, showing the distribution of indicators depicting the role of women**,** diplomacy and leadership in Kasavinaya's narrative.

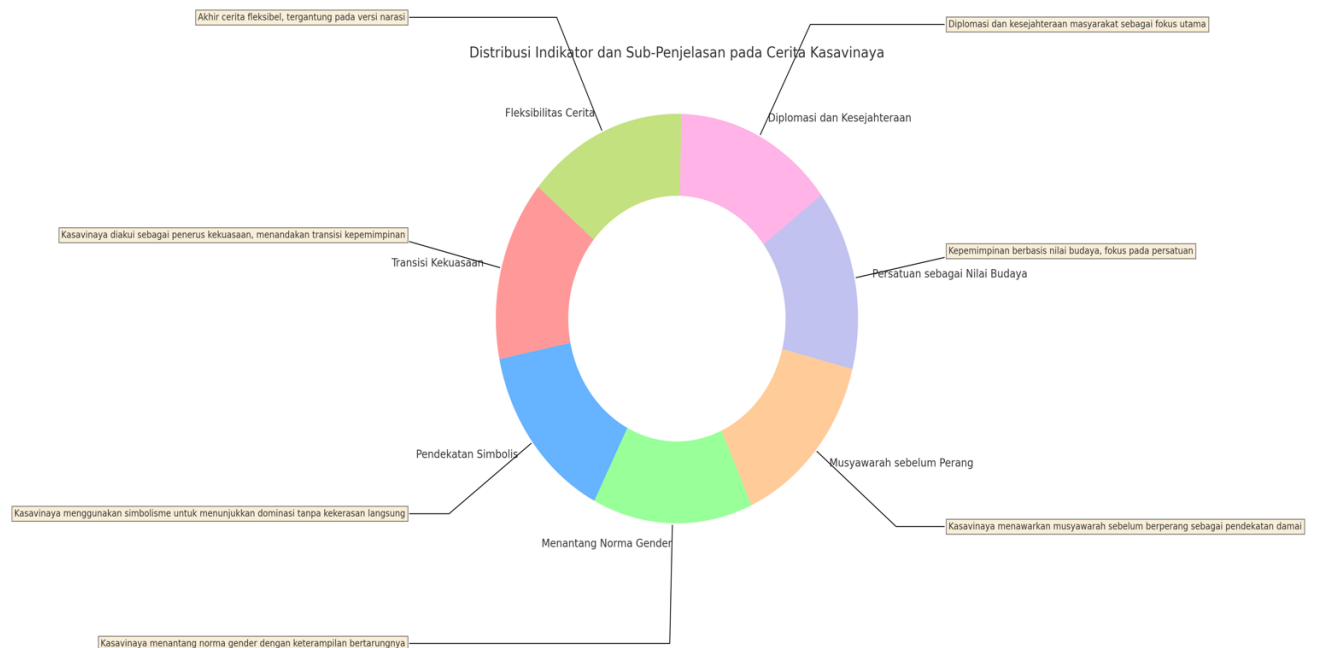**Figure 1: Distribution of Indicators and Sub-Explanations in Kasavinaya Stories**



Distribusi Indikator dan Sub-Penjelasan pada Cerita Kasavinaya

**Table.1 Leadership, Diplomacy and Gender Roles in Kasavinaya Narrative in terms of Categories, Dialogues and Indicators.**

| Category | Dialog | Indicator |
|---|---|---|
| **Representation of Women's Leadership** | Dialogue 1: "I want you to continue this kagaua (seat of government)!" | Kasavinaya was asked to continue the leadership, signaling the transition of leadership to a woman. |
| | Dialogue 2: "Dad you're calling me! Is there something you need?" | The interaction between Kasavinaya and her father while talking about the future of leadership. |
| **Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution Strategies** | Dialogue 1: "My hand has touched your body so I forbid myself to be eaten by the ground." | Kasavinaya uses symbolic diplomacy to show dominance without direct violence. |
| | Dialogue 2: "If the previous two are ignored by the enemy, then he will shake the enemy's hand in farewell." | Diplomacy lasts before using force as a last resort. |
| **Gender and Leadership Patterns in Folklore** | Dialogue 1: "Even so, she is so adept at using Guma Pasatimpo that even grown men are often defeated by her." | Kasavinaya as a woman adept at fighting, challenging traditional gender norms. |

| Category | Dialog | Indicator |
|---|---|---|
| **Negotiation as an Alternative to Violence** | Dialogue 2: "Kasavinaya was white, tall and had very long hair. Every day she needed servants to lift her long hair." | The physical representation of Kasavinaya as a female character with symbolic power and grace is unique in folk narratives. |
| | Dialogue 1: "His strategy is to invite peace." | Kasavinaya offers peace before war, emphasizing negotiation as an integral strategy. |
| | Dialogue 2: "If he is not heeded, he gives the enemy a chance to consult with him." | The enemy's opportunity to discuss and find peaceful solutions before conflict. |
| **Culture-Based Leadership** | Dialogue 1: "Kasavinaya is a Magau figure who has the principle that if united, it will be strong." | The principle of unity as strength reflects local cultural values in Kasavinaya leadership. |
| | Dialogue 2: "He always seeks peace before going to war with other kagaua." | Kasavinaya's leadership is based on traditional values that value peace and unity. |
| **Contributions to Gender and Leadership Discourse** | Dialogue 1: "Kasavinaya was a leader who used diplomacy to resolve conflicts, favoring negotiation over aggression." | Women's leadership, which uses diplomacy and negotiation as the main approach, is relevant to the modern discourse on women's leadership. |
| | Dialogue 2: "He is very attentive to the needs of his people." | A leadership style that focuses on the well-being of the community, reflecting the social role of women in servant leadership. |
| **Kasavinaya Story Variations** | Dialogue 1: "Kasavinaya passed away in old age and her kaga ended." | An ending in which the Kasavinaya leadership was not passed on to the next generation. |
| | Dialogue 2: "The kagaua no longer continues because there is now a new kagaua located north of Tamalendu hill." | Variations in the story regarding the reasons why leadership was not passed down the line, suggesting possible differences in other versions of the story. |

Having identified that **Kasavinaya** is recognized as a female leader in a patriarchal society, it is important to analyze this finding in the context of existing literature and look at its implications in more depth. The results of this study reveal a new trend in **female leadership** that focuses on **interpersonal trust** and **family legitimacy**, in contrast to traditional norms that often place male power at the center of leadership. **Comparison with literature** such as Nugraha (2019) that emphasizes women's secondary roles, suggests that Kasavinaya's narrative introduces a **more progressive model of female leadership**. **The strength of this study** lies in its exploration of how the **direct transition of power to women** is recognized within patriarchal structures, which is rarely revealed in similar studies. In addition, the findings have **important significance** in the discourse of **gender equality**, offering **potential applications** in the development of more inclusive models of contemporary leadership, based on **diplomacy and interpersonal relationships**. The research successfully answers **key questions** related to women's ability to lead in a patriarchal society and introduces **a new concept** of **legitimizing leadership through family relationships**. Although the research objectives were largely achieved, there were some **limitations**, such as the lack of further exploration of the **broader social acceptance of** women's leadership, which could be a focus for further research.

1. **Representation of Women's Leadership**

This research reveals that Kasavinaya is positioned as a successor to power in a patriarchal society through direct recognition from her father, who grants leadership legitimacy to his daughter. In line with research by (Joynal, 2023), which shows the importance of male figures in providing legitimacy to women in a patriarchal environment, Kasavinaya's father gave full trust to his daughter to continue leadership. This is also supported by (Ummiroh et al., 2022) who highlighted that women often utilize interpersonal relationships with influential men to negotiate their authority in patriarchal societies.

This process of power transition is not through violence or physical domination, but through interpersonal diplomacy that emphasizes the importance of strong family relations, as described by (Selamat & Endut, 2020) which illustrates how women can navigate the patriarchal system by using interpersonal relationships. In this case, Kasavinaya, like other women in patriarchal contexts, relied on her father's trust and support to gain legitimacy, which is relevant to (Adongo et al., 2023a) study on the importance of dominant male support in ensuring smooth leadership transitions for women.

Kasavinaya does not follow the traditional patriarchal pattern that places men as the main inheritors of power, but shows that women can lead with strong interpersonal support. This is reinforced by (Rahmawati et al., 2021) who showed how women in Madura managed to achieve leadership positions through nonviolent strategies and interpersonal diplomacy, which is similar to how Kasavinaya gained power through close family relations. This model also reflects the argument of (Seale et al., 2021) which emphasizes that leadership approaches based on interpersonal diplomacy can help expand the acceptance of women's leadership in male-dominated societies.

The strength of Kasavinaya's narrative lies in its ability to demonstrate that female leadership can occur without the use of physical force or militaristic domination, but rather through interpersonal diplomacy and family trust. As explained by (L. Chen et al., 2023) patriarchal structures often require legitimacy from male figures, and in this context, Kasavinaya's father's support provided the necessary legitimacy. This approach also reflects the changing model of leadership in modern societies, where interpersonal relations and communication play an increasingly important role, as pointed out by (Girdhar, 2020).

This research successfully addresses the question of how women can lead in patriarchal societies by showing that interpersonal relations and family support play a key role in providing legitimacy to women. However, as Joynal (2023) points out, more research is needed to explore how the wider society responds to women in leadership roles, especially in historically male-dominated societies.

## 2. Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution

Kasavinaya chose diplomacy and negotiation as the main approach in conflict resolution, as seen in the dialogue "This hand of mine has touched your body, so I forbid myself to be eaten by the ground," which shows the use of symbolism and the power of words to control the situation without violence. This finding is in line with (Amri et al., 2021) who highlighted the importance of symbolism in Minangkabau patriarchal society, where women use local symbols to resolve conflicts. This strategy is also seen in another dialog, "If the previous two things are ignored by the enemy, then he will shake the enemy's hand as a farewell greeting," where negotiation is the main option before confrontation. Rami et al. (2022) show that women often use diplomacy and symbolic communication to resolve conflicts in rural communities.

Furthermore, (Van Dooren & Noordegraaf, 2020) emphasized the importance of effective communication in maintaining authority during a crisis, relevant to Kasavinaya's approach of emphasizing diplomacy over physical dominance. (Adongo et al., 2023b) ) also support the importance of diplomacy in Ghana's patriarchal society, while (L. Chen et al., 2023highlight how women in China's patriarchal society gain recognition through the support of family and influential male figures, and use diplomacy to overcome conflict without violence.

Kasavinaya challenges patriarchal norms that associate power with military force, as outlined by (Rahmawati et al., 2021) in their study of Madurese women who use diplomacy to overcome patriarchal challenges. (Mayer et al., 2018) also found that women in South Africa used negotiation and symbolic communication to navigate complex authority dynamics. Kasavinaya, with her peaceful approach, showed that women can be effective leaders without having to rely on violence.

The relevance of these findings to modern leadership is seen in the study (Erikson & Josefsson, 2023), which shows that masculine practices in politics often work against women, but Kasavinaya exemplifies how diplomacy can be an effective tool in achieving peaceful solutions. (Subaidah & Rizquha, 2023) highlight how interpersonal and negotiation skills are highly effective in overcoming challenges in patriarchal environments. However, (Alhadhrami et al., 2018) emphasize that the social acceptance of women's diplomacy approach is still variable, so further research is needed to see how this strategy affects power dynamics in the long run.

## 3. Gender and Leadership Patterns in Folklore

Kasavinaya in folklore appears as a female figure who challenges traditional gender norms, especially in terms of physical strength and leadership, which are usually dominated by men. Dialogue such as "Even so, she is so adept at using Guma Pasatimpo that often even adult men are defeated by her" shows how Kasavinaya's fighting skills surpass those of adult men. This mirrors the findings of (Kluczewska & Hojieva, 2022)

who examined how figures such as Gordafarid in Shahnameh challenge patriarchal norms by adopting masculine qualities such as courage and physical strength. This representation confirms that folklore can be an effective medium for portraying female power in a patriarchal society.

Kasavinaya's physical and military leadership is also in line with the analysis of (Lobasz, 2008) who explores how women in military contexts often challenge traditional views of femininity. Lobasz emphasizes the complexities of female leadership and physical strength that are often overlooked by a society more focused on masculine representations. Kasavinaya, like the female military figures Lobasz discusses, illustrates how women can serve as strong leaders who transcend gender stereotypes. In addition, Kasavinaya also plays a strategic and leading role in conflict, similar to (Chandran et al., 2021)'s analysis of Sita's character in The Forest of Enchantments. Like Sita, Kasavinaya is not only a supporter but also takes control of her own destiny, indicating that women in modern folklore can defy patriarchal norms and emerge as leaders in strategic conflicts. In terms of physical appearance, Kasavinaya is depicted as a fair-skinned figure with long graceful hair. This is reminiscent of a study (Britten et al., 2017) which showed that physical activities such as modern dance can strengthen women's physical and psychological strength, challenging stereotypes of female weakness. Kasavinaya's long hair symbolizes grace and strength, which complements her physical identity as a female leader, in line with (Berry, 2014)'s view that symbols of masculinity and femininity can be used to shape more dynamic representations of gender identity.

In patriarchal folklore, women's roles are often limited to diplomacy and verbal intelligence, while physical strength is associated with men. However, as outlined by (Duriesmith & Holmes, 2019) women in post-conflict Rwanda used diplomatic strategies to lead, showing that physical strength is not the only way for women to challenge patriarchal structures. In this context, Kasavinaya utilized both physical strength and diplomatic strategies to strengthen her leadership. Kasavinaya's leadership also reflects the journey of women's transformation within patriarchy, as outlined by (Liebert, 2008) Women who were previously seen as weak or subordinate are now emerging as empowered figures, illustrating a broader transformation of women's roles in society. Like Kasavinaya, women's leadership in folklore often provides an alternative view that reinforces their role in a patriarchal society.

In addition to physical strength, this study also shows that Kasavinaya, as described by Sethi (2023) can maintain grace and gentleness, which are part of the female identity. Sethi (2023) highlights how the character of Sita in modern mythology is presented with a balance between emotional strength and gentleness, recognizing that women can lead while maintaining their feminine aspects, which is also seen in Kasavinaya's leadership. This shows that women's physical strength in folklore does not take away their feminine aspects, but instead enriches the narrative. As highlighted by (Maxfield et al., 2009)), mythology and folklore can provide women with the agency to challenge the passive roles often associated with them, allowing them to emerge as

powerful and forceful figures. Kasavinaya illustrates this well, integrating physical strength and strategic leadership while still maintaining her elegance. This section emphasizes the importance of gender roles in folklore, where figures like Kasavinaya offer an alternative representation of female leadership that uses not only physical, but also symbolic power. As argued (Musyarrof et al., 2023b), female leadership in folklore can be a powerful tool to change traditional narratives, placing women as the primary leaders in patriarchal societies.

## 4. Negotiation as an Alternative to Violence

Kasavinaya's approach of prioritizing negotiation and diplomacy as key tools in her leadership, as seen in the dialogue "Her strategy is to engage in peacemaking," has relevance to recent studies and research on women's leadership in patriarchal contexts. (Koburtay et al., 2023) highlighted how women in Jordan used negotiation as a strategy to address inequalities in a patriarchal-dominated society. Kasavinaya, with her consistent approach to negotiation and providing opportunities for deliberation, as seen in the dialogue "If not heeded, she gives the enemy an opportunity to deliberate with her," reflects the principles of diplomacy also found in this study, which show that women often prioritize dialogue in the face of challenges. (Adongo et al., 2023c) also strengthens this argument by showing that women leaders in Ghana use diplomacy and negotiation to navigate patriarchal cultural norms, demonstrating that negotiation is a particularly important tool in dealing with cultural barriers. Kasavinaya's emphasis on deliberation is also consistent with the findings of this study, where women were given a strong role in peaceful negotiations. In addition, (Ummiroh et al., 2022b) presents further evidence of how women leaders, particularly in the context of social entrepreneurship in Muslim societies, use negotiation in their personal lives to confront patriarchal constraints, similar to Kasavinaya's strategy of placing negotiation as a priority before resorting to violence. This research highlights how women successfully negotiate their roles in a socially restrictive environment through peaceful approaches, mirroring Kasavinaya's approach to leadership.

This opinion is also reinforced by (Sinyosi & Potokri, 2021) who examined the experiences of female school principals in South Africa. They highlighted that women leaders in rural environments often face great leadership challenges and use diplomacy and negotiation as key strategies to resolve conflicts in environments that reject women's authority. Kasavinaya, by providing opportunities for deliberation before the conflict escalates, exemplifies the power of effective female diplomatic leadership, similar to the findings of this study.

Furthermore, (Rahmawati et al., 2021) highlighted how women's leadership in Madura, particularly in the context of Klebun, employed peaceful conflict resolution strategies, despite being faced with patriarchal norms that constrained their autonomy. This shows strong similarities with Kasavinaya's approach, where women demonstrate diplomatic discretion to negotiate their roles in a society dominated by violent norms.

(Shah, 2023) also points out the relevance of Kasavinaya's approach to the dynamics of gender stereotypes in patriarchal leadership, where women leaders often face major challenges in utilizing diplomacy to resolve conflicts. Kasavinaya exemplifies how diplomacy can serve as an effective leadership strategy where physical force is not required, reinforcing the narrative that women have an exceptional ability to lead peacefully in violent contexts. Kasavinaya's peaceful approach also challenges traditional patriarchal narratives that portray men as leaders who are quick to resort to violence, as outlined by (Sufa, 2023) in her study of folklore.

Kasavinaya suggests that women can offer a more cooperative and deliberation-based alternative, a leadership model that is more inclusive and focused on peaceful resolution without bloodshed. Additionally, (Tekleselassie & Roach, 2021) revealed that women leaders in Ethiopia drew on their experiences of marginalization to push for social justice through diplomacy, reinforcing that women often use negotiation as a key tool in their leadership. Kasavinaya with her peaceful strategy reflects this, where violence is only used as a last resort after all negotiation efforts have failed. These findings suggest that women have an important role to play in introducing more cooperative leadership models that focus on peaceful resolution, challenging traditional narratives that prioritize violence as the primary solution to conflict.

## 5. Culture-Based Leadership

In the narrative "Kasavinaya is a Magau figure who has the principle that if you are united, you will be strong," it is seen that unity is the main principle of Kasavinaya's leadership. This principle applies not only to personal leadership, but also in managing the wider community. This is in line with research results (Sharif et al., 2022), which emphasize that authentic leadership based on trust, integrity, and openness has an important role in creating commitment and knowledge sharing in organizations. Kasavinaya emphasizes traditional values such as harmony and unity, which are relevant to the modern leadership context. (Chen & Shao, 2022) also support this view by showing that transformational leadership based on cooperation and caring can improve employee performance in organizations.

The dialogue "He always seeks peace before going to war with other kagaua" shows the Kasavinaya approach that emphasizes peace and deliberation as the first step in resolving conflicts. This approach aligns with research (Hsu et al., 2022) which states that emotional intelligence, such as empathy and the ability to manage interpersonal relationships, are important elements in creating transformational leadership. Kasavinaya, with her peaceful approach, reflects the leadership characteristics of women who use empathy and social harmony to address problems without confrontation, as also supported by (Tangonyire et al., 2024)), who found that female principals in Ghana successfully created an inclusive and harmonious environment by combining professionalism and motherhood.

In addition, Kasavinaya, who always prioritizes openness and honesty in leading, exhibits authentic leadership characteristics. (Monzani et al., 2021) highlighted that authentic leadership helps women overcome gender stereotypes and build a more inclusive work dynamic, which is reflected in how Kasavinaya leads with the principles of trust and integrity. This Kasavinaya approach is also supported by research (Meldawati et al., 2023) which shows that traditional cultural values such as unity and harmony can encourage innovation and collaboration in the context of small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

In the narrative, Kasavinaya's approach of avoiding direct conflict and prioritizing deliberation as the main step is also in line with research results (Akın, 2022) that emphasize that traditional cultural values such as unity and peace remain relevant in modern organizations. Kasavinaya demonstrates that these traditional principles can be effectively applied in a more complex and competitive environment, by providing a focus on cooperation and inclusiveness.

Thus, these snippets of dialogue strengthen the argument that Kasavinaya uses a culture-based leadership model that prioritizes harmony, unity, and deliberation as the basis for decision-making. This model is in line with the findings of various studies that confirm that leadership based on cultural values can be an inclusive and relevant model in facing modern organizational challenges.

## 6. Contributions to Gender and Leadership Discourse

This research makes a significant contribution to the modern discourse on gender and leadership through the character of Kasavinaya, who is portrayed as a female leader who uses diplomacy and prioritizes community service. In the dialogue "Kasavinaya is a leader who uses diplomacy to resolve conflicts, favoring negotiation over aggression," Kasavinaya emphasizes negotiation-based conflict resolution. This aligns with the findings of (Cárdenas, 2019) who noted that women's diplomacy in modern contexts is often more effective because it prioritizes negotiation over military force.

Kasavinaya also demonstrates a leadership style that is very concerned about the welfare of the community, as reflected in the narrative "She is very concerned about the needs of her community." This leadership style reinforces the view of (Matsumura & Tomaru, 2012) that women's leadership in the public sector results in better social welfare than male leadership that focuses on short-term economic achievements. This is reinforced by (Miranda et al., 2022) who found that women's leadership in local government is more efficient in managing fiscal and social risks, with a more cautious and sustainable approach. Walsh et al. (2022) also highlight how gender stereotypes can influence perceptions of women leaders, but they are often able to overcome these barriers by showing greater concern for the well-being of the community.

The transformational approach adopted by Kasavinaya is in line with the findings of (Martínez-Córdoba et al., 2023), which show that women in public leadership are more responsive to community needs, especially in social services. (Lubis et al., 2023; Ranabahu & Wickramasinghe, 2022) also emphasize the importance of women's leadership in improving community welfare through a collaborative approach. (Lubis et al., 2023) support this argument by stating that women's leadership that focuses on social welfare can increase productivity and satisfaction in the work environment, and create more inclusive and prosperous communities.

This research shows a strong connection between diplomacy and social service in women's leadership. Kasavinaya, through her dialog that shows concern for the community, reflects a more long-term oriented leadership model. (Terminanto et al., 2024) suggest that service-focused leadership styles in the context of Islamic finance also show similar results, with women leaders being more oriented towards community empowerment. Hashmi et al., (2023) add that women's diplomacy in the international context is more collaborative and focused on community welfare, an approach that Kasavinaya demonstrates in each of her diplomatic interactions.

The significance of this finding lies in how Kasavinaya provides an alternative model for women's leadership that focuses on public welfare and a diplomatic approach to conflict resolution. Martínez-Córdoba et al., (2023) emphasize that women in public leadership are more effective in addressing social and fiscal risks, while (Nugroho, 2023) highlight the importance of social support in strengthening women's leadership style oriented towards community welfare. With a service- and negotiation-focused approach, Kasavinaya became a relevant model of women's leadership in modern social and organizational contexts, where the ability to build interpersonal relationships and attend to people's needs are key elements of success. Therefore, Kasavinaya not only contributes to the discourse of women's leadership focusing on diplomacy and social service, but also reinforces the idea that women can lead in different ways than men. Kasavinaya's leadership model emphasizes the importance of social welfare, empathy, and collaboration as essential components of effective leadership in the modern world.

## 7. Kasavinaya Story Variations

The variety of narratives in Kasavinaya folklore reflects the social and political changes that occur in society, as illustrated by a number of previous literatures. As revealed by (Herdiawan et al., 2023) folklore not only functions as a means of cultural preservation but also as an adaptive medium that can be adapted to modern pedagogical and technological needs. In the context of Kasavinaya, these changes in leadership stories show that folklore can reflect broader social transitions, both in terms of gender and power. For example, as suggested by (Kropej Telban, 2023b) and (Suryani et al., 2021) folklore narratives are often a reflection of historical shifts and cultural adaptations, where variations in the stories can indicate changes in leadership structures and gender roles.

In the context of Kasavinaya, narrative variation appears in two main forms: first, narratives that show that Kasavinaya's leadership was not continued, and second, narratives that show that power passed to another region. Key dialogues such as "Kasavinaya passed away in old age and his kaga ended" show that Kasavinaya's leadership was not passed on to the next generation, indicating the fragility of the individual-based leadership system. This dialogue indicates that leadership systems that are not supported by institutions or strong lineages are vulnerable to destruction. As described by (Sulistyo et al., 2023) and (Korolainen, 2024) folklore narratives often adapt to reflect changes in social and political structures, where leadership based on a single figure tends not to last long after the figure's death. This variation suggests that societies at the time may have relied on a central figure for leadership, but when that figure is gone, the power system is also fragile and poorly organized.

Another variation appears in the narrative "The kagaua no longer continued because by then there was a new kagaua north of Tamalendu hill," which reinforces the idea that after Kasavinaya's leadership, power did not continue, but moved to another area. This suggests a shift in social and political dynamics, and the emergence of new centres of power that may have been better organized or structurally stronger. In this sense, the Kasavinaya story reflects a shift in power structures from individual-based to more decentralized or perhaps institutional. These story variations demonstrate that folklore is able to adapt to changing local contexts, as described by (Situmorang et al., 2023) and (Ali et al., 2024), which underscore that folklore serves as a reflection of social dynamics, including gender roles and power.

This research also enriches the discourse on folklore dynamics as expressed by (Maulina, 2017) and (Frank, 2004) which show that folklore is dynamic and constantly evolving. In the context of the Kasavinaya story, variations in the narrative that show the loss of leadership without a successor show how folklore is used to reflect different political and social realities. These variations in the story show that power is no longer centralized in one figure but rather dispersed, reflecting the social and political changes that may occur in the society. (Puglia, 2023) emphasizes that variations in folklore can be used to understand changes in social structures, which in this context, reflect changes in power that are more decentralized and distributed. Through dialogue and narrative variation, the Kasavinaya story shows how people utilize traditional narratives to reflect changes in social, political and gender realities. These variations show that folklore is not static but continues to adapt to changing contexts, illustrating how power structures and gender roles in society can change over time and socio-political dynamics.

## CONCLUSIONS

This research provides an in-depth exploration of women's leadership through diplomacy in Central Sulawesi folklore, focusing on the character Kasavinaya. Through detailed narrative analysis, it is found that Kasavinaya challenges patriarchal norms by leading through negotiation, peaceful conflict resolution, and upholding cultural values such as unity. Her leadership style, which emphasizes diplomacy over physical domination, offers an alternative perspective on gender roles in leadership in traditional societies. The main findings show that male-dominated narratives have historically overshadowed the important role of women in folklore leadership. However, Kasavinaya's story highlights the importance of non-aggressive strategies in leadership. This research shows that women in traditional societies often exercise power through interpersonal relationships and wisdom rather than through force, challenging conventional images of leadership that tend to be dominated by men. Kasavinaya's character becomes a counter-narrative to patriarchal folklore, where women are often placed in passive roles. The implications of this research are important for the broader discourse on gender and leadership. By focusing on female figures from Indonesian folklore, this study contributes to the growing literature on recognizing the diversity of female leadership in traditional narratives. The findings indicate that leadership models based on diplomacy, empathy and cultural unity can be referenced in contemporary leadership practices, especially in areas that require collaboration and negotiation. Future research could expand the understanding of the social acceptance of female leaders in folklore across different regions in Indonesia. Comparative studies between different cultural contexts could also reveal broader patterns of female leadership, as well as how folklore shapes and reflects gender roles in leadership. In addition, this study highlights the importance of recognizing alternative models of leadership in traditional narratives, particularly those that give agency to women and promote diplomacy. By highlighting figures such as Kasavinaya, it is shown that folklore offers a rich source of insight into how women have historically exercised leadership and power, while challenging and reshaping the patriarchal structures of their time.

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