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Implementation of Change Management in BUMDes: A Case Study of a Family-Based Village Business

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Abstract

Background: In the era of economic disruption and digitalization, Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) face significant challenges in adopting change to remain relevant and competitive. The COVID-19 pandemic intensified these pressures by disrupting village business activities and exposing weak governance, while family-based BUMDes face an additional challenge because kinship ties blur the boundary between private and public interests.
Objective: This research aims to examine the implementation of change management in BUMDes that run family-based village businesses, focusing on adaptation strategies, leadership, community participation, and institutional structure.
Method: A descriptive qualitative case study was conducted in one purposively selected BUMDes in Indonesia, involving in-depth interviews with 20 informants, participatory observation, and document analysis, with source and method triangulation.
Results: Change unfolded through three phases, namely change initiative, initial resistance, and gradual transformation, resulting in a co-management model between the community and business families. Success was influenced by the commitment of the village head, the involvement of family business actors, and community support, whereas a dominant familial mindset and limited managerial capacity were the main barriers.
Conclusion: Gradual, participatory, and culturally embedded change is more effective than purely technical restructuring. This research strengthens community-based change management models and offers practical guidance for local BUMDes development policies.

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INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and digital disruption, local organizations face increasing pressure to adapt to a rapidly changing environment. Public and social sector organizations such as cooperatives, traditional institutions, and community-based enterprises need to build resilience through innovation and organizational change (Duchek, 2020; Errida & Lotfi, 2021). More than 60% of small and medium enterprises in developing countries experience operational disruptions due to unpreparedness for external changes, especially those based in local communities.

Especially in the rural sector, the global economic transformation poses its own challenges. Nearly 70% of the rural population in developing countries still depend on the informal economy and are not accessed by adequate financial systems. Therefore, institutions such as Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) have the vital potential to become engines of change and local economic empowerment, but only if they are able to adapt to the challenges of the times (Hilmawan et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, BUMDes have become a strategic instrument for developing the local economy since their introduction through Village Law No. 6/2014. As of December 2023, there are more than 60,000 BUMDes spread across the archipelago. However, only around 25% are active and able to make significant economic contributions to village communities. As village-level economic institutions, BUMDes are mandated to manage village assets, open employment opportunities, and increase village original income, so that their performance directly affects the welfare of rural households (Fitriani et al., 2024). Global changes, such as digital market competition, shifting consumer preferences, and the economic shock of the COVID-19 pandemic, have therefore pressed BUMDes to reorganize their business models and governance in order to survive (Anisariza et al., 2025; Belitski et al., 2022; Yaya et al., 2024).

One of the biggest challenges of BUMDes is weak organizational governance and resistance to change (Khaw et al., 2023; Putri et al., 2024). More than 40% of BUMDes fail to survive more than three years due to lack of adaptation to market dynamics and limited managerial capacity. In BUMDes that run family-based businesses - e.g. local food processing, agriculture, or household-based homestays - there are unique dynamics in decision-making, informal organizational structures, and the interplay between family and public interests. Therefore, the change management approach used needs to take into account the socio-cultural characteristics of the community (Shrivastava et al., 2022).

In family-based BUMDes, these general challenges take a more specific form. The overlap between kinship ties and managerial roles may weaken accountability, concentrate decision-making within one family, and blur the separation between family assets and village assets (Chen et al., 2022). As a result, structural reform is easily perceived as a threat to family ownership and identity, so that resistance to change tends to be rooted in loyalty, trust, and fear of marginalization rather than in purely technical objections (Schweiger et al., 2024). These family dynamics are the specific context that shapes how change management is initiated, negotiated, and institutionalized in such BUMDes.

This research is important for two main reasons. First, there are not many in-depth studies that highlight the implementation of change management in the micro realm of rural organizations such as BUMDes. Second, the sustainability of BUMDes is highly dependent on their ability to manage internal change in an inclusive and participatory manner. Without a proper understanding and change management strategy, many BUMDes have the potential to stagnate and even fail. With the increasing role of BUMDes as a catalyst for the village economy post-pandemic, the urgency to apply change management principles is even greater. The resilience of local organizations to crises is largely determined by the ability to transform, adapt to technology, and strengthen social capital (Duchek, 2020; Yasni et al., 2023).

The novelty of this research lies in the in-depth case study approach of a village-owned enterprise (BUMDes) that runs a family-based village business. BUMDes with this model are a hybrid form of organization, combining the characteristics of family and public entities in the village economic system. In many cases, family-based village businesses often sit at the intersection of personal and social interests, making them unique in terms of governance, decision-making and business sustainability.

From the perspective of family organization studies, family-run units are characterized by overlapping family, ownership, and management systems, in which emotional bonds, loyalty, and informal authority often shape strategic decisions (Swab et al., 2020). Similarly, change in micro and community economic organizations tends to depend on personal

relationships, informal communication, and local legitimacy rather than on formal procedures (Burnes, 2020; Sumarmi et al., 2022). However, these perspectives have rarely been applied to BUMDes, in which family business interests are embedded within a public village institution, and this gap is the point of departure of the present study.

Most previous studies have mostly discussed the general management of BUMDes without specifically exploring how close family relationships can affect organizational dynamics, especially in the context of change implementation. Studies by Hilmawan et al. (2023) and Fitriani et al. (2024), for example, still tend to emphasize the formal institutional aspect and have not comprehensively discussed the influence of social structure in the process of organizational transformation. In this context, this study aims to fill this void by addressing the socio-cultural perspective that is rarely touched upon in the discourse of change management in rural Indonesia.

This research developed a change management implementation model based on local and contextual participation. The main focus is on how the social dynamics and cultural values of village communities play a role in influencing the change strategies undertaken. Thus, the contribution of this research is not only academic, but also applicable in the context of more inclusive and sustainable village empowerment.

This research enriches the literature on change management by integrating classical theories and contextual approaches that are appropriate to the characteristics of village organizations. The concept of change management used in this study refers to the theory of John Kotter, which suggests eight stages in the process of organizational change ranging from creating a sense of urgency to institutionalizing change in organizational culture (Phillips & Klein, 2023).

In addition, Burnes' approach of planned change versus emergent change Burnes, (2020) provides an important theoretical framework in understanding how small organizations, including BUMDes, can choose change strategies that suit their internal and external dynamics. In the context of local participation, Sumarmi et al. (2022) emphasize that the active involvement of village communities in the process of program planning and implementation is a key success factor for BUMDes. This study aligns with this view, adding the familial dimension as an important aspect that influences participation.

Furthermore, the study by Yasni et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of transformational leadership of village heads in bringing changes to BUMDes structures and strategies. This study deepens that understanding by examining how the character of village leadership interacts with local family and community values in supporting or hindering change. Finally, Humaedi et al.'s (2025) study on the role of local culture in supporting or hindering organizational change provides a highly relevant perspective, especially in the context of villages that still uphold customary and family values.

By combining classical change management theory and a contextual approach based on village culture, this research seeks to close the gap in the literature that has so far been sectoral and has not integrated a transdisciplinary approach in discussing change in micro-community organizations. This research generally aims to examine the implementation of change management in the context of BUMDes that run family-based village businesses. Specifically, there are three main objectives to be achieved. First, to analyze the implementation process of change management in BUMDes, particularly in the aspects of strategy, leadership, social structure, and family dynamics. Second, to identify internal and external factors that support and inhibit the success of organizational change, taking into account the social conditions of the village and the involvement of local actors. Third, to formulate a participatory and contextual approach to organizational change that can be adopted by other BUMDes with similar characteristics.

This research is expected to provide various benefits that can be felt at the academic, practical and policy levels. From the theoretical side, this research enriches the literature on change management, especially in the context of community-based micro-organizations and hybrid organizations that bring together family and public elements. This research also

makes a new contribution to the development of local culture-based change management theory, which has so far been minimally discussed in depth. Practically, the results of this study can serve as an implementative guide for BUMDes managers, village heads, and other relevant parties in designing and implementing organizational change effectively.

By understanding the key factors that influence successful change, actors at the village level can avoid common failures that often occur in BUMDes. From a policy perspective, this research provides important input for local and central government in formulating village development and empowerment policies. The model of change based on participation and local values offered in this study can be used as a reference in mentoring programs and strengthening the capacity of village institutions, especially in facing the evolving economic, social, and technological challenges.

For example, a village head or BUMDes manager can begin by mapping the families that control key business units, communicate the reasons for change through village deliberations and informal forums such as pengajian and arisan, formalize the role of the family as an operational partner through a written agreement, and establish a community forum that periodically monitors business performance. Such steps can improve accountability while maintaining the social cohesion on which family-based organizations depend.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to describe in depth the implementation process of change management in a Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) that runs a family-based business. This approach was chosen because the research focus is on understanding social phenomena and organizational dynamics in the context of complex and contextual village community life. The following is a detailed description of the research method: The method was designed to correspond directly to the three research objectives, namely describing the change process, identifying supporting and inhibiting factors, and formulating a participatory change model, which are reported in the same order in the results section.

Research Approach and Type

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study type. Case studies were chosen because they allow researchers to explore phenomena that occur contextually and in-depth in one unit of analysis, namely family-based BUMDes. This research does not aim to generalize, but rather comprehensively understand the dynamics of change management in a specific local context.

Location and Research Subjects

This research was conducted in one of the villages that has an active BUMDes and runs a family-based business, which was determined purposively. The location selection was based on several criteria, as can be seen in Table 1:

Table 1. Research Site Selection Criteria

No.	Criteria	Description
1	BUMDes runs family-based business units	Major business units are managed by local families, such as food processing and home farming businesses
2	Organizational change process occurs	Changes were found in the organizational structure, management roles, and business policies of BUMDes.
3	Active involvement of the community and family businesses	Communities and entrepreneur families are involved in deliberations, daily management, and decision-making

Based on table 1 above, viz:
1. The BUMDes has been running family business units (e.g. local food processing, family farms, homestays, or crafts).
2. There is a process of organizational change or transformation (such as changes in structure, leadership, or business patterns).
3. Active involvement of village communities and entrepreneurial families in the management of BUMDes.

Table 2. Characteristics of Research Subjects

Informant Category	Total	Role in Research
Village Head	1 person	Policy maker and initiator of BUMDes change
BUMDes Management	3 people	Directly involved in the management and implementation of change strategies
Family members of business actors	4 people	Key actors in family business units affected by changes in management structures and systems
Community/customary leaders	2 people	Influencers in the acceptance of change and bridges between groups in the community
Villagers (general respondents)	10 people	Community beneficiaries and observers of change, providing perceptions of the transformation process

Based on table 2, the research subjects consisted of:
1. Village head and village officials.
2. BUMDes management.
3. Family members of business actors.
4. Community leaders and citizen representatives.

Data Collection Technique

Data was collected through the following main techniques:

In-Depth Interviews

Key informants such as village heads, BUMDes managers, and family business owners were interviewed. Interviews were semi-structured with guidance on key topics around the change process, family roles, organizational strategies, and community perceptions. A total of 20 informants were involved, consisting of the categories presented in Table 2. Interview data were used mainly to capture the perceptions of family members, managers, and villagers during the resistance and transformation phases reported in the results section. In accordance with research ethics, the identities of the village and the informants are not disclosed in this article.

Participatory Observation

Researchers made direct observations of daily activities in the BUMDes environment, interactions between actors, and social dynamics during the change process. Observations were made by recording activities, behaviors, and informal communication patterns that emerged in the community.

Documentation

The documents analyzed include the organizational structure of the BUMDes, activity reports, village meeting minutes, local policies, and relevant internal BUMDes records. This

documentary data helps to understand the historical and administrative context of the changes.

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis was carried out descriptively qualitatively, through the following stages:

1. Data Reduction: Filtering and sorting information obtained from the field to focus on core issues related to organizational change and family engagement.
2. Data Presentation: Arranging data in narrative form and thematic categorization to facilitate interpretation.
3. Conclusion Drawing and Verification: Formulating meaning from the data and organizing findings based on patterns that emerged in the field.

The analysis was conducted in a cyclical manner, i.e. the data was reviewed repeatedly until a deep understanding of the observed phenomena was obtained. The thematic categories used in data presentation were organized around the research objectives, namely the phases of change, the supporting and inhibiting factors summarized in Table 3, and the components of the participatory change model.

Data Validation Technique

To ensure data validity, the following triangulation technique was used:

1. Source triangulation, which compares data from various informants.
2. Triangulation of methods, namely comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation.
3. Member check, which is asking for clarification or confirmation from informants on the researcher's interpretation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research found that the implementation process of change management in family business-based BUMDes not only involves formal institutional aspects, but is also strongly influenced by socio-cultural dynamics, family structures, and community trust in local leaders. The research results are presented in three main sections in accordance with the set objectives.

Change Management Implementation Process

The implementation of change management in the study BUMDes took place in three major phases: change initiative, initial resistance, and gradual transformation.

Change Initiative

The change was initiated by the village head who wanted to improve the business management structure to make it more professional and reduce dependence on one family of business actors who previously dominated the agricultural product processing business unit. The village head saw the potential for conflicts of interest and stagnation of growth due to lack of innovation and weak managerial control.

Therefore, a new management team was initiated and the family business structure was separated from the BUMDes institution. This initial step reflects the first stage in Kotter's theory (Phillips & Klein, 2023), which is creating urgency for change. However, the initiative was not immediately accepted by all parties.

Initial Resistance

There was considerable resistance from the families of business owners, who felt they were losing control of the business they had started. In interviews, family members expressed concerns over financial transparency, profit sharing, and the possibility of being marginalized from the business process. This conflict poses a challenge in implementing

structural change, and highlights the importance of effective communication and socialization.

From the perspective of the general public, there is ambiguity about the direction of change. Some residents are supportive because they want openness, but others feel there is no need for change because the business has been running "well all along". This shows that family values, loyalty and caution in rural communities can be barriers to change if not managed carefully.

Gradual Transformation

After a process of village deliberation and the establishment of a community forum, the structural changes were finally made in stages. The families of business owners are still involved in management as operational partners, while financial management and business policies are the responsibility of the newly formed BUMDes management team. This approach adopts a "co-management" model between the community and the business families.The socialization and communication of change were carried out in several layers. Formal communication took place through village deliberations and the community forum, where the village head and the new management explained the purpose of separating the family business structure from the BUMDes institution, the new division of roles, and the mechanism of financial accountability.

Informal communication was then carried out through religious gatherings (pengajian), rotating savings groups (arisan), and traditional meetings, which allowed the business families and villagers to express their concerns in a more familiar setting. This layered communication gradually reduced resistance because the change was understood as a negotiated arrangement rather than a unilateral decision.

Supporting and inhibiting factors

In the implementation of organizational change in family-based BUMDes, a number of supporting and inhibiting factors were found. These findings are summarized in Table 3 below:

Table 3. Supporting and Hindering Factors for Change Management Implementation

Category	Supporting Factors	Inhibiting Factors
Leadership	Support from a visionary village head	Lack of managerial training for new board members
Institutional	Official decree establishing the new management team	Institutional structure is not yet flexible to innovation
Socio-Cultural	The existence of trust in traditional leaders	Dominant family values inhibit professionalism
Community Participation	Active village deliberation forum	Lack of community understanding of BUMDes governance
Local Economy	High market potential of village products	Dependence on one business unit

The most significant supporting factor was the presence of a respected village head who was an agent of change. His participatory and communicative leadership succeeded in bridging differences of opinion between the business families and the community. Meanwhile, the biggest inhibiting factor was the dominance of a familial mindset that blurred the line between private and public interests (Putri et al., 2024; Sidik & Habibi, 2024).In addition to internal actors, external parties also influenced the change process.

The regulatory framework of Village Law No. 6/2014 provided the legal basis for restructuring, while the official decree on the new management team gave formal legitimacy to the change. At the same time, the lack of managerial training for new board members indicates that support from supra-village government, village facilitators, and other partners

is still needed. Because the data in this case did not capture systematic involvement of these external parties, their role is discussed here as a structural need rather than as a main empirical finding.

Participatory Change Model: A Contextualized Local Approach

Based on the field findings, researchers formulated a participatory change model that can be adopted by other BUMDes with similar characteristics. The model includes five stages:

1. Internal Social Mapping
   Identify who the key actors are, including the families of the business actors, and understand the social networks formed within the BUMDes.
2. Multi-level Socialization
   Using village forums and informal groups as a medium for communicating change to avoid sharp resistance.
3. Family Cooptation as Partner
   Instead of eliminating the role of the family, the role was re-oriented to become a business partner with a clearer operational agreement.
4. Capacity Building of the New Management Team
   Training on financial management, micro-enterprise management, and business ethics for newly appointed BUMDes administrators.
5. Monitoring by Community Forum
   The community is given access to oversight through quarterly evaluation forums, which also serve as a space for reflection and strategy improvement.

Discussion with Literature

The findings of this study confirm the importance of organizational change theory in the context of rural and local communities. First, the field results show that the success of change in BUMDes is strongly influenced by a strong and visionary leadership figure (Sulistyorini et al., 2024). This is in line with the initial stages in Kotter's change model (Phillips & Klein, 2023), namely creating a sense of urgency, forming a coalition of change drivers, and developing a vision and change strategy that can be understood by all levels of the community. In this case, the village head not only acts as a formal leader, but also as a social mediator who is able to manage informal power relations rooted in the family structure and village culture.

The role of the village head in driving change demonstrates that local leadership cannot be viewed solely from an administrative structure. Rather, it functions as a symbol of trust and social stability that is key in building coalitions of change. Village heads who succeed in building communication across actors-business families, traditional leaders, and the general community-have performed the function of "social mobilization" as emphasized in the literature on community-driven development (Sumarmi et al., 2022; Yasni et al., 2023).

The approach to change that is not carried out drastically, but rather through a gradual adaptation process by considering social dynamics, is very much in line with the concept of emergent change discussed by Burnes, (2020). In this approach, change is not imposed structurally from above (top-down), but rather develops through discussion, negotiation and social experimentation between various parties in the community. In the context of BUMDes involved in family businesses, this proves to be particularly relevant as power and authority structures are not only formal, but spread across family, customary, and socio-religious networks.

The findings of this study also reinforce the views of Humaedi et al. (2025) who emphasize that local values such as gotong royong, deliberation, and family relationships can act as catalysts for organizational change. In this study, the village deliberation forum is not only a consultative tool, but also a space for social negotiation where various parties,

especially business families, articulate their positions and interests. Musyawarah becomes a deliberative arena that allows change to be accepted not as a threat, but as the result of collective agreement.

Meanwhile, the involvement of villagers in every stage of change from socialization to monitoring strengthens Sumarmi et al.'s (2022) argument regarding the importance of community participation in driving the success of village development programs. In this finding, villagers are not only beneficiaries, but also have an active role in designing and monitoring the transformation process. This model succeeds in creating a sense of ownership for BUMDes, which was previously considered the property of a few individuals or families.

In addition, informal socialization processes through recitation forums, neighborhood gatherings, and traditional meetings are effective communication channels that are rarely discussed in modern management literature. These channels have strong social power to shape public opinion and strengthen the legitimacy of change. In other words, communication strategies for change in villages are more effective when using cultural approaches that are intimate and based on social networks, not just formal counseling (Shrivastava et al., 2022). From an organizational theory perspective, this approach illustrates how informal structures and cultural values can serve as managerial tools that support or even replace formal mechanisms in the change process.

BUMDes as an entity born from and for rural communities, cannot be forced to use a pure corporate approach, as this model ignores the socio-emotional dimensions inherent in rural communities.Thus, the implementation of change management in family business-based BUMDes cannot rely solely on rational-technical strategies such as restructuring, standardization, or operational efficiency. Change must be situated within the framework of local culture, social relations, and community identity. This suggests that a transdisciplinary approach, combining change management, organizational anthropology and community development, is important in addressing the complexity of change at the grassroots level.

When compared with other studies, the central role of the village head in this case confirms the findings of Yasni et al. (2023) on the importance of transformational leadership of village heads in changing BUMDes structures and strategies. However, this study extends their view by showing that such leadership is effective mainly when it is able to negotiate with family and customary authority. In contrast to Hilmawan et al. (2023) and Fitriani et al. (2024), who tend to emphasize formal institutional aspects, the present findings show that informal social structures determine whether formal institutional change is accepted. These findings also support Duchek, (2020); Yasni et al., (2023), who state that the resilience of local organizations depends on the ability to transform and strengthen social capital, although technological adaptation was not yet a prominent aspect in the BUMDes studied.

In terms of long-term impact, the changes observed at the time of the research were still at the stage of institutionalization, which corresponds to the final stage of Kotter's model (Errida & Lotfi, 2021), namely anchoring change in organizational culture. The sustainability of the co-management model will depend on continuous capacity building for the new management, diversification beyond one dominant business unit as indicated in Table 3, and consistent community oversight through the quarterly evaluation forum. Since this study was not conducted longitudinally, these long-term impacts are interpreted as potential implications that need to be examined in future research.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of change management in family business-based BUMDes is strongly influenced by social dynamics, the role of family business actors, and the legitimacy of local figures. The change process unfolded through three phases, namely change initiative, initial resistance, and gradual transformation,

supported by a visionary village head and active deliberation forums but hindered by a dominant familial mindset and limited managerial capacity.

Change can be successful if done gradually, through a participatory approach, intensive socialization, and co-optation of key actors into a more transparent and accountable system. Practically, village governments and BUMDes managers can adopt the proposed five-stage participatory model, combining capacity building, culturally based communication, and community monitoring to build a resilient and inclusive local economy, while policymakers can integrate it into village mentoring and capacity-strengthening programs.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest. This research was conducted in the absence of any commercial, financial, or personal relationship that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest. The author has no managerial, ownership, or familial ties to the BUMDes studied, its business units, or the village government, and none of these parties had any role in the study design, data analysis and interpretation, writing of the manuscript, or the decision to publish the results.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

As the sole author, Agus Rohmat Hidayat was responsible for all aspects of this research, including conceptualization, methodology, fieldwork and data collection (in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis), data curation, formal analysis, interpretation of findings, writing of the original draft, and review and editing of the manuscript. The author has read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USAGE STATEMENT

The author used generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools during the preparation of this manuscript solely to improve the language clarity, grammar, and readability of the English text. Generative AI was not used to design the study, collect or analyze data, interpret the findings, generate references, or draw conclusions. All AI-assisted output was critically reviewed and edited by the author, and its use complied with applicable ethical guidelines on the use and disclosure of generative AI in scientific research. Generative AI is not listed as an author. The author takes full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the entire content of this manuscript.

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