

ADAPTIVE GOVERNANCE IN VILLAGE-LEVEL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: EMPOWERING BUMDES TO ENHANCE LOCAL REVENUE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN INDONESIA

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Abstract.

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges for village governments in developing countries, forcing them to safeguard both social welfare and economic stability under conditions of uncertainty. While adaptive governance has been widely studied in urban and environmental contexts, its application at the micro level of village-owned enterprises (BUMDes) remains underexplored. This study investigates how adaptive governance practices supported the empowerment of BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera in Wonorejo Village, East Java, during the pandemic, and the extent to which these practices contributed to increasing village-generated revenue (PADes). Employing a descriptive qualitative single-case study, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis, and analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model. The findings reveal that adaptive governance was manifested through participatory recruitment, continuous capacity building, and flexible cross-sector collaboration. As a result, BUMDes contributions to PADes increased from IDR 40.9 million in 2020 to IDR 60.7 million in 2021, positioning Wonorejo among the top-performing villages in Kediri Regency. However, structural limitations persist, including the absence of a merit-based recruitment system and the lack of formal partnership agreements. This study extends the literature on adaptive governance by demonstrating its relevance in strengthening institutional resilience at the village level. It also offers policy implications for institutionalizing adaptive practices through regulatory reforms, formalized partnerships, and integration with broader post-COVID rural resilience and SDG agendas.

Keywords: empowerment, adaptive governance, village public administration, BUMDes, local revenue, resilience, COVID-19

1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has had profound implications for local governance, particularly in rural areas of developing countries such as Indonesia. As the frontline administrative unit, village governments have faced significant challenges in maintaining the social and economic stability of their communities. In the Indonesian context, the impact of the pandemic has been evident through rising unemployment, widespread layoffs, and the disruption of economic activities that heavily rely on daily social interactions. These challenges have been further exacerbated by limited resources and infrastructure, forcing village governments to adopt policies that are not only reactive but also inclusive and adaptive to the evolving needs of their populations (Winoto, 2021; Zwolińska-Ligaj & Guzal-Dec, 2024a).

In responding to this crisis, the adaptive governance approach becomes highly relevant. Adaptive governance emphasizes the capacity of institutions to adjust rapidly to changing conditions through continuous learning and the involvement of multiple actors in decision-making processes (Greenhill et al., 2020; Janssen & Van der Voort, 2020). This conceptual framework is especially critical in the village context, where local governments are expected not only to fulfill administrative functions but also to serve as key agents in community economic empowerment. By adopting adaptive governance principles, village administrations can formulate more responsive, context-oriented policies while

simultaneously enhancing collective capacity to withstand external shocks (Greenhill et al., 2020; Janssen & Van der Voort, 2020).

While adaptive governance has been increasingly recognized as a useful framework for managing complex and uncertain challenges, most studies have primarily concentrated on macro-level governance arrangements in climate change adaptation, environmental sustainability, and disaster risk reduction (Chaffin et al., 2019; Duit, 2022; Folke, 2021). In these contexts, adaptive governance is understood as the capacity of institutions to respond flexibly through learning, participation, and collaboration across multiple stakeholders. However, the application of this framework in rural governance and micro-level institutions remains relatively underexplored. Research often overlooks how small-scale, community-based organizations can institutionalize adaptive practices under pressing crises such as pandemics.

Recent scholarship has highlighted the significance of local institutions in building resilience, particularly in rural settings where state capacity and infrastructure are often limited (Agrawal et al., 2021; Clarke & Francouer, 2020). For example, studies of community-based enterprises and cooperative models in Africa and Latin America show that local institutions play a critical role in maintaining livelihoods during economic shocks. Yet, there is still limited empirical evidence on how village administrations in Southeast Asia particularly in Indonesia, with its extensive network of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) apply adaptive governance principles to strengthen resilience in times of crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic provides a unique opportunity to examine this phenomenon, as it has exposed both vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities of rural communities worldwide (Folke, 2021; Zwolińska-Ligaj & Guzal-Dec, 2024).

This study addresses this gap by investigating the case of BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera in Wonorejo Village, East Java, during the COVID-19 pandemic. By focusing on how adaptive governance principles such as participatory decision-making, flexible collaboration, and capacity building were operationalized at the village level, the study offers fresh empirical insights into the role of micro-level institutions in crisis response. In doing so, it contributes to international debates on adaptive governance by extending its theoretical and practical application to the context of rural public administration in a developing country. Furthermore, this study positions the Indonesian experience within broader global discussions on local governance and resilience, particularly in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and strategies for post-COVID rural recovery.

Nonetheless, empirical realities on the ground continue to reveal significant institutional capacity gaps in supporting local economic resilience. While initiatives such as Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) have been introduced to strengthen rural economies, many of these units operate below their potential due to constraints in human resources and limited innovation in enterprise governance usaha (Prayitno et al., 2020; Winoto et al., 2023). The case of Wonorejo Village in Kediri Regency, which successfully established *BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera* during the pandemic, serves as a concrete example of effective policy-driven economic empowerment that can be scaled up (Ahrens & Ferry, 2020; Zwolińska-Ligaj & Guzal-Dec, 2024a). This success indicates that an adaptive governance model focused on human capital development and cross-sectoral collaboration can foster innovation and economic resilience at the village level.

Research on adaptive governance strategies in village-level public administration is essential to fill existing gaps in the literature. By examining the practical approaches adopted by the Wonorejo Village Government in enhancing village-generated revenue (*PADes*) through *BUMDes*, this study seeks to contribute both theoretically to the discourse on local public administration and practically to the development of village policy frameworks oriented toward resilience. The central research question posed is: How does adaptive governance support the empowerment of *BUMDes* during the COVID-19 crisis, and what role does it play in ensuring sustainable *PADes* under conditions of uncertainty? (Cordova, 2024; Winoto, 2021).

2. THEORETICAL STUDY

2.1 Concept of Adaptive Governance

Adaptive governance is a critical approach for responding to complex challenges and uncertainty in various contexts, including climate change and public health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The concept emphasizes policy flexibility as well as the importance of collaboration and continuous learning among diverse governance actors. This aligns with (Janssen & Van der Voort, 2020), who argue that agile and adaptive governance plays a vital role in crisis response, underscoring the need for stakeholder collaboration in managing dynamic emergencies.

As part of public governance, adaptive governance refers to the capacity of government systems to respond to crises through policy innovation and enhanced responsiveness. Norman et al. note that during COVID-19, organizations that learned from experience and incorporated feedback into decision-making processes were better able to manage responses effectively. This approach supports institutional capacity building and collaboration between public and private sectors (Janssen, 2022).

At the community level, such adaptation has been shown to strengthen resilience capacities in the face of disruption. According to (Sauter et al., 2023), adequate resources and a supportive work environment are essential for individuals and organizations to adapt to acute stress during health crises. This reflects the importance of community engagement in building adaptive capacity, including within village-level governance for managing Village-Owned Enterprises (*BUMDes*) during crises.

Furthermore, adaptive governance extends beyond immediate crises such as pandemics or natural disasters; it is equally crucial in addressing long-term uncertainty, particularly that associated with climate change. (Walch, 2018) explains that cooperation among stakeholders across social and ecological systems enables governance structures to adapt more effectively to complex challenges. System flexibility enhances institutional responsiveness to rapid changes, thereby strengthening overall organizational resilience (Jamal et al., 2019).

In practice, the development of responsive human resources and the enhancement of adaptive organizational structures are two critical dimensions. These aspects support institutional readiness for unforeseen challenges. Overall, adaptive governance provides a framework for more effective crisis responses by emphasizing multi-actor collaboration, organizational learning, and institutional flexibility. It serves as a strategic key to enhancing the preparedness and resilience of local governments in managing resources and uncertainty in the future.

2.2 Integration with Resilience Theory

Resilience theory has increasingly been integrated with adaptive governance to explain how institutions and communities cope with crises. Resilience refers to the capacity of social and institutional systems to absorb shocks, adapt to change, and transform in the face of prolonged disruptions (Folke, 2021). In public administration, resilience is not only about survival but also about the ability of governance systems to learn and innovate under uncertainty (Duit, 2022). At the community level, resilience highlights how local actors collectively mobilize resources, sustain livelihoods, and maintain institutional continuity during crises such as pandemics or natural disasters (Agrawal et al., 2021; Clarke & Francouer, 2020).

Integrating resilience into adaptive governance provides a more comprehensive lens for understanding village-level responses to crises. Adaptive mechanisms such as participatory decision-making, flexible collaboration, and continuous capacity building become meaningful when they enhance institutional resilience, enabling small-scale organizations like *BUMDes* to not only recover but also thrive under adverse conditions. By linking these two concepts, this study demonstrates how village governments can institutionalize resilience through adaptive governance practices, offering insights relevant to both developing and developed contexts.

To sharpen the theoretical contribution, this study compares its focus with existing research on adaptive governance and resilience. While adaptive governance has been widely applied to macro-level contexts such as climate change, socio-ecological systems, and urban governance, its integration with resilience theory at the micro-level of rural institutions remains underexplored. Table 1 summarizes

selected studies, highlighting their context, findings, limitations, and how this paper extends the literature.

Table 1. Comparative State-of-the-Art on Adaptive Governance and Resilience in Local Governance Studies

Author(s) & Year	Context	Focus/Findings	Gap/Limitations	Contribution of This Paper
Janssen & Van der Voort (2020)	Urban governance during COVID-19	Adaptive governance helps cities respond to crises through agility and collaboration	Focused on urban systems, limited analysis of rural micro-level institutions	Extends adaptive governance analysis to village-level institutions in Indonesia
Folke (2021)	Socio-ecological systems	Defines resilience as adaptive capacity to absorb shocks and transform	Theoretical, lacking empirical application in local governance	Applies resilience theory to village public administration in a developing country
Clarke & Francouer (2020)	Rural governance in North America	Shows how community resilience supports rural development	Limited engagement with adaptive governance framework	Links resilience and adaptive governance in the context of BUMDes
Agrawal et al. (2021)	South Asia local institutions	Local institutions support adaptation to climate change	Focus on climate adaptation, not economic empowerment institutions	Demonstrates adaptive governance in economic enterprises (BUMDes) under crisis
Zwolińska-Ligaj & Guzal-Dec (2024)	Eastern Europe rural areas during COVID-19	Examines resilience of rural communities to pandemic disruptions	Regional focus, lacks connection to governance frameworks	Provides empirical case of resilience-building through adaptive governance in Southeast Asia
This Study (2024)	Wonorejo Village, Indonesia	Adaptive governance through BUMDes during COVID-19	—	Provides new empirical evidence on how micro-level adaptive governance fosters resilience in rural public administration

Source: Author's compilation (2024) based on various studies

As shown in Table 1, most previous studies have concentrated on urban systems, socio-ecological frameworks, or climate adaptation, often neglecting rural governance and micro-level institutions in developing countries. This paper addresses that gap by integrating adaptive governance with resilience theory in the context of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes). In doing so, it provides empirical evidence on how village-level institutions can act as resilience mechanisms during crises, thereby enriching the international discourse on public administration and local governance.

2.3 Village Public Administration in Indonesia

Village-level public administration in Indonesia is governed by Law No. 6/2014 on Villages, which provides a strong legal foundation for autonomy and local governance. This law encourages villages to become active agents of development not only in managing administrative affairs but also in economic development and community empowerment based on local wisdom (Sepyah et al., 2022; Solehan &

Sukresno, 2024). *BUMDes* are designed as economic instruments to promote village growth and are regulated through national policies to ensure professional and community-based management (Ginting et al., 2023).

The success of public administration at the village level depends on key factors such as institutional capacity, the managerial competency of village officials, and the effectiveness of participatory mechanisms between government and citizens (Hardinata, 2024; Mada et al., 2017; Umaira & Adnan, 2019). Studies show that competent village officials significantly contribute to the accountability of village fund management, while active citizen participation increases transparency and public trust (Adam et al., 2019; Aurelia et al., 2023). The Village Consultative Body (*BPD*) also plays a crucial role in channeling community aspirations and overseeing development planning (Kuswandi et al., 2023; Sakir & Almahdali, 2024).

Leadership is another critical variable, as it influences community engagement in planning. Effective village leadership encourages active participation, which in turn enhances the overall effectiveness of public administration (Jusman et al., 2022). Capacity-building efforts, such as training and workshops for *BPD* members and village officials, have also been proven to improve governance outcomes (Kuswandi et al., 2023; Milanti et al., 2023). Achieving sustainable development requires synergy among stakeholders, including village officials, *BPD*, and the community (Rachman et al., 2022; Rajagukguk et al., 2023).

To optimize village public administration, it is essential to strengthen community participation, improve bureaucratic competencies, and integrate local wisdom into policy and program development. These factors contribute to more accountable governance and better overall welfare for rural communities (Mozin & Isa, 2023; Turmudi, 2023).

2.4 *BUMDes* and Rural Economic Empowerment

Village-Owned Enterprises (*BUMDes*) are community-managed economic institutions established by village governments to enhance welfare through productive economic activities and job creation. According to (Widiastuti et al., 2019) and (Purwaningsih & Widodo, 2023) *BUMDes* aim to increase village-generated revenue (*PADes*) and serve as key instruments in local economic development. In many cases, *BUMDes* operate across multiple sectors, including traditional markets, microfinance services, and rural tourism (Handoyo et al., 2021; L. Mindarti et al., 2022; Sidik, 2015). Previous research by Mindarti et al. (2022) confirms that *BUMDes* play a dual role as both economic institutions and governance innovations, where community-based entrepreneurship contributes directly to rural empowerment.

The social function of *BUMDes* is also significant, acting as a platform for community participation in development. Yuliana and Alinsari (2022) emphasize that the implementation of *BUMDes* should align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the village level. While *BUMDes* have high potential, there remain challenges in optimizing their role in leveraging local assets and enhancing managerial innovation (Puansah et al., 2023). In line with this, Mindarti et al. (2025) highlight that effective policy implementation and empowerment strategies are necessary for building community resilience, particularly in rural and coastal contexts, which resonates with the empowerment mission of *BUMDes*.

The effectiveness of *BUMDes* depends not only on government support but also on the managerial capacities of those involved. Training and education for *BUMDes* managers are crucial to ensure accountable and efficient operations (Beni et al., 2024). For instance, (Rahmi et al., 2023) found that *BUMDes* can become engines of local economic independence if they are well-managed and supported by strong leadership.

Conversely, weak managerial skills and poor coordination can hinder *BUMDes* performance. (Puansah et al., 2023) highlight gaps in creativity and leadership that need to be addressed. Other studies stress the importance of transparency and proper financial reporting, which are essential for public trust and sustainability (Nisaa & Hidayati, 2022; Nurhayati, 2022).

To optimize the function of *BUMDes*, a comprehensive approach is needed enhancing managerial capacity, encouraging creativity, and promoting community involvement. With these strategies, *BUMDes* can serve not only as distributors of economic benefits but also as key drivers of inclusive and sustainable rural development (Marini et al., 2023; Nisaa & Hidayati, 2022).

In the case of Wonorejo Village, *BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera* was established in 2020 at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The enterprise manages several business units, including a traditional market, rental services, electricity token services, and a nascent local tourism initiative. Within two years, its contribution to *PADes* increased from IDR 40.8 million in 2020 to IDR 60.7 million in 2021, reflecting the effectiveness of governance and relevance of the business strategy.

2.5 Empirical Gaps

Although *BUMDes* have been widely recognized as strategic tools for strengthening village economies in Indonesia, there is still a lack of field-based research evaluating their adaptive capacity, particularly during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Much of the existing literature focuses on institutional design or regulatory frameworks rather than the practical experiences of village governments in managing *BUMDes* under pressure (Sidik, 2015).

The need to understand *BUMDes* as a mechanism for economic resilience has become more urgent in times of uncertainty. The case of Wonorejo Village shows how adaptive capacity was enhanced through internal recruitment, training, performance evaluation, and cross-sector collaboration. According to (Rais et al., 2024), innovative leadership is essential for *BUMDes* governance, emphasizing the importance of stakeholder collaboration in local economic development.

Capacity-building strategies such as those proposed by (Solehan & Sukresno, 2024) highlight the critical role of sound village fund management. However, challenges persist, including a lack of skilled human resources, weak coordination, and limited community participation factors that must be addressed to ensure *BUMDes* effectiveness.

The duration and quality of training for *BUMDes* members also play a critical role in operational success. As noted by Hardinata (2024), strategic training for *BPD* members significantly improves governance. In the *BUMDes* context, both strengths and weaknesses in managerial skills must be explored to establish a responsive and adaptive system.

Moreover, digital technology integration is increasingly important. (Ridwansyah et al., 2021) argue that digital transformation can enhance public services and productive enterprise development. By leveraging digital platforms, *BUMDes* can become not only revenue generators but also catalysts for sustainable and inclusive economic strategies at the village level.

In conclusion, further research focused on field-based practices and the adaptive capacity of village governance is crucial for understanding how villages like Wonorejo can survive and innovate during crises. These insights may serve as practical models for other villages across Indonesia seeking to optimize *BUMDes* governance in uncertain times.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using a single case study design (Yin, 2014), aimed at exploring the practice of adaptive governance by village-level public administration in empowering Village-Owned Enterprises (*BUMDes*) during the COVID-19 pandemic. The case study focused on Wonorejo Village, located in Ngadiluwih Subdistrict, Kediri Regency, East Java, Indonesia. The village was purposively selected due to its designation as a “self-sufficient village” under the Village Development Index (*Indeks Desa Membangun*, IDM) for the years 2020–2021, and its exemplary institutional performance through *BUMDes* during the crisis. These characteristics made Wonorejo a relevant and informative unit of analysis in understanding adaptive capacity in village governance.

Data collection involved three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including the village head, village officials, the director and board of *BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera*, as well as public and private

sector partners. Observations were carried out directly at the *BUMDes* operational sites and during internal coordination processes within the village administration. Meanwhile, documentation included village regulations, *BUMDes* financial reports, minutes of community deliberation meetings, and performance evaluation records. These methods were chosen to ensure depth of insight and data triangulation, as recommended by (Creswell & Poth, 2018) in case study-based qualitative research.

The data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, 2014), which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Analysis was conducted iteratively and concurrently with data collection to enable conceptual reflection and adaptive focus adjustments throughout fieldwork. The validity of findings was strengthened through source and method triangulation, as well as *member checking* with key informants to confirm the accuracy and representativeness of the interpretations.

Ethical considerations in this research included obtaining formal permission from the village government, informing respondents about the purpose of the study, and ensuring the anonymity and confidentiality of all personal data. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to interviews, and all field interactions adhered to public health protocols applicable during the pandemic period.

In summary, this research methodology integrates a deep single-case study approach with diverse data collection techniques and systematic analysis to develop a contextual understanding of adaptive governance practices at the village level. The methodological structure aligns with best practices in international public policy research, which emphasize case-based learning, local relevance, and strong linkage between research design and policy focus (Peters & Pierre, 2016).

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Adaptive Human Resource Development

One of the key dimensions of adaptive governance identified in Wonorejo Village is the participatory and contextual development of human resources. The recruitment of *BUMDes* personnel was conducted through a village deliberation mechanism (*musyawarah desa*), reflecting principles of inclusive governance and public deliberation. The resulting organizational structure comprises individuals with diverse educational backgrounds, ranging from junior high school to postgraduate degrees. This composition reflects a balance between administrative competence and community representation.

While this diversity reflects inclusiveness and community representation, the absence of a merit-based recruitment mechanism also reveals a potential weakness in professional capacity. This condition illustrates the adaptive governance paradox, where flexibility promotes broad participation but, without structured mechanisms, may undermine long-term resilience (Clarke & Francouer, 2020).

Table 2. Organizational Structure and Educational Background of *BUMDes* Makmur Sejahtera (2021)

No	Name	Position	Education
1	Agus Setiyoko	Advisor	Bachelor's (S1)
2	Sutrisno	Supervisor	Senior High School (SMA)
3	Soemarjono	Director	Bachelor's (S1)
4	Sutrisno	Secretary	Master's (S2)
5	Deta Malina	Treasurer	Diploma 3 (D3)
6	Kartijan	Manager, Market and Village Asset Unit	Diploma 3 (D3)
7	Nur Anisa	Secretary, Market Unit	Vocational High School (SMK)
8	Rinda Artika	Treasurer, Microfinance Unit	Junior High School (SMP)
9	Wilian	Manager, Microfinance Unit	Vocational High School (SMK)
10	Mujiyanto	Parking Officer	Diploma 3 (D3)

No	Name	Position	Education
11	Sumarji	Parking Staff	Junior High School (SMP)
12	Supardi	Parking Staff	Junior High School (SMP)

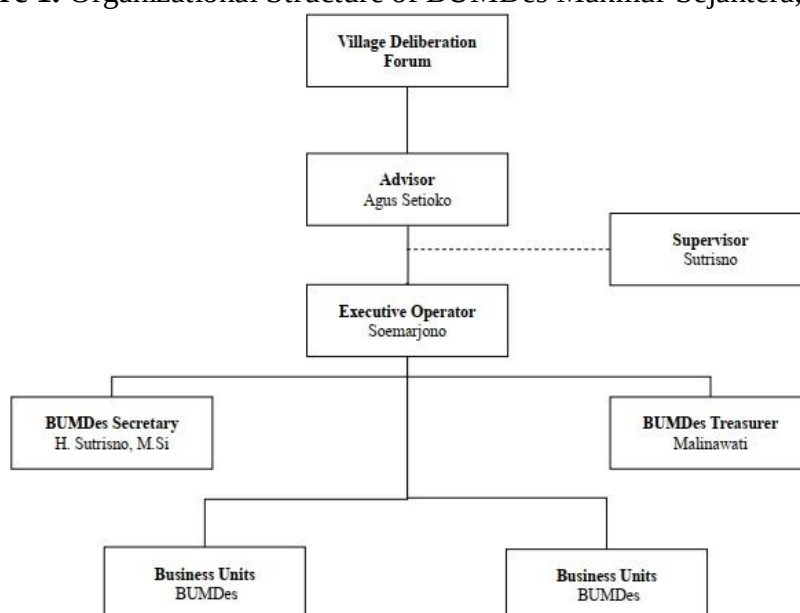
Source: Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) Makmur Sejahtera, Wonorejo Village (2022).

The structure demonstrates how adaptive governance supports a model of institutional inclusiveness that leverages local capacities while ensuring community ownership. The diversity in educational attainment among staff indicates a grounded understanding of local socio-economic dynamics, enabling BUMDes to function as both an administrative entity and a grassroots economic agent.

Capacity strengthening efforts were carried out through benchmarking visits to other villages, administrative training programs, and regular evaluations that covered aspects such as financial reporting, work discipline, and infrastructure conditions. These evaluations were conducted not only by the Village Government but also in collaboration with partners such as the Cooperative Office (*Dinas Koperasi*). These continuous training and evaluation practices exemplify the adaptive governance principle of organizational learning, enabling BUMDes to enhance its institutional responsiveness (Janssen & Van der Voort, 2020). At the same time, by embedding evaluation mechanisms, the institution strengthens its resilience capacity, ensuring that it is not only reactive but also capable of sustaining adaptive performance under prolonged uncertainty (Duit, 2022).

To provide a clearer illustration of the established institutional framework, the following diagram presents the organizational structure of *BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera* as of 2022:

Figure 1. Organizational Structure of BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera, 2022.



Source: Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) Makmur Sejahtera, Wonorejo Village (2022).

The organizational structure also reflects the principle of power-sharing within adaptive governance, where leadership is distributed, and community actors are given clear roles. Such institutional design is not only a technical arrangement but also a resilience mechanism, ensuring accountability and collective ownership in managing local economic resources.

4.2 Organizational Strengthening and Cross-Sectoral Collaboration

The institutional development of *BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera* has been driven not only by the internalization of managerial values but also through collaboration with both public and private sectors. Although most partnerships remain informal and are not yet formalized through official Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), the involvement of external stakeholders has significantly contributed to the

operational strengthening of business units. This reliance on informal collaboration reflects the flexibility characteristic of adaptive governance, which allows pragmatic responses during crises (Janssen & Van der Voort, 2020). However, it also exposes institutional fragility, as resilience requires the formalization of adaptive practices into durable arrangements (Folke, 2021). Without such institutionalization, partnerships may remain vulnerable to leadership changes or external shocks, thus limiting long-term sustainability.

Field data indicates that six active business units are currently managed by the BUMDes.

Table 3. Business Units of BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera and Their Functions

Business Unit	Description
Village Market	Market operations have become more orderly and free from illegal levies
Microfinance Services	Provides microcredit and savings services for villagers
Shop Rental and Parking	Manages 10 rental shops and parking areas as a source of village revenue
Mobile Credit and Electricity Tokens	Offers payment services for electricity and mobile credit
Dunia Candy Tourism	A community-based family tourism destination that creates local employment
BUMDes Convenience Store	Supplies daily necessities and supports household economies

Source: BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera, Wonorejo Village (2022).

The establishment of six diverse business units illustrates institutional learning and experimentation, which Chaffin et al. (2019) identify as essential elements of adaptive governance. By diversifying its portfolio, BUMDes reduced vulnerability to single-sector shocks and enhanced local economic resilience, particularly during the pandemic. This diversification strategy highlights how adaptive governance operates not only as crisis management but also as a long-term resilience mechanism.

The management of these units has had a significant impact not only on village revenue but also on improving access to public services and fostering community-based entrepreneurship. The village market, previously vulnerable to extortion, has now become more organized and serves as a key revenue source. Similarly, the tourism and village store units have revitalized the local economy by creating jobs and stimulating informal economic activities.

These developments exemplify adaptive governance in practice, where local institutions respond to community needs through collaborative innovation and flexible service provision. At the same time, they embody resilience by strengthening local livelihoods, creating employment, and embedding economic stability within the community. As Clarke & Francouer (2020) argue, community resilience is achieved when local institutions integrate social and economic strategies that sustain livelihoods under crisis conditions. The experience of Wonorejo thus demonstrates how adaptive governance and resilience can converge to reinforce both institutional capacity and community welfare.

4.3 Impact on PADes and Local Economic Resilience

The implementation of adaptive governance by the Wonorejo Village Government particularly through institutional strengthening of the BUMDes has yielded tangible impacts on the increase of Village Original Revenue (PADes) and overall local economic resilience. Over the first two years of operation, BUMDes contributions surged significantly despite the economic pressure caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2020, the BUMDes contributed IDR 40,909,000 to PADes, sourced from four business units: shop rentals and parking, electricity token and mobile credit services, village market operations, and a microfinance unit that had not yet commenced. Detailed figures are presented in Table 3 below:

Table 4. Financial Report of BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera, 2020

No	Revenue Source	Revenue in 2020 (IDR)
1	Shop Rental and Parking	28,800,000
2	Mobile Credit and Electricity Tokens	220,866
3	Village Market	11,900,000
4	Microfinance Unit	0

Source: Annual Report of BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera Wonorejo (2022).

By 2021, the *BUMDes* had expanded both the number and scale of its business units, with six active ventures including the launch of *Dunia Candy* tourism and the *BUMDes Convenience Store*, alongside the activation of the microfinance unit. As a result, contributions to *PADes* rose to IDR 60,733,525, as outlined in Table 4:

Table 5. Financial Report of BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera, 2021

No	Revenue Source	Revenue in 2021 (IDR)
1	Village Market	234,844,900
2	Microfinance Unit	61,397,500
3	Mobile Credit and Electricity Tokens	220,866
4	Shop Rental and Parking	36,550,000
5	Dunia Candy Tourism	5,000,000
6	BUMDes Convenience Store	8,505,700

Source: Annual Report of BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera Wonorejo (2022).

The expansion in both the number of business units and their revenue performance demonstrates that *BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera* has successfully transformed into a productive and resilient local economic institution. This achievement has positioned Wonorejo as one of the top ten villages with the highest *PADes* in Kediri Regency.

This financial growth should not be viewed merely as an economic indicator, but as evidence of adaptive governance in practice. The significant increase in *PADes* during a global crisis illustrates how participatory decision-making, capacity building, and strategic collaboration translated into institutional resilience. Duit (2022) emphasizes that adaptive capacity allows institutions to transform external shocks into opportunities for innovation, and the case of Wonorejo confirms this dynamic at the micro-level of rural governance.

At the same time, the diversification of revenue sources across multiple business units reflects the principle of experimentation and adjustment central to adaptive governance (Chaffin et al., 2019). By spreading risks and reducing dependence on a single income stream, *BUMDes* was able to stabilize the village economy while creating new livelihood opportunities. This pattern is consistent with Folke's (2021) argument that resilience is achieved when governance systems can simultaneously absorb shocks and reorganize functions to maintain stability.

Nevertheless, this progress continues to face structural challenges, including the lack of a formal merit-based recruitment system and the absence of officially documented MoUs with external partners. These limitations illustrate that while adaptive governance enables flexibility and rapid recovery, long-term resilience requires institutionalization through formal structures and professional standards. Without such measures, the sustainability of cross-sectoral collaboration and the quality of public service delivery may remain at risk.

4.4 Synthesis of Findings

The empirical findings of this study highlight how adaptive governance was operationalized in the management of BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera during the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the dimensions of human resource development, cross-sectoral collaboration, financial performance, and business diversification, the results demonstrate that adaptive governance practices contributed significantly to strengthening both institutional capacity and community resilience.

First, inclusive but non-meritocratic recruitment reflected the adaptive governance principle of participation, enabling broader community involvement. However, this inclusivity also revealed structural weaknesses that may undermine professionalization and long-term sustainability.

Second, cross-sectoral collaboration with public and private stakeholders illustrates the flexibility of adaptive governance in crisis conditions. Yet, the reliance on informal agreements underscores institutional fragility, confirming the need to institutionalize resilience through formal partnerships.

Third, the significant increase in PADes and the rise of Wonorejo as one of the top ten villages in Kediri Regency show that adaptive capacity allowed the village to transform crisis into opportunity. Financial growth during uncertainty confirms that local institutions can strengthen resilience when adaptive practices are embedded in decision-making and organizational routines.

Finally, diversification into six business units demonstrates institutional learning and innovation, central features of adaptive governance. By reducing dependency on a single income source and creating new livelihood opportunities, BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera fostered local economic resilience that extended beyond immediate crisis response.

Taken together, these findings show that adaptive governance at the village level is not merely a theoretical construct but a practical framework for institutionalizing resilience in rural communities. Nevertheless, structural challenges such as informalized partnerships and the absence of standardized recruitment systems remain as barriers that must be addressed to ensure sustainability. This synthesis provides the empirical basis for the next section, which critically discusses how these findings align with and extend existing international literature on adaptive governance and resilience.

5. DISCUSSION

This study finds that adaptive governance plays a critical role in enhancing institutional resilience, particularly for village governments in developing countries during times of crisis. According to (Țiclău et al., 2020), adapting governance structures and practices is essential for managing uncertainty and rapidly changing dynamics in crisis contexts, as evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Adaptive governance provides a framework for local governments to respond effectively to challenges, enabling more responsive decision-making to meet the evolving needs of communities, and fostering collaboration between the government and society in developing more cohesive and inclusive solutions (Țiclău et al., 2020).

(Hurlbert, 2018) emphasizes that integrating public participation into governance contributes to institutional resilience by creating clearer channels of communication between the government and the community. This is especially crucial at the village level, where limited resources and local knowledge of challenges often become key factors in decision-making. Enhanced public participation not only fosters accountability but also increases the legitimacy of decisions, thereby strengthening the government's capacity to act effectively during difficult situations (Chen et al., 2022).

The multi-unit enterprise model of *BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera* demonstrates the village's capacity to diversify its economy, even amid national economic disruption. The flexible collaboration model between the village government, local entrepreneurs, and public sector partners shows that informal partnerships though not formalized through MoU can function effectively under resource constraints. This resonates with studies in South Asia (Agrawal et al., 2021), which show that local institutions can sustain community livelihoods during shocks through grassroots innovation. However, unlike those cases where external donor support played a significant role, the Indonesian case illustrates that

resilience can also emerge endogenously through village-level governance mechanisms. This difference highlights the adaptability of BUMDes as a hybrid institution combining community ownership with formal legal status, thereby offering an added dimension to resilience theory.

Comparative insights also reveal contrasts with rural resilience in Eastern Europe. Zwolińska-Ligaj and Guzal-Dec (2024b) found that resilience in Polish villages during COVID-19 was largely underpinned by formal state support and structured cooperative systems. By contrast, the Wonorejo case demonstrates that informality and social trust can serve as temporary resilience mechanisms under resource-constrained contexts. This suggests that while adaptive governance shares universal features such as collaboration and learning, its institutional pathways differ depending on context.

Nonetheless, the study also highlights limitations in the institutionalization of adaptive governance at the village level. The absence of a standardized, merit-based recruitment system and the lack of formal legal agreements in partnerships are structural weaknesses that may jeopardize long-term sustainability. Therefore, it is imperative to strengthen the formal and legal aspects of governance structures that have already demonstrated operational adaptiveness. This aligns with Folke (2021), who argues that resilience is reinforced when adaptive practices are embedded into formal structures. The lesson here is that informal practices may ensure short-term survival, but institutionalization is necessary for long-term stability.

From a scholarly standpoint, this study addresses a gap in the literature on local public administration, where the application of adaptive governance in the context of village-level governance and microeconomic institutions like BUMDes remains underexplored. By presenting empirical data from the field, the study expands our understanding of how micro-level institutions can carry out responsive and collaborative public governance simultaneously. It also extends the scope of adaptive governance studies, which have traditionally focused on urban systems or ecological governance (Duit, 2022; Folke, 2021), by applying the framework to rural micro-enterprises in developing contexts.

This case study advances the theoretical application of adaptive governance by illustrating how institutional agility at the local level can promote the effectiveness of decentralized economic policymaking under conditions of extreme uncertainty. Through flexible, participatory, and collaborative governance practices, the Wonorejo Village Government has demonstrated that adaptability is not exclusive to large-scale systems but can also be embedded in village-level administrative units with limited autonomy. The added value of this case lies in showing how resilience can be institutionalized even under informality, thereby offering new insights into how governance functions under resource-constrained conditions. This contribution is particularly relevant to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on resilient institutions and sustainable local economies. Hence, this study affirms the importance of a dynamic micro-governance approach as a component of the broader architecture of public policy resilience in developing countries.

5.1 Limitations and Future Research Directions

Although this study offers strong empirical and theoretical contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the single-case study approach focusing exclusively on Wonorejo Village limits the generalizability of the findings. The diverse social, institutional, and economic conditions across villages in Indonesia pose a challenge to drawing broader conclusions about adaptive patterns at the national level.

Second, the use of a descriptive qualitative method does not allow for statistical measurement of relationships between variables. Future research could adopt a mixed-methods approach to quantitatively assess the influence of factors such as human resource capacity, business scale, and institutional support on the increase in village-generated revenue (*PADes*).

Third, the current study does not fully explore the dynamics of power, conflicts of interest, and resistance to change in the institutional adaptation process. Further investigations employing institutional ethnography or actor-network theory could offer deeper insights into the political dimensions of adaptive governance.

These findings open up opportunities for future exploration on how adaptive governance can be replicated and institutionalized in other villages with varying characteristics, while enriching strategies for strengthening resilient local economic systems.

6. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the implementation of adaptive governance at the village level through the case of BUMDes Makmur Sejahtera in Wonorejo Village, Indonesia, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings demonstrate that adaptive governance, manifested through inclusive recruitment, flexible collaboration, organizational learning, and business diversification, played a critical role in enhancing both institutional resilience and community livelihoods under crisis conditions. By sustaining revenue growth, expanding business units, and creating new livelihood opportunities, BUMDes contributed not only to local economic recovery but also to the strengthening of village-level public administration.

6.1 Conclusion

Theoretically, this study extends adaptive governance theory beyond its conventional application in macro-level systems such as climate change adaptation, socio-ecological resilience, and urban crisis governance into the micro-level of village-owned enterprises. The findings show that resilience can be institutionalized within small-scale, community-based institutions that operate under resource constraints and limited formal authority.

By integrating adaptive governance with resilience theory in the context of BUMDes, the study contributes three advances to the literature:

1. **Contextualizing adaptive governance in developing countries** – showing how informality, participation, and limited professional capacity shape governance outcomes differently than in developed contexts.
2. **Linking adaptive governance and resilience at the micro-institutional level** – demonstrating how local enterprises function as resilience mechanisms through participatory decision-making, flexible partnerships, and organizational learning.
3. **Expanding the scope of resilience theory** – illustrating that resilience is not only about survival or ecological adaptation but also about institutional innovation and economic stabilization within village governance structures.

These contributions emphasize that adaptive governance is not exclusive to large-scale systems; it can also be embedded in micro-governance arrangements, thereby enriching the theoretical understanding of resilience in public administration.

6.2 Policy Recommendations

Practically, the study provides actionable insights for policymakers and practitioners. First, it underscores the need to institutionalize adaptive practices through merit-based recruitment systems, formalized partnerships, and structured capacity-building programs, which are essential for ensuring long-term sustainability.

Second, the findings demonstrate that BUMDes can serve as policy instruments for advancing broader development agendas, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- SDG 1 (No Poverty): through income generation and community empowerment.
- SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): by supporting small-scale enterprises and creating jobs.
- SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities): by enhancing local economic resilience and public service provision.
- SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions): by strengthening local governance capacity.

Third, the study provides insights into post-COVID rural resilience policies. The case of Wonorejo demonstrates that village-owned enterprises can function as engines of recovery by enabling communities to absorb shocks, reorganize local economies, and sustain livelihoods despite systemic disruptions.

6.3 Concluding Remarks

Overall, this study affirms that adaptive governance, when embedded in village-level institutions such as BUMDes, has the potential to transform crises into opportunities for institutional strengthening and local development. While challenges remain in formalizing governance practices and ensuring professionalization, the evidence from Wonorejo highlights that even under informality and limited resources, adaptive governance can foster resilience and contribute meaningfully to both national and global development agendas.

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