

ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF BUMDES IN INDONESIA: FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Abstract: *Over the past decade, research on Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) in Indonesia has experienced significant growth. However, its contribution to institutional strengthening and village business sustainability remains limited because many studies are repetitive and lack in-depth analysis. To address these limitations, this study conducted a systematic review of 19 articles published between 2015 and 2025 using the methodology of [Tranfield et al. \(2003\)](#). The review results indicate that BUMDes research concentrates on governance, accountability, and performance issues. At the same time, other aspects, such as innovation, digital adaptation, dynamic capacity building, and cross-actor collaboration, have received relatively little attention. These findings identify research gaps and point to three main agendas for future research: (1) exploring new issues relevant to BUMDes dynamics, (2) diversifying research paradigms through qualitative, mixed-method, or phenomenological approaches, and (3) applying more contextual management and entrepreneurship theories, such as the resource-based view, dynamic capabilities, or social capital theory. Thus, this study provides a theoretical contribution in the form of encouragement for developing a more adaptive conceptual framework and a practical contribution in the form of strategic recommendations for researchers and practitioners in strengthening the role of BUMDes for sustainable village development.*

Keywords: Paradigm, Systematic Review, Theory, Village-Owned Enterprises

INTRODUCTION

Social enterprises (SEs) are organisational forms that simultaneously pursue economic viability and social value creation, positioning themselves at the intersection of market mechanisms and social objectives ([Brownell et al. 2025](#)). They operate across diverse sectors such as education, healthcare, finance, agriculture, and retail, reflecting their flexible institutional character and context-specific missions ([Erpf et al. 2025](#)). A central challenge faced by social enterprises lies in balancing financial sustainability with the

consistent achievement of social goals, particularly under conditions of resource scarcity and market pressure ([Turyakira et al. 2025](#)). When financial constraints intensify, social missions are often deprioritised, leading to mission drift and a gradual departure from the enterprise's original social purpose ([Vickers et al. 2025](#)).

Village-Owned Enterprises (Badan Usaha Milik Desa/BUMDes) in Indonesia represent a distinctive form of social enterprise that integrates economic activities with community welfare objectives within rural

governance structures ([Harinurdin et al. 2025](#)). Established as instruments of local economic development, BUMDes are expected to mobilise village resources, create employment, and enhance community resilience through inclusive business models ([Indrawanto et al. 2025](#)). Despite strong policy support, the empirical performance of BUMDes remains uneven, with a substantial proportion failing to operate effectively or contribute meaningfully to village income ([Nugraheni et al. 2025](#)). Recent data indicate that a significant number of BUMDes remain inactive or underperforming, signalling persistent structural and managerial challenges ([Putra et al. 2025](#)).

Existing studies identify several recurring constraints affecting BUMDes performance, including misalignment with local economic potential, limited managerial competence, and weak strategic planning capacity ([Suryanto et al. 2025](#)). Leadership deficiencies and the absence of long-term vision further undermine the ability of BUMDes to formulate adaptive strategies and respond to environmental change ([Pramono and Kambut 2025](#)). In addition, low levels of human capital, inadequate training, and weak community empowerment reduce organisational effectiveness and limit innovation capacity ([Fathima et al. 2025](#)). These conditions contribute to a widening gap between the normative objectives of BUMDes as instruments of rural development and their practical implementation on the ground.

The declining performance of many BUMDes has become increasingly concerning in the context of rapid economic transformation, market integration, and technological change in rural areas ([Priharjanto and Andriana 2025](#)). Organisations that fail to adapt to shifting demand patterns, competitive pressures, and digitalisation face heightened risks of stagnation and organisational decline. From a strategic management perspective, dynamic capabilities play a critical role in enabling organisations to sense environmental changes, seize emerging

opportunities, and reconfigure resources accordingly ([Anggoro et al. 2022](#)). Without such capabilities, organisations are likely to struggle in maintaining relevance and sustainability under conditions of uncertainty and change ([Arianto and Oktaviani 2025](#)).

Beyond dynamic capabilities, the literature on organisational sustainability emphasises the strategic role of innovation and corporate governance in enhancing adaptive capacity. Innovation capability enables organisations to develop new products, services, and business models while fostering continuous learning and responsiveness to environmental change ([Dhiba et al. 2025](#)). At the same time, effective corporate governance characterised by transparency, accountability mechanisms, and strategic oversight strengthens organisational control, stakeholder trust, and long-term performance stability ([Fauzia and Djashan 2019](#)). In hybrid organisations such as BUMDes, the integration of innovation practices with sound governance structures is particularly important to prevent mission drift, manage risks, and support sustainable value creation.

Although BUMDes research has expanded over the past decade, much of the literature remains focused on accountability, governance structures, investment mechanisms, and social performance outcomes ([Haryanto et al. 2025](#)). Relatively limited attention has been given to understanding how BUMDes develop adaptive and dynamic capabilities over time as strategic responses to complex rural environment ([Jayadi et al. 2025](#)). This gap restricts the ability of existing studies to offer solution-oriented insights for improving long-term organisational resilience and sustainability ([Saputra et al. 2025](#)). Accordingly, there is a growing need for research that systematically examines the dynamic capabilities of BUMDes as a foundation for adaptive capacity, innovation, and sustainable rural economic development ([Kardin and Firmansyah 2025](#)).

Table 1. Research Question

RQ	Description
RQ1	What themes and findings have been identified in existing studies regarding the environmental adaptation and sustainability of BUMDes in Indonesia?
RQ2	How have previous studies examined the capabilities, strategies, and factors that enable BUMDes to adapt to dynamic environmental changes?
RQ3	What research gaps and future research opportunities can support the development of more adaptive and sustainable BUMDes?

This systematic review draws from 19 articles published between 2015 and 2025, a period marked by the enactment of Village Law No. 6 of 2014, which catalyzed the rapid growth and strategic role of BUMDes in Indonesian villages. Research published after 2015 is particularly relevant to understanding the evolving dynamics of BUMDes in the post-regulation era. The review uses a systematic methodology [Tranfield et al. \(2003\)](#) to identify research gaps and suggests areas for future investigation, such as the development of dynamic capabilities, adaptation strategies, and innovation within BUMDes. The sources for this review were drawn from the Scopus database, ensuring a high level of academic rigor and relevance to the topic.

Definition of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes)

Before further discussing the dynamics of BUMDes management and development, the author would like to first outline the basic definition of BUMDes as a conceptual foundation for this study. According to Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, a BUMDes is a business entity whose capital is wholly or substantially owned by the village through direct participation derived from separated village assets, and is managed independently and professionally. The existence of a BUMDes aims to improve the village economy, enhance community efforts in managing local economic potential, and increase the village's original income. In Indonesian development based on community empowerment, BUMDes plays a

strategic role as an institutional instrument for the village economy. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the concept and urgency of BUMDes is a crucial foundation before analyzing its challenges and capabilities in the current dynamics of village development.

The current phenomenon of BUMDes management in Indonesia shows that not all BUMDes can operate optimally. One of the main issues that frequently arises is weak governance and accountability, which hinders many BUMDes from achieving their economic and social goals [\(Somiartha et al. 2024\)](#). The findings of [Yasni et al. \(2023\)](#) and [Fitriani et al. \(2024\)](#) for example, emphasize the importance of implementing accountability principles so BUMDes can sustainably improve performance. Issues of transparency and management professionalism were also highlighted in research by [Sari et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Setyorini et al. \(2023\)](#), which showed that there is still a gap between ideal governance practices and the reality on the ground. Furthermore, several studies, such as those by [Sari et al. \(2021\)](#) and [Yasni et al. \(2023\)](#) emphasize the importance of leadership and a spirit of social entrepreneurship to encourage innovation within BUMDes.

Furthermore, obstacles to human resource capacity development are also widely discussed, as expressed by [Maksum et al. \(2021\)](#) and [Rivai et al. \(2024\)](#) who highlight the need for training and improving managers' managerial skills. Equally important, funding and investor trust in village-owned enterprises (BUMDes), as explained by [Agrawal and Jespersen \(2024\)](#), pose challenges in expanding

access to capital. These findings demonstrate that the success of BUMDes is primarily determined by collaboration between good governance, adaptive leadership, sustainable innovation, and active support from various parties, including the government, the community, and investors.

METHOD

Following the systematic review methodology outlined in [Tranfield et al. \(2003\)](#), this study adopts a structured and transparent procedure to identify, select, extract, and synthesize literature related to Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) in Indonesia. The methodological process consists of seven stages:

Research Scoping

The initial stage involved defining the scope of the review, focusing on studies that examine Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) from the perspective of management, governance, performance, and sustainability. This step ensures that the review addresses the strategic and organizational challenges faced by BUMDes in adapting to an increasingly competitive rural business environment.

Search Term Identification

To locate relevant academic publications, the authors identified appropriate keywords, including "Village-Owned Enterprise" and "BUMDes." These keywords were chosen to capture studies discussing the structure, management practices, operational challenges, and development of BUMDes in Indonesia.

Data Source Identification

The articles reviewed in this study were sourced primarily from the Scopus database. Scopus was selected due to its reputation for indexing high-quality, peer-reviewed international journals. The search was not restricted to specific national journals; instead, the selection was based on topic relevance,

publication quality, and alignment with the governance, performance, and sustainability issues associated with BUMDes.

Article Collection

The initial search yielded 21 articles. All articles identified through keyword searching were collected for further screening and eligibility checks.

Article Filtering

A manual review process was conducted to ensure the inclusion of articles that specifically discuss BUMDes' management, performance, sustainability, and adaptability. Articles that were not open access or did not meet the predetermined relevance criteria were excluded. After screening, 19 articles were retained for full-text assessment and inclusion in the final analysis.

Data Abstraction (Data Extraction)

The retained articles were examined using a structured data extraction form to ensure consistency in capturing relevant information. The extracted data included:

- bibliographic details (author(s), publication year, title, journal, volume, issue, pages);
- focus and context of BUMDes in Indonesia;
- classification of BUMDes-related themes (e.g., business, management, accounting, governance, community development).

This step ensured that each article's methodological approach, research context, and thematic contribution were systematically documented.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

After data extraction, the authors conducted a narrative thematic analysis. Articles were categorized based on:

- (1) research focus;
- (2) theoretical foundation;
- (3) research methodology;
- (4) sample and research setting; and
- (5) key findings.

Through this categorization, recurring themes and research gaps were identified, allowing the authors to synthesize patterns related to BUMDes governance, leadership, financial management, community involvement, and organizational sustainability. The synthesis also enabled the development of a conceptual understanding of the evolution and challenges of BUMDes, forming the basis for proposing future research directions.

The complete process of article identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion is presented in Figure 1, following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework.

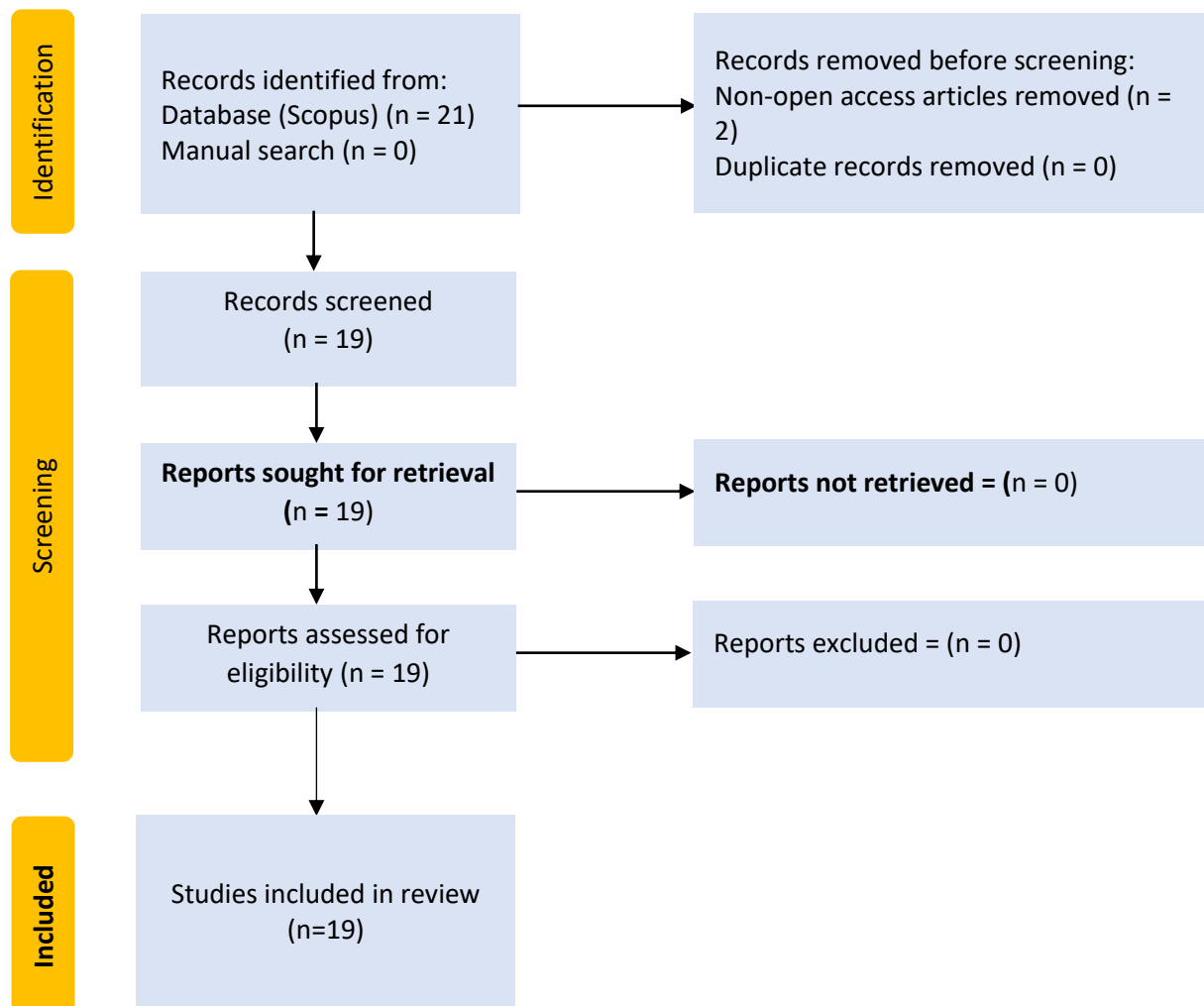


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram for the Selection of Article

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

The distribution of articles by year of publication is presented in Figure 2. The results indicate a generally increasing trend in BUMDes-related research focusing on environmental adaptation and sustainability during the period under review. In the early phase, research output remained relatively low and stable, with only one article published in both 2019 and 2020. A gradual increase is observed thereafter, with two articles published in 2021 and three articles in 2022, suggesting a growing academic interest in the topic.

The peak of publication activity occurred in 2023, with a total of eight articles, reflecting a substantial acceleration compared to previous years. This surge indicates heightened scholarly attention to issues of adaptability, sustainability, and management challenges faced by BUMDes in response to dynamic environmental and institutional changes. In 2024, the number of publications declined to four articles; however, this figure remains higher than the output observed during the 2019–2022 period. The lower number in 2024 may also be influenced by incomplete indexing or reporting coverage for the ongoing year.

Overall, the temporal distribution demonstrates an expanding body of literature up to 2023, followed by a moderate decline in 2024.

This pattern suggests that research on BUMDes adaptation and sustainability has gained increasing relevance in recent years, reinforcing the need for a systematic synthesis to consolidate existing findings and identify future research directions.

Figure 3 presents the distribution of research locations in Scopus-indexed articles examining the dynamic capabilities of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) in Indonesia. The findings reveal a clear concentration of empirical studies in a limited number of provinces. Riau and West Java emerge as the most frequently examined locations, each accounting for 22% of the total studies (44% combined). This concentration suggests that empirical evidence on how BUMDes develop, reconfigure, and orchestrate resources particularly in terms of sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring capabilities has been predominantly generated from these two regional contexts.

Central Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta each contribute 13% of the reviewed studies, further underscoring the strong dominance of Java-based research. This pattern likely reflects the relatively well-developed academic ecosystems, research accessibility, and institutional support available in these regions, which facilitate case-based and region-specific studies on BUMDes.

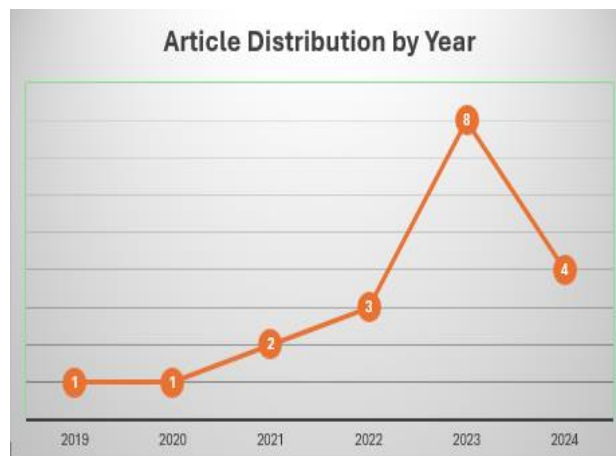


Figure 2. Article Distribution by Year

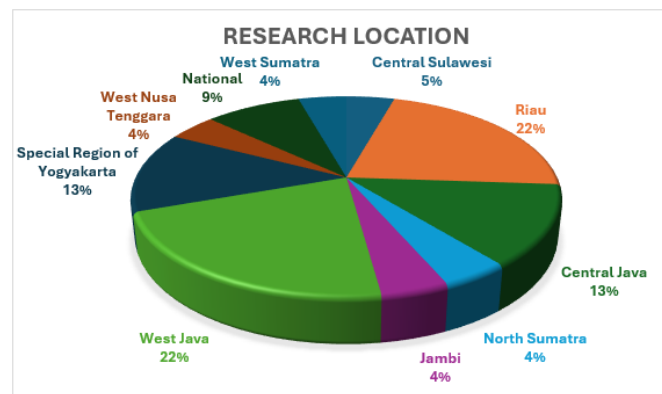


Figure 3. Distribution of Research Locations

Studies categorized under a “national” scope account for 9% of the total, indicating the presence of research adopting cross-provincial coverage or analytical designs not tied to a single geographic location. Such studies potentially offer a more aggregated perspective on the dynamic capabilities of BUMDes at the national level. Beyond these dominant regions, research locations are more sparsely distributed, including Central Sulawesi (5%) and West Sumatra, North Sumatra, Jambi, and West Nusa Tenggara, each representing 4% of the reviewed articles.

Overall, this spatial distribution highlights a notable geographical imbalance in the Scopus literature on BUMDes dynamic capabilities, with a strong emphasis on selected regions in Sumatra and Java. This uneven representation suggests that empirical insights remain limited for eastern Indonesia and other regions with distinct institutional settings, market structures, and village governance characteristics. Consequently, future research would benefit from expanding its geographical coverage to enable more comprehensive and comparative analyses of BUMDes adaptation and sustainability across diverse regional contexts.

Figure 4 shows that research topics are predominantly concentrated on social and institutional dimensions. Social innovation and

governance accountability emerge as the most frequently examined themes, with four articles each. This pattern indicates that the literature primarily conceptualizes dynamic capabilities as mechanisms for addressing village-level social needs while strengthening governance structures, transparency, and organizational accountability.

A secondary group of topics includes BUMDes development and strategic management, each represented by three articles. These studies focus on organizational development processes, strategic formulation, and the reconfiguration of resources and capabilities to maintain operational continuity under changing environmental conditions.

In contrast, sustainability performance receives comparatively limited attention, appearing in only two articles, suggesting that integrated assessments of economic, social, and environmental outcomes have not yet become a central analytical focus. The least examined themes are technology adoption and agrotourism development, each represented by a single article. This distribution highlights the limited empirical exploration of digital transformation processes such as platform-based services and data-driven decision-making as well as sector-specific business development grounded in local potential.

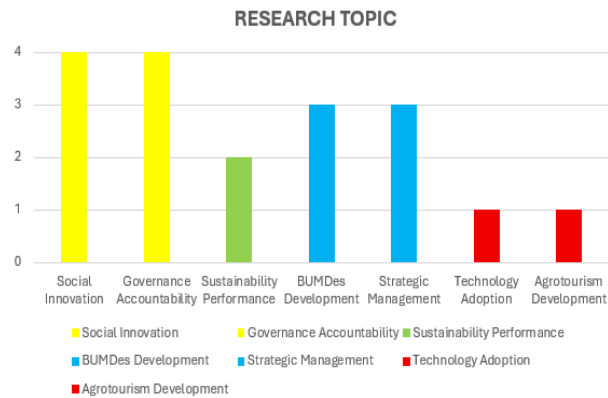


Figure 4. Distribution of Research Topics

Overall, Figure 4 reveals a research landscape that emphasizes social innovation and governance-related aspects of dynamic capabilities, while empirical investigation into technological adaptation, specific business sectors, and standardized sustainability performance measurement remains relatively underdeveloped.

Figure 5 indicates that qualitative approaches dominate the reviewed studies, accounting for 50% of the articles, followed by quantitative methods at 44%, while mixed-method designs are used only to a limited extent (6%). The predominance of qualitative research reflects a tendency to examine dynamic capabilities as context-dependent processes, such as how BUMDes engage in sensing,

seizing, and reconfiguring activities, through case studies, interviews, and narrative institutional analyses that emphasize depth of understanding.

The relatively substantial proportion of quantitative studies suggests that a number of researchers have attempted to empirically test relationships among key variables, including dynamic capabilities, governance, innovation, and BUMDes performance, using more structured and measurable approaches. However, such studies remain constrained by data availability and the development of robust measurement instruments tailored to the BUMDes context.

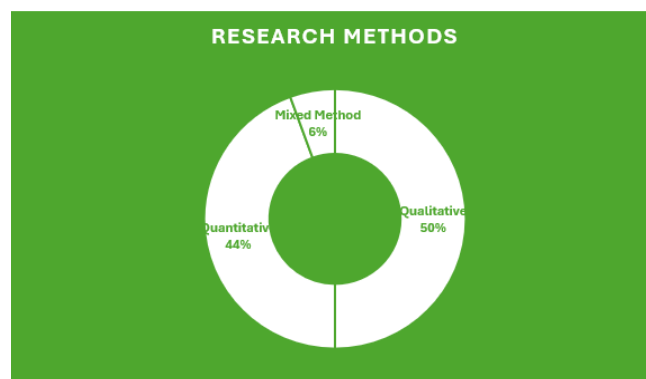


Figure 5. Distribution of Research Methods

The limited use of mixed-method approaches indicates that integrative research designs combining qualitative exploration with quantitative validation remain underutilized. This distribution highlights an opportunity for future studies to adopt more comprehensive methodological approaches capable of capturing both the underlying processes and the measurable outcomes of dynamic capability development across different regional and organizational contexts.

Figure 6 shows that the theoretical foundations of the reviewed studies are predominantly anchored in the Resource-Based View (RBV), which appears more frequently than any other theoretical perspective. This dominance suggests that dynamic capabilities are commonly conceptualized as an extension of resource-based logic, focusing on how BUMDes accumulate, combine, and reconfigure assets and competencies to enhance organizational performance and sustainability within rural contexts.

Beyond RBV, the theoretical landscape exhibits a long-tail pattern, with a wide range of alternative theories applied sporadically and in relatively small numbers. These include Social Entrepreneurship Theory, New Institutional Theory, Institutional Logics Theory, Participatory Governance Theory, Stewardship Theory, Contingency Theory, Transformational

Leadership, as well as broader entrepreneurship and rural development perspectives. This diversity reflects an understanding of BUMDes not merely as economic entities, but also as socio-public organizations shaped by governance arrangements, institutional legitimacy, leadership dynamics, and community participation.

However, the presence of a “not provided” category indicates that several studies do not explicitly state their theoretical grounding. This lack of clarity may limit theoretical accumulation and reduce the comparability of findings across studies. Overall, Figure 6 highlights both the central role of RBV in framing dynamic capability research on BUMDes and the fragmented use of complementary theories, suggesting opportunities for stronger theoretical integration across future studies.

Figure 7 shows that studies predominantly adopt an internal actor perspective, with directors or management boards of BUMDes serving as the primary unit of analysis in 13 studies. Village officials represent the second most frequently examined group, although in a much smaller proportion, appearing in only three studies. Other units of analysis such as academics, social entrepreneurs, and investors are each represented in a single study.



Figure 6. Distribution of Research Theories

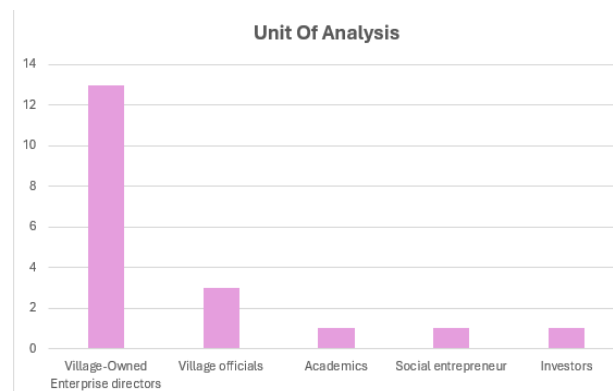


Figure 7. Distribution of Units of Analysis

This distribution indicates that the literature largely conceptualizes dynamic capabilities as managerial and organizational capabilities embedded in core decision-makers within BUMDes. Empirical attention is therefore concentrated on how internal actors engage in key processes such as sensing local opportunities and constraints, seizing strategic options, and reconfiguring resources to respond to environmental changes.

At the same time, the limited representation of external actors and knowledge-oriented stakeholders suggests that relational and ecosystem-oriented dimensions of dynamic capabilities such as inter-organizational collaboration, network building, value co-creation, financing support, and cross-institutional partnerships remain less explored. Overall, Figure 7 highlights a strong internal managerial focus in existing studies, with relatively limited empirical attention given to multi-actor and multi-stakeholder configurations surrounding BUMDes.

Thematic Findings

The thematic synthesis of the selected studies identified six core analytical categories that capture how dynamic capabilities are conceptualised, developed, and manifested within BUMDes. These themes reflect recurrent patterns across the literature rather than isolated findings from individual studies, allowing a structured interpretation of dominant research

foci, underlying mechanisms, and observed outcomes. The identified themes include governance and accountability mechanisms; human capital development and leadership; innovation and strategic capabilities; community engagement and social capital; organisational and sustainability performance; and policy and institutional context. Together, these themes provide an integrative lens for understanding how BUMDes adapt to environmental changes and pursue sustainability within diverse local and institutional settings.

Governance and Accountability Mechanisms

The literature consistently highlights governance and accountability as foundational elements shaping the adaptive capacity and sustainability of BUMDes. Several studies indicate that while formal governance principles are often acknowledged and partially implemented, their effectiveness is frequently constrained by weak organisational capacity, limited regulatory understanding, and underdeveloped accountability mechanisms (Rivai et al. 2024). In many cases, deficiencies in planning, organisational management, and the practical application of regulations hinder BUMDes from responding effectively to environmental challenges and stakeholder demands (Setyorini et al. 2023; Fitriani et al. 2024).

A recurring pattern across the studies is the presence of structural and institutional gaps

that weaken governance performance. Limited human resource capacity, unclear legal status, and ineffective coordination among stakeholders reduce the ability of BUMDes to translate governance frameworks into operational practices. These constraints undermine transparency, monitoring, and control mechanisms, which are essential for sustaining organisational legitimacy and long-term viability ([Sari et al. 2022](#)).

Moreover, the literature reveals that BUMDes often operate under dual institutional logics social welfare and commercial sustainability which creates tension in accountability practices. While financial reporting is commonly conducted, broader dimensions of accountability, such as fairness, performance accountability, and social value creation, remain ambiguous or weakly institutionalised. This partial accountability limits BUMDes' ability to align organisational objectives, stakeholder expectations, and performance evaluation in a coherent manner ([Basri et al. 2023](#)).

Conversely, studies that document stronger governance arrangements demonstrate more positive outcomes. Robust governance structures characterised by clear management processes, effective monitoring, and transparent accountability enable value co-creation among stakeholders and contribute to improved organisational performance. Accountability mechanisms not only enhance financial and social outcomes but also strengthen trust and participation, reinforcing the adaptive capacity of BUMDes in dynamic local environments.

Overall, these findings suggest that governance and accountability function as both enabling and constraining factors for dynamic capabilities in BUMDes. Weak governance limits the organisation's ability to sense opportunities, seize strategic options, and reconfigure resources, whereas well-institutionalised governance mechanisms support adaptive decision-making and sustainable performance.

This theme underscores the importance of strengthening governance capacity and accountability systems as a prerequisite for developing resilient and sustainable BUMDes.

Human Capital Development and Leadership

Human capital development and leadership emerge as critical drivers of dynamic capabilities within BUMDes, particularly in enabling organisations to respond to environmental uncertainty and operational constraints. The reviewed studies consistently emphasise that the effectiveness of BUMDes is closely linked to the quality of human resources, leadership capacity, and continuous learning processes embedded within the organisation ([Maksum et al. 2021](#)).

Training and capacity-building initiatives are identified as fundamental mechanisms for strengthening individual and organisational competencies. Evidence suggests that among various supporting factors, structured training plays a decisive role in enhancing operational effectiveness and the successful adoption of new practices. In contrast, the absence of systematic training and incentives constrains skill development, weakens motivation, and limits the organisation's ability to implement strategic changes ([Alamanda et al. 2023](#)).

Leadership, particularly in its transformational form, is highlighted as a key catalyst for organisational adaptation. Leaders and change agents within BUMDes are portrayed as pivotal actors who mobilise resources, inspire collective action, and translate ideas into concrete programmes. Their ability to build trust, foster social relations, and persist in the face of constraints enables BUMDes to maintain resilience during periods of disruption, such as economic shocks or crises. Through visionary leadership, BUMDes can align organisational goals with community needs while sustaining internal commitment ([Yasni et al. 2023](#)).

In addition, organisational learning is frequently positioned as a mediating mechanism

linking leadership and human capital to performance outcomes. Leadership practices that encourage learning, knowledge sharing, and experimentation contribute to the development of adaptive routines and capabilities. These processes allow BUMDes to sense environmental changes, interpret emerging challenges, and reconfigure internal resources accordingly ([Sari et al. 2021](#)).

Collectively, the findings indicate that human capital and leadership are not merely supporting factors but constitute core elements of dynamic capabilities in BUMDes. Weak capacity and leadership deficiencies restrict adaptability, whereas strong leadership combined with continuous learning enhances the organisation's ability to navigate complex institutional and market environments. This theme underscores the importance of sustained investment in human capital development and leadership formation to support the long-term adaptability and sustainability of BUMDes.

Innovation and Strategic Capability

Innovation and strategic capability constitute a central theme in explaining how BUMDes adapt to changing environmental and competitive conditions. The reviewed studies consistently frame dynamic capabilities as the organisation's ability to formulate strategies, foster innovation, and reconfigure resources to sustain both social and economic objectives ([Prasetya et al. 2023](#)).

Innovation capability is frequently identified as a key mediating mechanism that translates managerial orientation and organisational practices into improved sustainability and performance outcomes. Rather than operating in isolation, innovation emerges through the interaction of strategic intent, organisational routines, and accumulated knowledge. Studies indicate that BUMDes with stronger innovation capabilities are better positioned to integrate quality management practices, respond to community needs, and

enhance sustainability performance ([Wulandari and Wardani 2024](#)).

Entrepreneurial orientation particularly in its social and strategic dimensions also plays a significant role in strengthening adaptive capacity. Research highlights that entrepreneurial and market-oriented strategies enable BUMDes to identify new opportunities, experiment with novel business models, and engage in open innovation processes. Open innovation, in turn, facilitates knowledge exchange and collaboration, allowing BUMDes to improve both financial and social performance. These findings suggest that dynamic capabilities in BUMDes are closely linked to their willingness and ability to engage beyond organisational boundaries ([Basri et al. 2024](#)).

Strategic management practices further reinforce adaptive capacity by shaping deliberate actions and long-term orientation. Evidence shows that deliberate strategy and market orientation influence the adoption of strategic cost management techniques and resource allocation decisions, thereby supporting organisational efficiency and competitiveness. However, organisational size does not consistently determine strategic effectiveness, implying that adaptability depends more on strategic capability than on scale ([Sriyono et al. 2022](#)).

Overall, the literature portrays innovation and strategic capability as integrative mechanisms that connect leadership, organisational learning, and environmental responsiveness. BUMDes that successfully develop these capabilities are more likely to navigate institutional constraints, adjust to market dynamics, and pursue sustainable development paths. This theme underscores the importance of embedding innovation and strategic thinking within the organisational fabric of BUMDes to enhance their dynamic capabilities and long-term resilience.

Community Engagement and Social Capital

Community engagement and social capital emerge as essential elements in shaping the adaptive capacity and sustainability of BUMDes. The reviewed studies emphasize that BUMDes operate within tightly knit rural social structures, where trust, participation, and collaboration with local stakeholders significantly influence organisational outcomes. Dynamic capabilities in this context are not solely internal attributes but are embedded in social relations and collective action ([Agrawal and Jespersen 2024](#)).

Several studies highlight that community involvement plays a decisive role in aligning BUMDes activities with local needs and resources. Investment and business decisions are often driven not only by economic considerations but also by expected social and environmental benefits, such as reducing social problems, improving land productivity, and mitigating environmental degradation. This orientation reflects the social enterprise character of BUMDes and reinforces their legitimacy within the village ecosystem ([Kusmulyono et al. 2023](#)).

Stakeholder collaboration is repeatedly identified as a critical mechanism for strengthening rural entrepreneurship and organisational resilience. Effective collaboration among village governments, communities, and external partners enables resource sharing, knowledge exchange, and joint problem-solving. Such collaborative arrangements enhance the ability of BUMDes to sense emerging opportunities and constraints, as well as to mobilize collective resources in response to environmental change ([Dhewanto et al. 2020](#)).

Social capital manifested through trust, shared norms, and networks also supports performance and sustainability by facilitating coordination and reducing transaction costs. Studies indicate that when social capital is combined with capable leadership and innovation, its impact on organisational performance becomes more pronounced. This

suggests that social capital acts as a complementary dynamic capability, reinforcing both social and economic outcomes.

Overall, this thematic cluster underscores that the sustainability of BUMDes depends heavily on their embeddedness within local social systems. Dynamic capabilities are strengthened when BUMDes actively cultivate community participation and stakeholder collaboration, transforming social capital into a strategic resource that supports adaptation, resilience, and long-term development.

Business Performance and Institutional Environment

The final thematic cluster links the performance outcomes of BUMDes with the broader institutional and policy environment in which they operate. The reviewed studies indicate that improvements in social and economic performance are not automatically achieved through the mere establishment of BUMDes, but depend on the interaction between organisational capabilities, governance quality, and external institutional support.

Several studies reveal that BUMDes performance remains uneven and, in some cases, relatively weak in contributing to village economic development. Evidence shows that higher levels of public funding, such as village funds, do not consistently translate into improved development outcomes when organisational capacity and governance mechanisms are insufficient. In contrast, Village Original Income (PADes) is found to have a stronger and more consistent influence on rural development, suggesting that internally generated revenue reflects a higher degree of organisational effectiveness and sustainability ([Hidayah et al. 2019](#)).

Business performance is also shaped by the ability of BUMDes to develop viable business units aligned with local potential. Cases of organisational stagnation or failure highlight how weak managerial commitment, limited strategic direction, and inadequate

performance orientation can undermine the long-term viability of BUMDes, even when regulatory compliance is formally achieved. Conversely, studies focusing on sector-specific development, such as agrotourism, demonstrate that performance growth is supported by a combination of natural resource potential, infrastructure, technological innovation, community involvement, and institutional support (Zulgani et al. 2023).

The institutional environment further conditions how dynamic capabilities are formed and exercised. Policy frameworks, regulatory clarity, and intergovernmental coordination influence the incentives and constraints faced by BUMDes managers. When institutional pressures are misaligned or overly rigid, they may weaken the relationship between accountability mechanisms and financial performance. This finding suggests that adaptive and supportive policy environments are necessary to enable BUMDes to translate governance improvements into tangible performance outcomes.

Overall, this theme highlights that sustainable BUMDes performance emerges from the alignment between internal dynamic capabilities and external institutional conditions. Strengthening organisational adaptability without addressing policy coherence and institutional support may limit the effectiveness of BUMDes as engines of rural economic and social development.

Results Synthesis Based on Research Questions

This section presents the synthesis of findings from the reviewed studies while simultaneously interpreting their implications for understanding environmental adaptation and sustainability of BUMDes. The analysis is structured around the three research questions to ensure conceptual clarity and direct alignment between evidence and inquiry.

RQ1 – Themes and Key Findings on Environmental Adaptation and Sustainability of BUMDes

The synthesis of the reviewed literature indicates that research on BUMDes' environmental adaptation and sustainability converges around several interrelated thematic domains rather than isolated organisational issues. The dominant themes include governance and accountability, human capital and leadership, and innovation and strategic capability. These core themes are further complemented by discussions on community engagement and social capital, organisational performance, and the broader policy and institutional environment.

Across studies, sustainability is conceptualised as a multidimensional construct encompassing economic viability, institutional robustness, and social value creation. Governance and accountability are consistently positioned as foundational mechanisms that shape organisational legitimacy and operational stability. Transparent financial management, regulatory compliance, and clear role delineation are associated with stronger performance outcomes. However, weaknesses in legal status clarity, reporting systems, and managerial coordination frequently undermine sustainability efforts.

Human capital and leadership emerge as decisive internal drivers of adaptation. Research highlights that managerial competence, training intensity, and transformational leadership significantly influence the ability of BUMDes to adjust to changing local economic conditions. Where leadership is proactive and future-oriented, BUMDes demonstrate stronger strategic alignment and improved responsiveness to environmental shifts. Conversely, limited managerial capability often results in operational stagnation and reduced competitiveness.

Innovation and strategic capability represent the operational mechanisms through which adaptation is enacted. Studies show that BUMDes with stronger entrepreneurial orientation, market awareness, and openness to collaboration are more likely to introduce new business models, diversify revenue streams, and enhance service delivery. Innovation capability often mediates the relationship between internal resources and sustainability outcomes, indicating that resources alone are insufficient without strategic experimentation and learning.

Community engagement and social capital further reinforce sustainability. Trust, participation, and stakeholder collaboration enhance access to local knowledge and strengthen organisational legitimacy. The findings collectively suggest that environmental adaptation and sustainability in BUMDes are shaped by the interaction of governance quality, leadership capacity, innovation practices, and social embeddedness within specific institutional contexts.

RQ2 – Capabilities, Strategies, and Enabling Factors for Dynamic Adaptation of BUMDes

In addressing how previous studies examine adaptive capacity, the literature primarily emphasises internal capability development rather than direct measurement of environmental dynamism. Adaptation is portrayed as a process rooted in human capital enhancement, leadership practices, organisational learning, and strategic innovation.

Human capital development is consistently identified as the most influential enabling factor. Training programmes, managerial capacity-building initiatives, and experiential learning processes significantly enhance operational effectiveness and responsiveness. Evidence suggests that structured training is often the only variable that consistently predicts improved organisational adaptability. Leadership, particularly transformational leadership, functions as the

coordinating mechanism through which adaptive responses are initiated and sustained. Leaders mobilise resources, align organisational goals with community expectations, and foster commitment during periods of uncertainty.

Organisational learning emerges as the connecting process between leadership and adaptation. Learning-oriented environments encourage experimentation, knowledge sharing, and reflective practices, enabling BUMDes to interpret environmental signals and adjust internal routines. Adaptation is therefore understood not as a one-time adjustment but as an ongoing capability-building trajectory shaped by accumulated experience.

Innovation capability and strategic orientation constitute the second major pillar of adaptive capacity. Entrepreneurial orientation enables opportunity recognition and business diversification, while deliberate strategic planning supports efficient resource allocation. Open innovation practices, including collaboration with external partners, facilitate knowledge exchange and enhance both social and financial performance. These findings indicate that adaptive BUMDes rely less on structural size and more on strategic intent, learning intensity, and innovation-driven behaviour.

Governance structures are interpreted as enabling conditions that influence how effectively capabilities are exercised. Clear accountability systems and regulatory understanding provide stability for strategic experimentation, whereas weak governance constrains managerial discretion and slows response to change. Adaptation, therefore, is predominantly conceptualised as a capability-building process embedded in leadership, learning, and innovation practices rather than purely structural reform.

RQ3 – Research Gaps and Future Research Opportunities for Adaptive and Sustainable BUMDes

Despite the growing body of scholarship, several gaps limit comprehensive understanding of adaptive and sustainable BUMDes. A primary gap concerns the limited explicit application of the dynamic capabilities framework. Although adaptation, innovation, and leadership are widely discussed, few studies systematically conceptualise these processes in terms of sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring. As a result, adaptation is often described operationally rather than analysed as a higher-order strategic capability.

Methodologically, the dominance of cross-sectional and single-case designs restricts insight into how capabilities evolve over time. Dynamic capabilities are inherently path-dependent and process-oriented, yet longitudinal and mixed-method approaches remain rare. This limits understanding of how BUMDes accumulate, refine, or lose adaptive capacity across different stages of organisational development.

The literature also exhibits a strong managerial focus, with limited incorporation of multi-stakeholder perspectives. External actors such as community members, customers, financial institutions, and local governments are seldom examined as integral contributors to adaptive capability formation. This narrow unit of analysis constrains understanding of relational and ecosystem-based dynamics.

Another notable gap relates to digitalisation and technology adoption. While rural markets are increasingly influenced by digital transformation, empirical investigation of digital capabilities within BUMDes remains limited. Future research could explore how digital tools interact with governance structures, human capital, and innovation strategies to enhance resilience and sustainability.

Finally, sustainability outcomes are often treated as end results rather than evolving processes. Economic, social, and environmental dimensions are rarely examined simultaneously, and standardised performance indicators remain underdeveloped. Strengthening theoretical

integration and methodological rigor will enhance both explanatory power and practical relevance of future BUMDes research.

CONCLUSION

Over the past decade, research on Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) in Indonesia has grown substantially. However, empirical evidence indicates that their contribution to institutional strengthening and long-term village economic sustainability remains uneven. This systematic review synthesised nineteen Scopus-indexed studies published between 2015 and 2025 to examine how environmental adaptation and sustainability of BUMDes have been conceptualised and analysed. The findings show that BUMDes sustainability is shaped by the interaction between governance and accountability mechanisms, human capital and leadership, innovation and strategic capability, community engagement, and the broader institutional environment. Rather than being determined by single structural interventions, adaptive capacity emerges from the alignment between internal organisational capabilities and external contextual conditions.

The review reveals that much of the existing literature examines adaptation at an operational or descriptive level, while higher-order adaptive processes—such as sensing environmental change, seizing emerging opportunities, and reconfiguring organisational resources remain under-theorised. By positioning dynamic capabilities as an integrative analytical lens, this study clarifies how governance quality, leadership capacity, organisational learning, and innovation practices collectively influence resilience and sustainability in dynamic rural environments. This synthesis strengthens the theoretical positioning of BUMDes research within broader discussions of organisational adaptability, social enterprises, and rural development.

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings highlight the need for more integrative

and multi-theoretical approaches. Prior studies frequently rely on single perspectives, such as governance or entrepreneurship, without systematically connecting internal capabilities to institutional and social contexts. Future research would benefit from combining perspectives such as the Resource-Based View, Institutional Theory, Stakeholder Theory, Social Capital Theory, and Open Innovation Theory within a dynamic capabilities framework to better explain how BUMDes adapt and sustain performance over time.

Practically, the review underscores that policy expansion and financial allocation alone are insufficient to ensure BUMDes sustainability. Strengthening human capital through continuous managerial training, fostering transformational leadership, encouraging innovation-oriented strategies, and developing adaptive organisational routines are critical for long-term resilience. Policymakers should also provide clearer regulatory frameworks and supportive institutional environments that enable BUMDes to experiment, collaborate, and respond flexibly to market and technological change.

This study has several limitations. The analysis is restricted to Scopus-indexed articles

and focuses exclusively on BUMDes in Indonesia, which may limit generalisability beyond the national context. The dominance of cross-sectional and geographically concentrated studies also constrains understanding of long-term capability development across diverse regions. In addition, the selected time frame and inclusion criteria may have excluded relevant grey literature and emerging empirical evidence.

Future research should adopt longitudinal and mixed-method designs to capture the evolution of adaptive capabilities over time. Expanding empirical coverage across underrepresented regions and incorporating multi-stakeholder perspectives would enhance contextual robustness. Greater attention to digital transformation, collaborative innovation, and integrated sustainability measurement frameworks is also necessary to advance both theoretical development and practical relevance. Strengthening research along these lines will contribute to a deeper understanding of how BUMDes can build dynamic capabilities to sustain their dual economic and social mandates in increasingly complex rural environments.

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