



DOI: <https://doi.org/10.38035/sjam.v4i2>
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Affirmative Policy Implementation in Village Fund Management for Community Empowerment: A Collaborative Governance Perspective from Dempel Village, Wonosobo, Indonesia

Erna Ardiani Palupi^{1*}, Triyuni Soemartono², Pandji Sukmana³, T. Herry Rachmatsyah⁴

¹Universitas Prof. Dr. Moestopo, Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia, ernaardianipalupi@gmail.com.

²Universitas Prof. Dr. Moestopo, Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia, triyuni@dsn.moestopo.ac.id.

³Universitas Prof. Dr. Moestopo, Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia, pandjisukmana@dsn.moestopo.ac.id.

⁴Universitas Prof. Dr. Moestopo, Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia, herry.rachmatsyah@dsn.moestopo.ac.id.

*Corresponding Author: ernaardianipalupi@gmail.com¹

Abstract: This study examines the implementation of affirmative policy in Village Fund management for community empowerment in Dempel Village, Wonosobo Regency, Central Java, during 2015-2024. The study addresses the need to ensure that increasing Village Fund resources are translated into equitable development opportunities and community empowerment. A qualitative approach was employed through document analysis, field observation, in-depth interviews, and policy actor analysis. The analytical framework integrates governance, collaborative governance, public policy, community empowerment, social justice, deliberative democracy, and the capability approach. The findings show that Village Fund management strengthened development and empowerment through labor-intensive programs, equitable resource distribution, poverty alleviation, village deliberation, local economic development, and collaboration among village government, community members, and vulnerable groups. Dempel Village progressed from a disadvantaged village to a self-sufficient village during the study period. The study further finds that affirmative policy expanded the distribution of Village Fund benefits, particularly for disadvantaged groups and those with limited access to resources and opportunities. The study contributes a collaborative governance perspective to affirmative policy implementation and proposes an empowerment approach that integrates participation, deliberation, collaboration, and affirmative support for inclusive and sustainable village development.

Keywords: Affirmative Policy, Village Fund Management, Community Empowerment, Collaborative Governance, Village Development.

INTRODUCTION

Village development in Indonesia has increasingly shifted from a growth-oriented approach toward inclusive and participatory development that places community capacity and access to development opportunities at the centre. This shift is particularly relevant for rural communities experiencing poverty, unequal access, and limited participation. The Capability

Approach emphasizes that development should be assessed not only through income or physical outputs but also through the expansion of people's substantive capabilities to participate and improve their quality of life. Accordingly, community empowerment becomes an important instrument for expanding access to resources, opportunities, and participation.

The development of affirmative policies reflects efforts to address persistent rural inequalities. Earlier community empowerment programmes, including PNPM, expanded participation but remained limited in coverage and effectiveness. PNPM reached 54% of villages in 2011, while its benefits were predominantly accessed by poor communities in only a limited proportion of villages (Agusta, 2015). Rural disparities were also evident in 2014, when only 3.92% of villages were classified as self-sufficient, compared with 27.22% classified as disadvantaged and 68.86% as developing (Bappenas & S, 2015; Schuck, 2002; Sigelman, 1997).

The enactment of Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages, subsequently amended by Law No. 3 of 2024, strengthened village autonomy through the principles of recognition and subsidiarity. One important manifestation of this affirmative policy is the Village Fund, which provides fiscal resources for village administration, development, community development, and empowerment (Eko, 2015). Village Fund allocations increased from Rp20.7 trillion in 2015 to Rp71 trillion in 2024, with an average allocation of approximately Rp943.7 million per village in 2024. However, increased fiscal resources do not automatically ensure effective community empowerment. Village governments continue to face challenges related to institutional capacity, regulatory requirements, accountability, supervision, and the translation of fiscal resources into locally appropriate interventions.

These conditions place governance and policy implementation at the centre of Village Fund analysis. Contemporary governance scholarship emphasizes interdependence among actors, institutional arrangements, network coordination, and cross-sector collaboration in addressing complex public problems (Amsler, 2016; Ansell & Torfing, 2018; Krogh, 2022). Collaborative governance further highlights the importance of institutional design, stakeholder interaction, deliberation, and coordination across organizational boundaries (Amsler, 2016; Ansell & Torfing, 2018; Krogh, 2022). These perspectives are complemented by recent scholarship on community empowerment, which emphasizes collective agency, meaningful participation, community capability, and greater control over decisions and resources (Haldane et al., 2019; Laverack & Pratley, 2018; Målqvist, 2018). The framework is further informed by contemporary discussions of social equity and justice (Mulyadi et al., 2018), deliberative democracy and inclusive decision-making, and the Capability Approach, particularly its relevance to agency, empowerment, poverty reduction, and community-driven development (Pham, 2018).

Recent studies have examined village governance, collaborative arrangements, community participation, and empowerment from different perspectives (Ansell & Torfing, 2018; Haldane et al., 2019). Nevertheless, these perspectives have generally examined governance, participation, collaboration, and empowerment as related but distinct dimensions. A specific gap remains in explaining how interactions among policy actors generate affirmative interventions that transform Village Funds from fiscal resources into instruments of sustainable community empowerment. This study addresses this gap by examining the interaction of collaborative governance, community deliberation, and affirmative intervention in Dempel Village.

This study addresses this gap by examining the implementation of affirmative Village Fund policy in Dempel Village, Wonosobo Regency, Central Java. It focuses on Village Fund management, community empowerment, the role of policy actors, and the governance processes underlying affirmative intervention. The study contributes the Affirmative Collaborative Village Governance Theory Dempel Framework, which proposes that

community empowerment is shaped not by fiscal resources alone, but by the interaction of collaborative governance, community deliberation, and affirmative intervention that transforms village fiscal resources into increased community capability, self-reliance, and sustainable development.

METHODS

Research Design and Paradigm

This study employed a qualitative research approach to examine the implementation of affirmative Village Fund policy in community empowerment, focusing on village government, policy actors, and networks. The approach enabled an in-depth understanding of social interactions and policy dynamics within their natural setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Ravitch & Carl, 2019).

The study adopted an explanatory research design to examine how affirmative Village Fund policy was implemented and how policy actors contributed to community empowerment. This design supports interpretation of relationships and processes underlying social phenomena (Ravitch & Carl, 2019; Tracy, 2019).

The research combined a case study with a comparative case study orientation to examine the phenomenon within its geographical and social context. This design enabled intensive analysis of policy implementation and actor interactions within the case setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).

The research process followed the dissertation's analytical flow, beginning with problem and setting identification, followed by data collection, interpretation, refinement of the research focus, and formulation of findings. Qualitative data were systematically organized, interpreted, and synthesized to understand the actors, interactions, and processes underlying affirmative Village Fund implementation (Miles et al., 2019; Tracy, 2019).

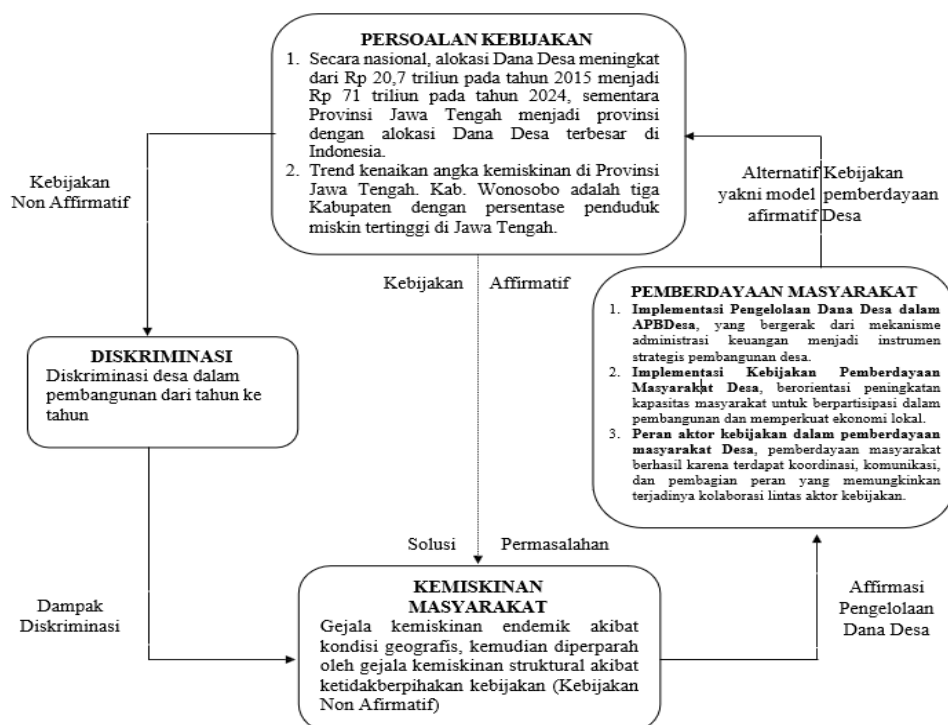


Figure 1. Research Flow of the Study

Figure 1 represents the research flow underlying the study and provides a methodological link between the research problem, empirical investigation, conceptual interpretation, and

formulation of findings. The figure is retained from the dissertation rather than reconstructed, thereby maintaining consistency between the article and the original research design.

Research Location and Case Selection

The study was conducted in Wonosobo Regency, Central Java, Indonesia, over a six-month research period. Central Java was selected because it received the largest Village Fund allocation among Indonesian provinces in 2023, while Wonosobo was selected because of its relatively high poverty rate, recorded at 15.28% in 2024 (Fahmi, 2025; BPS Kabupaten Wonosobo, 2024). These characteristics provided a relevant regional context for examining affirmative Village Fund policy in relation to community empowerment and poverty reduction.

The research locus was determined purposively based on the Village Development Index (Indeks Desa Membangun/IDM), with particular attention to villages demonstrating significant changes in development status. The use of village development indicators provides a basis for assessing differences in rural development capacity and village progress (Sofianto et al., 2024). The initial assessment identified Dempel Village, Kalibawang District, Wonosobo Regency, as a relevant case because of its substantial improvement in IDM status over the period examined.

Dempel Village was classified as a disadvantaged village in 2018, with an IDM score of 0.5344, before progressing to the developing category in 2019 with a score of 0.6558. The village subsequently reached the advanced category in 2023 with an IDM score of 0.7334 and achieved the self-sufficient category in 2024 with a score of 0.8454. This progression from disadvantaged to self-sufficient status made Dempel Village an information-rich case for examining the implementation of affirmative Village Fund policy and its relationship with community empowerment.

The case selection was therefore based on the specific development trajectory of Dempel Village rather than random selection. The substantial change in IDM status provided an empirical context for investigating how Village Fund management, village governance, community participation, and affirmative interventions were implemented within the village. The broader relevance of village development indicators is also reflected in the national policy effort to strengthen a unified framework for measuring village development and supporting village self-reliance (Bappenas & S, 2015).

Data Sources and Informants

The study utilized primary and secondary qualitative data. Primary data were obtained through field observation and in-depth interviews, while secondary data were derived from relevant documents concerning Village Fund management, village governance, development, and community empowerment. The data collection process combined observation, interviews, and documentation to obtain information from multiple perspectives and to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon.

The informants represented three main groups: district and subdistrict government actors, Dempel Village government officials, and village institutional and community actors. District- and subdistrict-level informants included relevant officials of the Wonosobo Regency Government, the Community and Village Empowerment Office, Bappelitbangda, the Kalibawang Subdistrict Government, and officials responsible for village governance and community empowerment.

At the village level, informants included the Village Head, Village Secretary, heads of administrative and financial affairs, planning and service officials, and village heads. The study also involved members of the Village Consultative Body (BPD), Village Community Institutions (LKD), Village Customary Institutions (LAD), community leaders, religious leaders, youth representatives, women representatives, and other community members.

The selection of informants was based on their institutional position, involvement, knowledge, and relevance to the implementation of affirmative Village Fund policy and community empowerment. This composition enabled the study to capture perspectives across governmental, institutional, and community levels and to examine the interaction among policy actors in the implementation process.

Data Analysis

The study employed qualitative data analysis to organize, interpret, and derive meaning from the empirical data collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The analysis focused on non-numerical data, including interview texts, field notes, photographs, activity records, and government documents. Following Creswell & Poth (2018), qualitative research involves systematic processes of data collection, analysis, interpretation, and representation to understand social phenomena within their contexts. In this study, qualitative analysis was used to organize empirical information from observations, interviews, and documents into meaningful interpretations of actors, activities, interactions, and events.

The analysis proceeded through several stages. First, all collected materials were examined and sorted according to their relevance to the research questions. Relevant information was retained, while data that did not correspond to the research focus were excluded. The selected materials were then organized and categorized according to the concepts and theoretical perspectives employed in the study.

Second, the selected data were subjected to coding, data reduction, and analytical categorization. Coding was used to organize the empirical material into initial analytical categories, establish relationships among codes, identify key analytical categories, and select evidence supporting the conceptual categories developed during the research.

Third, the categorized data were evaluated, compared, and synthesized to identify relationships and patterns relevant to affirmative Village Fund policy implementation, village governance, policy actors, and community empowerment. This process enabled empirical evidence from different sources to be integrated into an explanatory interpretation of the research phenomenon.

Finally, the selected and synthesized data were interpreted through narrative analysis. This stage was used to construct a coherent account of the sequence of events and the roles played by individual and collective social actors. Narrative analysis also enabled the researcher to connect empirical observations and actor experiences with the broader description, discussion, and interpretation of the research findings (Neuman, 2006).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Village Fund Management in the Village Budget

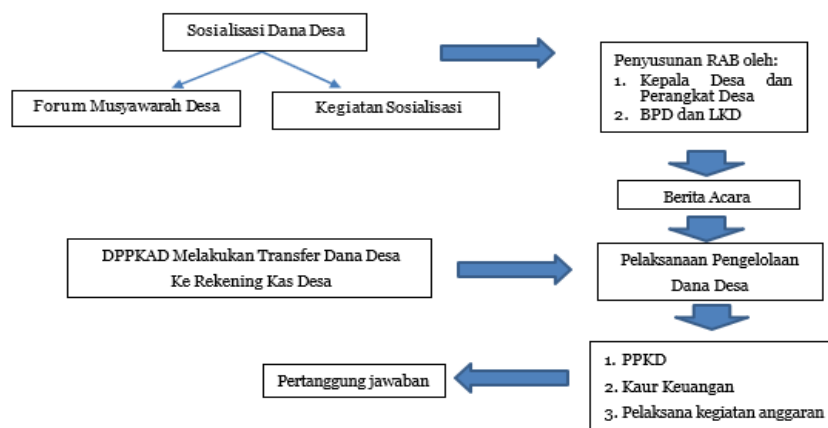
Village Fund management in Dempel Village is integrated into the Village Budget (Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Desa/APBDesa) and encompasses planning, implementation, administration, reporting, accountability, supervision, and community participation. The APBDesa is prepared based on the Village Government Work Plan (RKPDesa) and established through a Village Regulation involving the Village Government and the Village Consultative Body (BPD).

The development of APBDesa demonstrates an increase in the fiscal resources managed by Dempel Village. Total APBDesa revenue increased from approximately Rp1.24 billion in 2016 to Rp3.42 billion in 2024, while Village Fund receipts increased from approximately Rp676.39 million to Rp1.48 billion during the same period.

Table 1. Development of APBDesa in Dempel Village, 2016-2024

Description	2016	2018	2019	2021	2023	2024
Total APBDesa Revenue	Rp1.239 bn	Rp1.717 bn	Rp1.644 bn	Rp1.947 bn	Rp2.587 bn	Rp3.420 bn
Village Fund	Rp676.386 m	Rp817.057 m	Rp1.063 bn	Rp1.179 bn	Rp1.331 bn	Rp1.481 bn
Village Fund Allocation	Rp477.944 m	Rp472.397 m	Rp487.745 m	Rp544.553 m	Rp560.672 m	Rp590.340 m

The increase in fiscal resources was accompanied by an institutional mechanism that connected budgeting with village deliberation and implementation. Village Fund management involved socialization, Village Deliberation (Musyawarah Desa/Musdes), preparation of the activity budget, transfer of funds to the Village Treasury Account, implementation, and accountability. The process involved the Village Government, BPD, and village community institutions.


Figure 2. Village Fund Management Mechanism in Dempel Village

The mechanism indicates that Village Fund management was not limited to financial administration. Village deliberation provided a formal channel through which development priorities could be discussed before being translated into programmes and activities. This process connected financial management with community participation and development planning.

The relationship between village conditions, development priorities, deliberation, and implementation is further illustrated in the Village Development Scheme.


Figure 3. Village Development Scheme in Dempel Village

Figure 3 complements the management mechanism by showing that village development is connected to the characteristics and needs of the village, the determination of development priorities, deliberation, and implementation. Thus, the allocation of Village Funds operates within a broader development process rather than as an isolated budgeting activity.

Community involvement in this process is reflected in participation in Village Deliberation forums. The dissertation records relatively high attendance during 2020-2024. Attendance among the Village Head, BPD, and village officials reached 100%, while village community institutions and community leaders recorded attendance of 92.8% and 90%, respectively.

Table 2. Community Attendance in Village Deliberation Forums, 2020-2024

Invited group	Invited	Present	Absent	Attendance
Village Head	1	1	0	100%
BPD	7	7	0	100%
Village officials	11	11	0	100%
Village community institutions	28	26	2	92.8%
Community leaders	10	9	1	90%

The participation data indicate that deliberation was an established component of Village Fund management. Community members were given opportunities to submit proposals and participate in decisions concerning village development. The dissertation describes this process as bottom-up planning, in which Musdes and Musrenbangdes provide mechanisms for absorbing community aspirations and positioning residents as participants in development rather than merely recipients.

The findings therefore demonstrate an interaction between fiscal capacity, development planning, and participatory governance. The increasing resources managed through APBDesa provided the financial basis for development, while the management mechanism and village development scheme connected those resources with locally determined priorities. Community deliberation further provided an institutional mechanism for incorporating community interests into the process.

This configuration is important for understanding the subsequent implementation of community empowerment. Village Fund management in Dempel was not treated solely as a financial process; it became part of a broader governance arrangement in which fiscal resources, village development priorities, and community participation were interconnected. This governance arrangement subsequently shaped the implementation of affirmative community empowerment in the village.

Affirmative Community Empowerment Policy Implementation

The implementation of Village Fund policy in Dempel Village was directed not only toward physical development but also toward community empowerment through participation, self-help, mutual cooperation, and involvement in village development activities. The dissertation shows that community members were positioned as participants in identifying development needs, implementing programmes, and monitoring development outcomes. This orientation reflects the effort to strengthen community capacity through participation rather than treating residents solely as recipients of development programmes.

One important manifestation of empowerment was the increasing contribution of community self-help (swadaya masyarakat) in Village Fund-supported activities, particularly through the Village Cash-for-Work Programme (Padat Karya Tunai Desa/PKTD).

Table 3. Community Self-Help in Dempel Village, 2019-2024

Indicator	2019	2023	2024
Village Fund	Rp1.06 billion	Rp1.33 billion	Rp1.48 billion

Community financial contribution	Rp16 million	Rp45 million	Rp60 million
Residents involved in mutual cooperation	70 people	85 people	100 people

The data demonstrate an increase in both community financial contributions and participation in mutual cooperation. Community contributions increased from Rp16 million in 2019 to Rp60 million in 2024, while the number of residents involved in mutual cooperation increased from 70 to 100 people. The dissertation interprets this development as evidence of increasing community participation in development activities supported by Village Funds.

Community empowerment was also reflected in the planning and management of village finances. The number of village development planning deliberations increased from 10 in 2019 to 13 in 2024, while community attendance increased from 90% to 96.5%. The proportion of community proposals incorporated into the Village Government Work Plan (*RKPD*es) increased from 88% to 93%.

Table 4. Community Participation in Development Planning and Village Financial Management, 2019-2024

Indicator	2019	2021	2023	2024
Village development planning meetings	10	12	12	13
Community attendance	90%	92%	93%	96.5%
Use of village profile data in participatory planning	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Community involvement in updating village profile data	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Community proposals incorporated into RKPDes	88%	89%	91%	93%
Village government proposals incorporated into RKPDes/APBDDesa	90%	91%	93%	96%

These data indicate that participation extended beyond attendance in deliberative forums. Community involvement was incorporated into the preparation of village development priorities, including the use and updating of village profile data and the formulation of proposals for the RKPDes. The increasing proportion of community proposals incorporated into the RKPDes indicates a stronger connection between community aspirations and formal village planning.

Participation was also evident during programme implementation. The number of residents involved in physical development activities increased from 96 people in 2019 to 180 people in 2024. Participation in cash-for-work activities increased from 60 to 90 people, while the number of activities implemented by communities and village community institutions and financed through the APBDDesa increased from 7 to 15 activities.

Table 5. Community Participation in Development Implementation, 2019-2024

Indicator	2019	2023	2024
Residents involved in physical development	96	140	180
Residents involved in cash-for-work activities	60	75	90
Activities implemented by communities/village institutions and financed through APBDDesa	7	12	15

The increase in participation during implementation demonstrates that community involvement was translated into concrete development activities. Residents contributed labour and participated in activities financed through the village budget. In the context of Dempel's agricultural and hilly geographical conditions, mutual cooperation was also maintained through collective irrigation maintenance, pest control, road construction, and disaster response.



Figure 4. Community Mutual Cooperation in Village Road Development

The road-development activity illustrates the connection between Village Fund-supported infrastructure and community self-help. The dissertation explains that road opening and construction were commonly financed through Village Funds and implemented collectively, including through voluntary labour that reduced construction costs.

Community empowerment was not limited to economic or infrastructure activities but was also supported by local social and cultural practices. *Nyadran (Merdi Desa)* represents a form of collective activity involving environmental preparation, maintenance of ancestral graves, communal prayer, and shared meals. The dissertation identifies this tradition as a form of culturally embedded mutual cooperation that contributes to social cohesion.



Figure 5. Community Mutual Cooperation through Nyadran (Merdi Desa)

A broader outcome of these development and empowerment processes can be observed in Dempel's development trajectory. The village remained classified as *Desa Tertinggal* during 2016-2018, became *Desa Berkembang* during 2019-2022, reached *Desa Maju* in 2023 with an IDM score of 0.7334, and achieved *Desa Mandiri* in 2024 with a score of 0.8454.

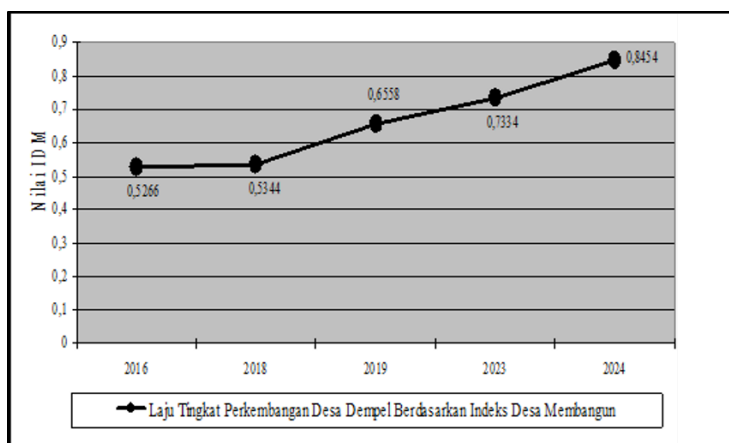


Figure 6. Development Trajectory of Dempel Village Based on the Village Development Index (IDM)

The progression from Tertinggal to Mandiri indicates a substantial improvement in Dempel's social, economic, and ecological development conditions. The dissertation relates this development to the implementation of participatory, transparent, and accountable village budgeting, alongside infrastructure development, economic empowerment, and the strengthening of BUMDes.

Taken together, the findings show that affirmative community empowerment in Dempel operated through participatory planning, community self-help, collective implementation, and locally embedded mutual cooperation. These mechanisms expanded community involvement in determining and implementing development priorities while supporting the village's broader development trajectory. The findings also provide an empirical basis for understanding how these empowerment processes were supported by interactions among the village government, BPD, community institutions, and other policy actors.

Policy Actors and Collaborative Governance

The implementation of community empowerment in Dempel Village involves multiple actors within and beyond the village government. The dissertation identifies the Village Government, BPD, village community institutions (LKD), community leaders, supra-village government, and village residents as important actors in the governance and empowerment process. Village community institutions include RT/RW, PKK, Karang Taruna, Posyandu, and the Village Community Empowerment Institution (LPMD), which function as channels for community participation and as partners of the Village Government in governance, development, community development, and empowerment.

The governance arrangement is based on interaction among these actors rather than on the actions of the Village Government alone. The Village Government and BPD jointly participate in formulating development priorities, while LKD, community leaders, and residents contribute through deliberation and implementation. The dissertation describes this process as involving stakeholders at the village and supra-village levels, with decision-making conducted through consensus-oriented mechanisms in Village Deliberation (Musyawarah Desa/Musdes) and Village Development Planning Deliberation (Musrenbangdes).

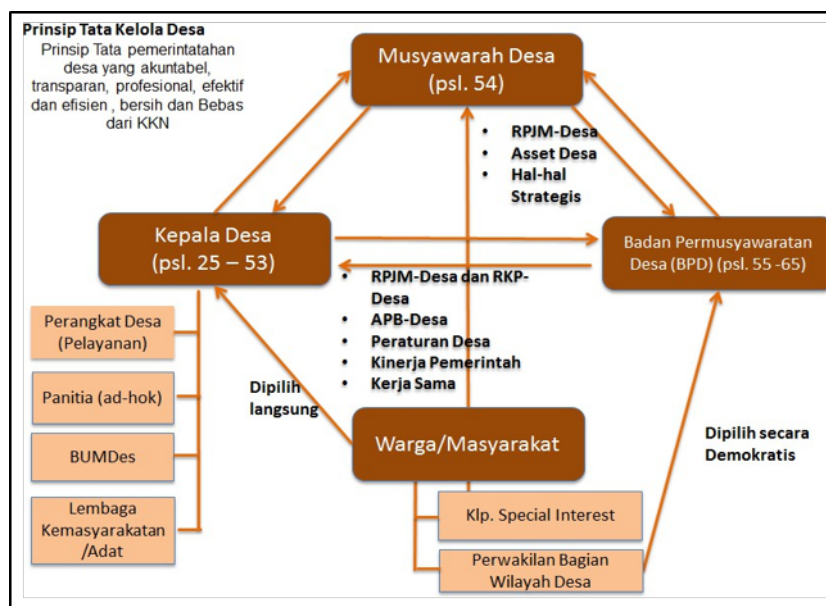


Figure 7. Village Governance Design in Dempel Village

The governance design illustrates institutional relationships among the Village Government, BPD, community institutions, and other stakeholders in formulating and implementing village development. Collaborative governance is particularly evident through Village Deliberation (Musyawarah Desa/Musdes) and Village Development Planning Deliberation (Musrenbangdes), where actors jointly identify priorities by considering community needs, local conditions, local wisdom, and local culture. These forums connect community aspirations with formal village planning and decision-making.

Village community institutions, particularly PKK and Karang Taruna, further strengthen this collaborative arrangement. PKK contributes to women's participation, family development, and the Kampung KB programme, while Karang Taruna supports youth empowerment, environmental activities, and village development. Its collaboration with the TNI Manunggal Membangun Desa (TMMD) in constructing an approximately 800-meter concrete road illustrates how community organizations and external actors combine local participation with additional institutional capacity.

Overall, collaborative governance in Dempel operates through institutional representation, deliberation, community organizations, and cross-institutional cooperation. The Village Government functions as a key coordinating actor, while BPD, LKD, community leaders, residents, and supra-village actors contribute to identifying needs, formulating priorities, mobilizing participation, and implementing development activities. These interactions provide the governance conditions for directing Village Fund resources toward community-oriented and affirmative interventions.

Affirmative Intervention and the Dempel Empowerment Model

The findings show that community empowerment in Dempel Village developed through a policy approach that was explicitly oriented toward community interests and the conditions of groups experiencing structural disadvantages and limited access. The dissertation identifies this approach as affirmative empowerment, in which development interventions are directed not only toward programme implementation but also toward reducing inequalities and expanding opportunities for communities to improve their quality of life, capacity, and self-reliance.

The need for affirmative intervention is associated with the conditions of Dempel Village, where geographical constraints and structural factors have contributed to limited access and persistent poverty. Under these circumstances, a uniform development approach is insufficient. The dissertation therefore proposes an empowerment model that provides particular attention to communities that are structurally disadvantaged, marginalized, poor, or have limited access to development resources.

The affirmative approach is implemented through a participatory process. Community members are positioned not merely as passive recipients of government programmes but as active participants in identifying problems, formulating priorities, and contributing to village development. The dissertation emphasizes that strengthening participation creates opportunities for communities to develop their own capacities while government and other stakeholders provide the institutional support required to sustain the resulting improvements.

The central empirical finding is that Dempel's achievement of Village Self-Reliance status in 2024 cannot be attributed to the increase in Village Fund allocation alone. Rather, the achievement is associated with the ability of policy actors to construct governance that integrates community deliberation, actor collaboration, and policy orientation toward vulnerable groups within participatory and accountable Village Fund management.

This finding leads to the principal conceptual contribution of the study. The dissertation identifies a limitation in approaches that directly connect Village Funds with development or connect Village Funds and participation with empowerment. The Dempel case indicates that this relationship is not necessarily direct. Affirmative intervention represents an important mechanism through which fiscal resources, participation, and collaboration are translated into empowerment outcomes.

The study consequently develops the Affirmative Collaborative Village Governance Theory-Dempel Framework. This substantive theory integrates collaboration among policy actors, community deliberation, and affirmative intervention as the central dimensions of village governance. Its core proposition is that successful community empowerment results from the interaction of these dimensions in transforming village fiscal resources into increased community capabilities, self-reliance, and sustainable development.

The theoretical novelty lies specifically in positioning affirmative intervention as the strategic mechanism linking collaborative governance and community empowerment. Collaborative Governance explains the process through which actors collaborate, while Community Empowerment Theory explains the process through which communities become empowered. The Dempel framework adds an explanatory mechanism for the conditions under which collaboration can generate empowerment outcomes: collaboration and deliberation need to produce affirmative policies that respond to unequal access and disadvantage.

The model also carries a policy implication. The dissertation proposes an Affirmative Village Empowerment Model that moves beyond an exclusive focus on physical development and budget absorption. Its orientation includes reducing social inequality, expanding access for vulnerable groups, strengthening the local economy, increasing community capabilities, and maintaining social, economic, and ecological sustainability.

The practical contribution is that the model is considered potentially applicable to villages with similar characteristics, particularly those facing structural poverty, geographical access constraints, and dependence on primary economic sectors. The dissertation emphasizes that empowerment should shift from an administrative orientation toward a transformative approach in which Village Funds generate not only activities and infrastructure but also community capacity, economic independence, local democracy, and sustainable development.

Thus, the Dempel case demonstrates that affirmative intervention is the critical mechanism that gives substantive direction to collaborative village governance. Collaboration provides the institutional basis, deliberation enables community interests to enter the policy

process, and affirmative intervention directs resources and programmes toward unequal conditions and limited access. Together, these processes explain how Village Fund resources can contribute to sustainable community empowerment and village self-reliance.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings have implications for the understanding and implementation of village community empowerment policy. Theoretically, the study supports an Affirmative Community Empowerment based on Collaborative Village Governance approach, in which empowerment is understood not simply as the distribution of programmes or assistance, but as a process of expanding community access, participation, capacity, control, and equitable benefits from development.

The theoretical implication is that Village Fund policy can be understood as an instrument of social transformation rather than merely a fiscal instrument. The Dempel case demonstrates that fiscal resources require appropriate governance arrangements to produce empowerment outcomes. In this context, collaborative governance, deliberative participation, and affirmative orientation provide the institutional and policy conditions through which Village Funds can be translated into increased community capacity and self-reliance.

At the policy and governance level, the findings suggest that Village Fund management should be strengthened across the full policy cycle, including planning, budgeting, implementation, administration, reporting, accountability, supervision, and outcome-based evaluation. Social and economic mapping should be incorporated into planning and budgeting so that Village Fund allocation can respond more accurately to local needs and the conditions of vulnerable groups.

The findings also imply that Village Fund allocation should maintain a balance between infrastructure development and social-economic investment. Priority areas identified in the dissertation include community capacity building, strengthening farmer and women's groups, youth and micro-enterprise development, digital marketing, BUMDes strengthening, access to capital, labour-intensive programmes, and data-based social protection.

A further implication concerns the role of Village Deliberation (*Musyawarah Desa*). Deliberation should function as a substantive forum in which community members can express interests, influence decisions, monitor implementation, and evaluate development benefits, rather than merely serving as a formal requirement. This reinforces the participatory and deliberative dimensions identified in the Dempel case.

Collaborative governance also requires stronger coordination among policy actors. The dissertation recommends a collaborative empowerment forum involving the Village Government, BPD, village community institutions, BUMDes, residents, village facilitators, subdistrict and regency governments, universities, the private sector, and other relevant stakeholders. Such collaboration is intended to integrate different resources, knowledge, authority, capacities, and interests into the village development agenda.

For local government, the implication is a shift from a predominantly administrative supervisory role toward a facilitating and capacity-accelerating role. Evaluation of Village Fund implementation should therefore move beyond administrative compliance and budget absorption toward outcomes such as poverty reduction, increased community capacity, strengthened local economies, equitable distribution of development benefits, and social-ecological sustainability.

Finally, the findings provide a basis for further development and empirical testing of the Affirmative Community Empowerment Model based on Collaborative Village Governance. The dissertation recommends that future research examine the model in villages with similar characteristics and develop appropriate measurement indicators. This would allow the proposed framework to be assessed beyond the Dempel case and further establish its

applicability to villages experiencing structural poverty, geographical access constraints, and dependence on primary economic sectors.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that the implementation of affirmative Village Fund policy in Dempel Village demonstrates that community empowerment cannot be explained by the amount of Village Fund allocation alone. Its effectiveness is associated with the capacity of policy actors to develop an affirmative governance arrangement that integrates community deliberation, actor collaboration, and policy orientation toward vulnerable groups within participatory and accountable Village Fund management. This arrangement enabled Village Fund resources to be directed toward development and empowerment activities responsive to local conditions and community needs.

The findings further demonstrate that community empowerment in Dempel was developed through participation in planning, implementation, and collective development activities. The process incorporated principles of equity, labour-intensive development, empowerment, and poverty reduction, while Village Deliberation provided a deliberative arena through which community members could participate in decision-making and develop local economic potential. These processes contributed to the transformation of community participation into increased capacity and opportunities for local development.

The study's principal contribution is the Affirmative Collaborative Village Governance Theory-Dempel Framework. The framework explains that successful village community empowerment results from the interaction of collaborative governance, community deliberation, and affirmative intervention, which transform village fiscal resources into increased community capabilities, self-reliance, and sustainable development. The key theoretical contribution is the positioning of affirmative intervention as a strategic mechanism linking collaborative governance to successful community empowerment.

Empirically, the relevance of this mechanism is reflected in Dempel's development trajectory, which progressed from Village in the Disadvantaged category during 2016-2018, Developing Village during 2019-2022, Advanced Village in 2023, and Independent Village in 2024. The village achieved an IDM score of 0.7334 in 2023 and 0.8454 in 2024, reaching the highest classification in the IDM system.

Overall, the Dempel case demonstrates that Village Funds can function beyond their role as fiscal resources when embedded within collaborative, deliberative, and affirmative governance. The study therefore contributes a substantive explanation of how village fiscal resources can be transformed into community empowerment and sustainable village self-reliance through governance arrangements that respond explicitly to inequality, limited access, and the conditions of vulnerable communities.

REFERENCES

- Agusta, I. (2015). Transformasi Desa di Indonesia 2003-2025. In *Makalah disampaikan pada acara Apresiasi kepada Bapak Prof.*
- Amsler, L. B. (2016). Collaborative Governance: Integrating Management, Politics, and Law. *Public Administration Review*, 76(5), 700–711. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12605>
- Ansell, C., & Torfing, J. (2018). *How Does Collaborative Governance Scale?* Policy Press. <https://doi.org/10.1332/policypress/9781447340553.001.0001>
- Bappenas, & S, B. P. (2015). *Indeks Pembangunan Desa 2014: Tantangan Pemenuhan Standar Pelayanan Minimum Desa*. Jakarta: Bappenas dan BPS.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

- Eko, S. (2015). *Regulasi Baru, Desa Baru: Ide, Misi, dan Semangat UU Desa* (Cetakan pertama). Kementerian Desa, Pembangunan Daerah Tertinggal, dan Transmigrasi Republik Indonesia.
https://komens.bappenas.go.id/public/storage/files/1699943474_Pembangunan%20Daerah.pdf
- Fahmi, A. (2025). Peranan Dana Desa Dalam Pertumbuhan Ekonomi Kabupaten Di Provinsi Jawa Tengah. *Jurnal Pendidikan Ekonomi (JUPE)*, 13(1), 9–18.
<https://doi.org/10.26740/jupe.v13n1.p9-18>
- Haldane, V., Chuah, F. L. H., Srivastava, A., Singh, S. R., Koh, G. C. H., Seng, C. K., & Legido-Quigley, H. (2019). Community participation in health services development, implementation, and evaluation: A systematic review of empowerment, health, community, and process outcomes. *PLOS ONE*, 14(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0216112>
- Krogh, A. H. (2022). Facilitating collaboration in publicly mandated governance networks. *Public Management Review*, 24(4), 631–653.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2020.1862288>
- Laverack, G., & Pratley, P. (2018). *What quantitative and qualitative methods have been developed to measure community empowerment at a national level?* WHO Regional Office for Europe.
- Målqvist, M. (2018). Community agency and empowerment—a need for new perspectives and deepened understanding. *Global Health Action*, 11(1), 123–130.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/16549716.2018.1474303>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2019). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Mulyadi, A. W. E., Kusumasari, B., & Keban, Y. T. (2018). Walking the Talk on Social Equity: A Call for Advancing the Fourth Pillar of Public Administration. *BISNIS & BIROKRASI: Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi Dan Organisasi*, 25(2). <https://doi.org/10.20476/jbb.v25i2.9824>
- Neuman, W. L. (2006). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Pham, T. (2018). The Capability Approach and Evaluation of Community-Driven Development Programs. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 19(2).
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2017.1412407>
- Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2019). *Qualitative Research: Bridging the Conceptual, Theoretical, and Methodological* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Schuck, P. H. (2002). Affirmative Action: Past, Present, and Future, dalam *Yale Law & Policy Review*, Th. 20, No.
- Sigelman, L. (1997). The Public and Disadvantage-based Affirmative Action: An Early Assessment, dalam *Social Science Quarterly*, Th. 78, No.
- Sofianto, A., Risandewi, F., Zuhri, M., Ambarwati, D., & Febrian, R. (2024). Kapasitas Pembangunan Perdesaan di Jawa Tengah. *Jurnal Pembangunan Wilayah Dan Kota*, 20(2), 207–233. <https://doi.org/10.14710/pwk.v20i2.53369>
- Tracy, S. J. (2019). *Qualitative Research Methods: Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact* (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Wonosobo, B. P. S. K. (2024). *Profil Kemiskinan Kabupaten Wonosobo 2024*. Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Wonosobo.
<https://wonosobokab.bps.go.id/id/pressrelease/2024/07/24/282/profil-kemiskinan-kabupaten-wonosobo-2024.html>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.