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# Analysis of village development issues in regional online news media

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## Abstract

The media and village development are two subjects that remain relevant and important to discuss. The article aimed to further examine village development issues in regional online news media. Suka (a fictitious name is adopted in this study to disguise the real name of the online news media), as a regional online news media, plays a strategic role in disseminating the regional government's agenda, helping monitor and evaluate regional policies, and providing information on the ideal village development measures. This study used a content analysis approach. The results of this study indicate that, in 2021, Suka reported seven news stories containing content with the keyword of village development. Those stories suggested four main issues of village development, namely sustainable village development, tourism village development, involvement of people with disabilities in village development, and the role of women and universities in village development. In these four main issues, a number of policy values in village development should be addressed by policymakers in formulating village development policies, namely integrated and sustainable development, utilization of local resources in development, along with increasing the role of the disabled people, women, and universities in village development.

**Keywords:** regional online news; village development; policy; sustainable development

## 1. Introduction

National development is directed at achieving the ideals of the state. In Indonesia, the goals of national development, as the ideals of the nation and state, are to protect the entire nation and homeland of Indonesia, promote public welfare, educate the nation, and implement a world order based on independence, long-lasting peace, and social justice. Indonesia's national development must be carried out in a fair manner. The implementation of national development must not create inequalities between villages and cities or between the western and eastern regions of the country. Currently, Indonesia's regions are predominantly rural areas. Out of 83,843 villages recorded by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) (Table 1), 74,961 of them fall into the category of rural villages as determined by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

As listed in Table 1, village development in Indonesia is an essential subject of research. In addition, Indonesia's latest poverty data indicate that a large portion of citizens who live under the poverty line reside in villages. Out of 26.16 million people recorded as impoverished in Indonesia, 14.34 million live in rural areas, while 11.82 million reside in urban areas (CNN Indonesia, 2022). In 2021, the data from the Central Bureau of Statistics show that the rural poverty rate indicated a decline. However, the poverty severity index in rural areas has

increased from 0.57 in March 2021 to 0.59 in September 2021. This demonstrates that the gap between people below the poverty line is widening and requires serious attention from the government (Bisnis.com, 2022).

**Table 1. Number of Villages in Indonesia in 2021**

Province	Number of Villages
Aceh	6,516
North Sumatra	6,132
West Sumatra	1,159
Riau	1,876
Jambi	1,562
South Sumatra	3,289
Bengkulu	1,514
Lampung	2,654
Bangka Belitung Islands	393
Riau Islands	417
DKI Jakarta	267
West Java	5,957
Central Java	8,562
Yogyakarta	438
East Java	8,496
Banten	1,552
Bali	716
West Nusa Tenggara	1,152
East Nusa Tenggara	3,353
West Kalimantan	2,137
Central Kalimantan	1,576
South Kalimantan	2,007
East Kalimantan	1,038
North Kalimantan	482
North Sulawesi	1,840
Central Sulawesi	2020
South Sulawesi	3,051
Southeast Sulawesi	2,309
Gorontalo	734
West Sulawesi	650
Maluku	1,248
North Maluku	1,199
West Papua	1987
Papua	5,560
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83,843</b>

**Source: BPS (2022)**

Village development is of extreme importance in national development in Indonesia. Thus, the examination of the role of the media in the development process is also essential. Mass media, as one of the pillars of democracy, carry a role in national development (Wahjono, 1988), especially in village development. On the other hand, the media also represent the owners of capital and the interests of capitalism (Bognár, 2018; Hutagalung, 2013) and is occasionally trapped in polarization (Kirdemir, 2020). Aside from its role in the development, mass media also act as parties that can influence the government's agenda (Feezell, 2018; Schroeder, 2018), policy formulation, and implementation. Mass media has long been recognized as a powerful tool in providing control over government agendas (Schroeder,

2018), as well as the formulation and implementation of public policies (Liu et al., 2019; McHale, 2019).

Mass media have been granted the freedom to express their voices or public opinions about government policies or other issues (Hendra, 2019). On the basis of press freedom, citizens can form their attitudes and opinions in the public sphere (Siregar, 2000). The role of the media in village development, especially the regional news media, has become an important and relevant subject of research. Dissecting village development issues in regional online news is a strategic approach since issues that have been covered and published by the regional online news media within a certain period of time are easily obtained and retrieved. The issues highlighted by the regional online news media have frequently become the central village development issues to be pursued in certain regions. One of the regional online news media with a broad reach is Suka, a Central Java-based regional newspaper that has existed for 26 years.

The observation of the role of Suka as a regional online news media in village development is an interesting research topic. Regional online news media have a strategic role in influencing policy setting, supervising policy implementation, and participating in evaluating development policies. This analysis of Suka's reporting on village development examined its position in influencing village development issues. This study is essential to identify the importance of online regional news media for village development, as well as to develop a conceptual framework for the relationship between the media and public policy.

## **2. Method**

Content analysis was utilized in this study. Content analysis is generally used to explain a text (Shava et al., 2021). This study was focused on the news content concerning village development published on the Suka news portal, and relevant data originating from several online media sites. The village development content in this study was obtained through an internet search using the keyword "village development" on the Suka website, resulting in seven news stories. The seven news stories were further categorized into four strategic issues related to the village development concept to be subsequently discussed systematically based on the literature reviews. Those four strategic issue classifications consisted of sustainable development, village tourism and edutourism, the role of people with disabilities in village development, and the role of women in village development.

Village development is an effort to achieve national goals. Development is a concept that requires the active participation of various development actors, and one of them is regional online media. Regional online media has a strategic position to influence policy makers to receive aspirations from citizens and learn from other regions that have been successful in carrying out development. Therefore, it is important to look at village development issues from the perspective of regional online media. Village development issues can be studied by using content analysis from reports carried out by regional online media. The results of this content analysis can be used as material for policy recommendations that can develop policies that are more pro to villagers, the poor, residents with minimal capacity, women and disabilities. Policy development that leads to ideal conditions for village development can be realized with this research (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Research Framework from Analysis of Village Development Issues in Regional Online News Media**

### 3. Results and Discussion

Based on the results of this study, there are four issues in village development as reported in online news media: 1) sustainable village development, 2) tourism village development, 3) involvement of people with disabilities in village development, and 4) the role of women and universities in village development (Table 2).

**Table 2. Summary of Suka's Articles Related to Village Development in 2021**

No.	Article Title	Publication Date	Content
1.	Tourism Village Development to Increase Economic Growth ( <i>Kembangkan Desa Wisata untuk Tingkatkan Pertumbuhan Ekonomi</i> ) Source: (Suaramerdeka.com, 2021d)	December 9, 2021	The central government develops tourism villages to increase villages economic growth, enhance their resident's welfare, eradicate poverty, overcome unemployment, promote culture, as well as preserving nature, the environment, and resources. The development of tourist villages attempts to accelerate village development in an integrated manner while also encouraging the village's social, cultural, and economic transformation.

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No.	Article Title	Publication Date	Content
2.	Ministry of Village: Village Development Must Be Sustainable ( <i>Kemendes: Pembangunan Desa Harus Berkelanjutan</i> ) Source: (Suaramerdeka.com, 2021e)	December 9, 2021	Village development must prioritize residents' welfare and be carried out in a sustainable manner. The use of village funds should be prioritized to accelerate the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs in villages.
3.	The Disabled's Roles Need to be Optimized in an Inclusive Space for Village Development ( <i>Kelompok Difabel Perlu Dioptimalkan dalam Ruang Inklusif Pembangunan Desa</i> ) Source: (Suaramerdeka.com, 2021c)	December 2, 2021	Village development serves as an inclusive avenue by involving all elements of society, including optimizing the contribution of people with disabilities.
4.	Eling Bansari Edutourism Integrated Area Inaugurated, a Motor for Accelerating Village Development ( <i>Kawasan Eduwisata Terpadu Eling Bansari Diresmikan, jadi Motor Penggerak Percepatan Pembangunan Desa</i> ) Source: (Suaramerdeka.com, 2021b)	September 24, 2021	The Temanggung Regency Government inaugurated Eling Bansari Edutourism in the Embung Bansari area, Bansari District, on Friday, September 24, 2021. This edutourism is expected to be a driving force for the acceleration of village development and community empowerment to improve village residents' welfare.
5.	UNDIP Students Socialize the Role of Women in Village Development ( <i>Mahasiswi Undip Sosialisasikan Peran Perempuan dalam Pembangunan Desa</i> ) Source: (Suaramerdeka.com, 2021f)	July 24, 2021	Tri Kumala Setiastuti, a student of UNDIP's Public Administration Department, held an awareness campaign for residents of RT 02 RW 02 in Pasekaran Village, Batang District, Batang Regency, with the topic of "Women's Empowerment Through MSMEs."
6.	Ministry of National Development Planning Holds Ministerial Level Meeting, Discussing Village Development Target Up To 2022 ( <i>Bappenas Gelar Rapat Tingkat Menteri, Bahas Pembangunan Desa Hingga Target Pembangunan 2022</i> ) Source: (Suaramerdeka.com, 2021a)	June 12, 2021	The ministerial-level meeting was conducted with the agenda of Poverty Reduction Targets, Unemployment Rates, and 2022 Gini Ratio discussing a number of development targets, which include a poverty rate of 8.5-9.0 %, the unemployment rate of 5.5-6.3 %, and Gini ratio of 0.376-0.378. The targets are in accordance with the target of 2020-2024 National Mid-Term Development Plan. The meeting also reviewed the improvement of poverty reduction, village fund programs, MSMEs, increased development measurements, as well as data sector for ministries and institutions.

No.	Article Title	Publication Date	Content
6.	Supporting Village Development in The Realization of a Golden Indonesia 2045 ( <i>Pembangunan Desa Topang Terwujudnya Indonesia Emas 2045</i> ) Source: (Suaramerdeka.com, 2021g)	April 6, 2021	The success of village development supports the realization of a Golden Indonesia in 2045. Currently, the development of villages in Indonesia is supported by the village fund program.

### 3.1. Sustainable Village Development

In articles entitled "Ministry of Village Development: Village Development Must Be Sustainable" (*"Kemendes: Pembangunan Desa Harus Berkelanjutan"*), "BAPPENAS Holds Ministerial Level Meeting, Discusses Village Development Targets Up to 2022" (*"Bappenas Gelar Rapat Tingkat Menteri, Bahas Pembangunan Desa hingga Target Pembangunan 2022"*), and "Village Development Supports the Realization of Golden Indonesia 2045" (*"Pembangunan Desa Topang Terwujudnya Indonesia Emas 2045"*), the editors of Suka raised the issue of sustainable development. Sustainable rural development is the key to Indonesia's development in the years to come. Integrated and sustainable village development is believed to be able to help achieve the goal of Golden Indonesia 2045. Besides, the achievement of that objective also requires the integration of components at the central government level to ensure coordination and communication focusing on important aspects. Accordingly, a ministerial-level meeting was held to discuss the goals of village development measures for the following year, suggesting that village development is an urgent issue. Inclusive village development must involve all residents and stakeholders, especially women and children, minority groups, the impoverished, and those pushed below the poverty line by natural and man-made disasters (Lal, 2019).

Suka's articles convey that sustainable development cannot be achieved instantly. The development process must begin with good planning, implementation, evaluation, and continuous efforts to create improvements. A strong focus on sustainable village development will help achieve the Golden Indonesia 45 goal. The issue of sustainable development during the COVID-19 pandemic remains crucial. During the pandemic, various government assistance programs have been delivered to ensure that rural communities survive the economic impact of the pandemic. The Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance Program (*Bantuan Langsung Tunai-Dana Desa/BLT-DD*) is one of the very significant assistance for the survival of residents during the pandemic (Ali & Khan, 2022; Amrullah et al., 2020; Engka et al., 2021; Iping, 2020; Kurniawan, 2020; Maun, 2020; Pramanik, 2020; Sukmana et al., 2021). However, the management of that direct cash assistance program still requires vast improvements, as indicated by various studies reporting the implementation of BLT-DD was marred by many problems (Arumdani et al., 2021; Febriaty, 2021; Herdiana et al., 2021; Masambe et al., 2021; Suparman et al., 2021; Yunita & Agustang, 2022).

The use of village funds is intended to accelerate the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals/SDGs in villages, namely national economic recovery, national priority programs, as well as mitigation and handling of natural or non-natural disasters adjusted to

village authority. In village development, collaborative efforts are expected to be carried out based on mutual trust and sensitivity to local customs and needs, as well as be long-term oriented, build a common culture and generate innovative ideas.

In a recent development, smart village discussion has become an extremely popular topic. Smart village is often considered only related to the ability to use science and technology in managing sustainable village development (Aggarwal et al., 2018; Park & Cha, 2019; Prakash et al., 2017; Zhang & Zhang, 2020). Meanwhile, the alternative perspective defines a smart village as a phenomenon associated with bottom-up community initiatives that organize their own needs and attempt to overcome state and market limitations to contribute to the welfare of local communities or take advantage of opportunities through collective means (Slee, 2019; Zavrtnik et al., 2019). Based on the aforementioned discussion, it is crucial to combine the definition of the smart village with efforts to seek development solutions based on local wisdom, science, and technology (Sutriadi, 2018). Therefore, the main policies that can be developed in the smart village concept are to build a regional innovation system suitable for villages, encourages the agricultural sector to become a value-added industry, diversifies rural economic activities, integrates industrial support, and improves the welfare of village residents (Park & Lee, 2019).

Village development must also be carried out in a more accountable manner by the village government since accountability increases the degree of trust of village residents (Beshi & Kaur, 2020; Imawan et al., 2019). Accountability is influenced by four functions, namely democratic control, assurance, learning and performance, and leadership factors affecting the dynamics of accountability development (Nurhidayati, 2019). The leadership factor is also very influential in the development of smart villages (Syaodih, 2018).

### **3.2. Tourism Village Development**

Articles entitled "Tourism Village Development to Increase Economic Growth" ("*Kembangkan Desa Wisata Untuk Tingkatkan Pertumbuhan Ekonomi*") and "Eling Bansari Edutourism Integrated Area Inaugurated, becomes a Motor for Accelerating Village Development" ("*Kawasan Eduwisata Terpadu Eling Bansari Diresmikan, jadi Motor Penggerak Percepatan Pembangunan Desa*"), are evidence that tourist villages are part of essential village development issue. Tourism villages can serve as alternative business ventures in villages to drive the local economy by utilizing their natural and human resources with no ecological impact. The presence of tourist villages suggests tourism potential in villages that deserves to be nurtured and developed. One form of village tourism is edutourism, which combines tourism and educational aspects. In this tourism village, travelers are offered fun entertainment and educational activities, which are expected to be an added advantage for tourists.

Successful tourism village development requires sufficient support in several aspects, such as infrastructure development, growing environmental awareness, local government and community support, availability of funds from the central or regional government, and private sector participation (Kumar et al., 2022). Community involvement in village development is extremely important (Garis, 2017). The development of tourism potential in an area can be accomplished by mapping its tourism potential (Susilowati, 2017). The mapping can be carried out based on participation to ensure that the identification of tourism potential has the

carrying capacity of the local community (Sadali et al., 2020) . As observed from the villages that have successfully developed tourist villages, there are three fundamental approaches that can be adopted as a basis for determining the direction of village development. Those approaches are the sectoral approach through increasing the role of village-owned enterprises (BUMDes) in developing the village economy, human resources to increase the role of village communities in managing village potential, and the use of information technology to improve service quality, transparency, and accountability (Purnomo et al., 2020). The involvement of village residents in the development of tourist villages must also be accompanied by the development of human resources. BUMDes, in collaboration with the entrepreneurial communities, can develop community potential and has a strategic position to improve community welfare. BUMDes, a program for cultivating village entrepreneurship, has proven to be able to improve the community's economy through productive economic development (Badaruddin et al., 2020; Larasdiputra et al., 2019). The purpose of tourism development in rural areas is to assist community empowerment and achieve sustainable local economic development (Wijijayanti et al., 2020).

### **3.3. Involvement of People with Disabilities in Village Development**

Suka's article entitled "The Disabled's Roles Need to be Optimized in an Inclusive Space for Village Development" (*"Kelompok Difabel Perlu Dioptimalkan dalam Ruang Inklusif Pembangunan Desa"*) shows that people with disabilities need to be involved in the village development process. The Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration is currently developing an inclusive village pilot program with a target of 640 villages in 160 districts in 33 provinces which will take place from 2021 to 2024. This program suggests the central government's commitment and efforts to create inclusive villages for people with disabilities. In empowering the disabled in village development, there are two crucial vital aspects, namely participation of the disabled and the inclusiveness of village development programs.

In the initial discussion, the efforts to pursue sustainable development encompass the principle of not leaving anyone behind, including people with disabilities. This principle is important because there is a close relationship between disability and poverty. The gap between people with disabilities and the general population tends to widen as countries move out of poverty (Cobley, 2022).

The Village Disabled Group (KDD) must be empowered during the village development process. Besides, the establishment of space for disabled people in village development is necessary. The empowerment of people with disabilities by KDD can be carried out by providing motivation, creativity, and skills training. These efforts were reported to be capable of encouraging the disabled to participate in village-level activities and organizations (Drain et al., 2018; Puspita & Astuti, 2021). Conceptually, there are concerns that a shift in the village's non-profit-oriented (NPO) character to social entrepreneurship potentially weakens the fulfillment of the rights of residents with disabilities due to a change in status from participants to consumers (Darcy et al., 2019). This finding notifies that the growth of entrepreneurship in villages (such as BUMDes) is not expected to change the nature of services that transform residents into consumers.



### **3.4. The Roles of Women and the Involvement of Universities in Village Development**

Suka's article entitled "UNDIP Students Socialize the Role of Women in Village Development" ("*Mahasiswa UNDIP Sosialisasikan Peran Perempuan dalam Pembangunan Desa*") shows that the issue of women's roles in village development and universities' involvement in village development are significant. Women's roles in village development are critical since they have an essential position in the lives of residents. The large population of women and their central roles in the family places women's involvement in village development as necessary.

On the other hand, women's empowerment requires understanding from policymakers and implementers of women's empowerment programs at the village level. A holistic and integrated understanding of rural women's entrepreneurship is vital for policy reformulation at the lower levels of government (Sefer, 2020). Empowerment of women in sharia-based microfinance services in Bangladesh shows significant positive impacts on women and their families, including additional income and savings, improved living standards, and increased human resources capabilities. The three dimensions of empowerment have also expanded in the form of economic empowerment, socio-cultural empowerment, and family empowerment (Islam, 2021).

In addition, the role of universities in village development is equally important. Universities are considered to be equipped with quality human resources who can serve as partners in village development. Meanwhile, higher education personnel can help disseminate the importance of multi-stakeholders' empowerment and participation, as well as the transfer of applicable knowledge and technology that can assist development programs. They can also become partners who encourage village residents to have high motivation and self-confidence. Knowledge transfer, community empowerment, and the development of public facilities can help increase regional economic activities in a sustainable manner while supporting national development simultaneously (Issundari & Yani, 2021). In addition, universities can also provide training programs concerning participatory village development planning that involve vulnerable groups (poor, disabled, women, and minorities) (Susetiawan et al., 2018).

Increasing motivation and self-perception among women, followed by efforts to increase the ability of village women, is essential. A previous study has reported a positive and significant relationship between skills and social perceptions of intentions to become sustainable entrepreneurs (Polas et al., 2022). Further, effective motivation and leadership help women gain self-confidence and trust to set goals and be confident in achieving those goals (Gupta, 2021).

Woman empowerment in villages requires identifying the potential of the village and entrepreneurship training programs relevant to this potential. Increased education and training for women's self-help groups also affect four key factors, namely economic development, improvement in family affairs, decisions to use public facilities, and political empowerment (Aggarwal et al., 2020). Additionally, a knowledge management strategy will result in permanent investment in knowledge and human development (Fombad, 2018; Keller, 2020), which is beneficial for development, especially for village development.

#### 4. Conclusion

An analysis of village development issues in the regional online news media Suka in 2021 shows four main village development issues. The issues raised by Suka indicate the efforts of regional online news media to convey the importance of village development. This study demonstrates that regional news media can actively participate in directing the policy agenda and government programs for the ideal village development process through policy values, which include integrated and sustainable development, utilization of local resources in development, increasing the role of people with disabilities, women, and universities in village development. As press media and development are dynamic, studies on these topics can continue to be carried out, especially by utilizing big data. This study recommends that managers of regional online news media remain concerned on rural development issues. Regional online news media can support the formulation and creation of policies that favor the poor, marginalized people, people with disabilities, as well as women. Regional online news media can share best practices from various countries or regions that can inspire governments and policy makers to take innovative policies for the welfare of residents.

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