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The welfare impact of village fund allocation in Indonesia: The comparative of Java and Non-Java

Mardalena[1,a*], Ardi Adji[2,b], Siti Rohima[3,a], Harunurrasyid[4,a], Rahma Nida[5,a]
[1]mardalena@fe.unsri.ac.id; [2]ardi.adji@tnp2k.go.id; [3]sitirohima@fe.unsri.ac.id;
[4]harunurrasyid@fe.unsri.ac.id; [5]rahmanida@fe.unsri.ac.id

[a] Department of Economic Development, Faculty of Economic, Universitas Sriwijaya, Indonesia
[b] Tim Nasional Percepatan Penanggulangan Kemiskinan, Indonesia
*corresponding authors

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ABSTRACT

There are inequality at the rural and urban levels that must be concern to the government. To reduce the inequality is to optimize village funds. Allocation of village funds is a stimulus to accelerate the village economy. Fiscal stimulus through village funds boost the economy at the village level. This research examines the impact of village fund allocation on economic performance in Java and non-Java. The Difference in Difference (DiD) method compares the average value of the observed variables before the village fund policy and the average variable value of development indicators and welfare indicators after the policy was implemented. The allocation of village fund has some good impacts on Indonesia's rural economy. We found that funding can boost welfare, such as improving clean water, per capita income, human development index, and reducing poverty. We also discovered that the Java area has a greater impact than the non-Java area. The results of this study provide essential information for formulating government plans and policies as a policy reference and evaluating the implementation of regional autonomy policies and allocation of village funds in Indonesia.

Introduction

Inequality in rural and urban development has become the government's focus as a classic problem that still needs to be fully resolved. Economic activity, access and infrastructure, and educational opportunities are centered in urban areas. These conditions are then transformed into factors inhibiting the economy's acceleration, so there are differences in the rate of acceleration and economic development between villages and cities. One of the economic indicators that is still visible is the poverty rate. Badan Pusat Statistik (2019) recorded a poverty rate in the rural zone of 15.15 million people and a poverty rate in urban areas of 9.99 million. There is also an educational gap between villages and cities. An indication of the educational gap can be seen from the number of teachers, access, and available educational facilities. Vito & Krisnani (2015) explain that the low

interest of teachers in teaching in the village is due to the lack of access to transportation and the poor facilities in the village. In addition to these gaps, there are village and city problems in various other indicators such as health, clean water, and so on. Not to mention, there is an unbiased urban phenomenon that exacerbates the gap between cities and villages. Therefore, the government still includes these problems as a priority policy focus through village fund allocation interventions.

Table 1. Average Village Fund by Province 2015-2019

No	Province	Average 2015-2019 (IDR)
1	Jawa Barat	3.960.773.807.200
2	Jawa Tengah	5.648.211.517.600
3	DIY	312.547.750.600
4	Jawa Timur	5.444.147.237.200
5	Banten	837.281.765.400
6	Aceh	3.659.751.006.000
7	Sumatera Utara	3.193.801.955.600
8	Sumatera Barat	619.794.314.000
9	Riau	1.082.558.570.800
10	Jambi	868.799.085.200
11	Sumatera Selatan	1.830.973.684.400
12	Bengkulu	847.588.824.000
13	Lampung	1.427.480.182.600
14	Kep Bangka Belitung	226.811.915.600
15	Kep Riau	193.572.972.200
16	Bali	435.446.890.000
17	NTB	801.324.604.200
18	NTT	2.035.131.122.800
19	Kalimantan Barat	1.416.614.844.400
20	Kalimantan Tengah	989.833.330.600
21	Kalimantan Selatan	1.178.061.875.200
22	Kalimantan Timur	640.507.940.000
23	Kalimantan Utara	936.611.981.400
24	Sulawesi Tengah	1.073.557.564.400
25	Sulawesi Selatan	1.645.018.601.000
26	Sulawesi Tenggara	950.091.429.000
27	Gorontalo	454.249.504.400
28	Sulawesi Barat	322.726.283.200
29	Maluku	778.117.122.200
30	Maluku Utara	550.123.770.000
31	Papua Barat	700.533.693.200
32	Papua	3.576.719.079.000

Source: Kementrian Keuangan (2019)

Allocation of village funds is a stimulus to accelerate the village economy. Infrastructure improvement policies are carried out as a buffer for economic access and empowerment in the form of labor-intensive activities. used as a fiscal stimulus to boost the economy at the village level (De

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Mello. 2000). The effectiveness of development at the village level is closely related to the role of the village government and community empowerment. In addition. the village fund allocation also stimulates empowerment to create a multiplier effect that encourages increased welfare. Even though there has been a village fund program as a stimulus. in its implementation. it requires cooperation with all village officials and elements. which jointly increase village development and welfare and reduce the inequality that occurs. This allocation. in practice. considers the needs of each village from each district in various provinces in Indonesia. such as whether the village is developing. advanced. or lagging so that each area has the highest spending limit or village fund ceiling that is different from another.

Table 1, the province with the highest expenditure of village funds is Central Java, with an average total village fund ceiling from 2015-2019 reaching IDR 5.65 trillion, followed by East Java at IDR 5.44 billion. Fourteen provinces have an average budget ceiling of over one trillion rupiah. In the eastern region of Indonesia, Papua Province has the highest average budget ceiling, around 2.58 trillion rupiah. Meanwhile, there are also provinces with an average village fund ceiling relatively slight, including the Riau Archipelago of 193.6 billion rupiahs, Bangka Belitung of 226.8 billion rupiahs, and the Special Region of Yogyakarta, of 312.6 billion rupiahs. In each province, according to the needs and the number of districts covering the 382 identified neighborhoods. The village development paradigm follows a decentralization pattern. This condition provides a new paradigm for village officials to understand the financial system, empowering citizens, so strengthening institutions at the village level is needed to encourage village government to work well (Annahar et al., 2023). Thus, villages can develop their territory based on local economic development. Therefore, an increase in the village budget is expected to be a driving force to achieve faster village economic growth. However, in implementing village fund allocations, various problems have been encountered, such as budget misuse, the quality of human resources in management, to the effectiveness and priority of distribution.

Indonesia Corruption Watch (2017) noted that at least 84 cases of corruption caused losses of 1.02 trillion rupiah. The management of village funds between villages in Java and non-Java also differs. The educational background of the executor or the task force in allocating and channeling village funds differs between Java and non-Java. Central Bureau of Statistics (2018) through a survey of Indonesian village potential, shows that village heads, village secretaries, and related village officials in Java are dominated by higher education than those non-Java. The access of villages on the island of Java to economic centers is quite close compared to areas non-Java, with a wide area coverage and a relatively dense population. Another reason why Java got the higher fund is because of the dense population compared to non-Java (Arifin et al., 2020). If the exact formula for calculating village funds is still used, then the goal of village funds to reduce inequality between

regions will be difficult to achieve. On the other hand, accountability, management, and financial management of village funds in areas non-Java could be more problematic. For example, many villages in Lhokseumawe, Aceh, do not record and report the use of the village budget (Karim et al., 2021). These variations in conditions can potentially produce different impacts between villages on the island of Java.

Some previous studies explained the relationship between village funds and economic outcomes. The measurements of the economic outcomes are poverty, economic growth, inequality, human development index, and social welfare indicators. They use several methods, such as multiple linear regression, the difference in difference, two stages least square (2SLS), and geographically weighted regression, to indicate the effect or relationship on village funds. Wibowo et al (2019) using the Difference in Difference (DID) analysis technique stated that the allocation of Village Funds had an impact on improving output outcomes. The outcomes measurements are infrastructure, education, and health services, as well as improving economic outcomes, but had not been able to improve welfare indicators. Village Funds are expected to be able to increase economic growth in the short term but have not affected reducing poverty and unemployment. Oki et al (2020) have different results in their study. The research results showed a positive relationship between village fund management and community empowerment and welfare. Furthermore, Ernita & Sari (2019) which uses multiple linear regression analysis techniques, also shows that village fund allocations do not affect poverty. Using the Geographically Weighted Regression (GWR) method, Artino et al (2019) emphasize that village funds can reduce poverty but have no significant effect.

Some studies measured the influence of village funds on other economic variables, such as income distribution, human development index, education, and poverty. Ismail et al (2020) using a simultaneous equation regression model with a two-stage least squares (2SLS) regression technique and a Fixed Effect Model (FEM), found that the village fund variable has a negative and insignificant effect on income distribution inequality. It means that any increase in village funds will reduce inequality in income distribution. Findings by Yusuf & Afendi (2020) using multiple regression analysis techniques, show that village funds have a negative and insignificant effect on the human development index. The findings of Arham & Rauf (2020) using a multiple regression model show the result that the elasticity of income inequality is getting higher after implementing village fund transfers. Rural poverty tends to decrease yearly, but elasticity changes are getting lower after implementing village fund transfers. Furthermore, this study showed that village fund transfers are insignificant in overcoming the problem of income inequality. At the same time, education and the level of labor productivity in the agricultural sector are the determining factors in overcoming the problem of income inequality in rural areas. This study further reveals the

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importance of village fund transfers in reducing rural poverty.

Other previous research investigated the relationship between village funds and economic growth. Research conducted by Karim et al (2021) uses a quantitative research method using the Warp PLS statistical tool. The results of the analysis show that the village fund allocation variable has a positive effect on economic growth. Research conducted by Zakaria et al (2020) used multiple linear regression analysis with panel data, showing that the village fund allocation variable positively affects economic growth. with panel data, showing that the village fund allocation variable positively affects economic growth. Village fund allocation of 10% of matching funds channeled through the APBD has no impact on poverty alleviation. Moreover, village funds from the State Revenue and Expenditure Budget, which are channeled directly to villages, have the potential to reduce poverty rates in districts/cities in Maluku Province.

Both studies mentioned in above underline the importance of the Village Fund Program in stimulating economic growth. They contribute empirical evidence to substantiate the claim that village fund allocations have a positive effect on economic growth, aligning with the broader goal of using these funds to accelerate rural development and alleviate poverty. These studies highlight the significance of targeted investments in village-level initiatives. This study contributes to the literature by comparing the welfare indicator between Java and non-Java area. Besides that, we also measure the impact using the difference and difference method. And we explore some well-being indicators, such as access to clean water, sanitation, GDP per capita, human development index, poverty rate, and education.

Method

The scope of this research focuses on analyzing the effectiveness of village fund allocation and whether it significantly impacts the development, social, economic, and quality factors of the village itself. Specifically, this study uses a quantitative approach by focusing on testing comparisons of village conditions before and after the village fund allocation policy, which compares the resulting impact between allocations in Java and non-Java. Development factors include available public facilities indicators, social factors include the human development index (HDI), and economic factors include welfare indicators. The observation period in this study was 2010-2014 as the pre-funding phase and 2015-2019 as the post-allocation phase village. We test statistically at the district level as a research object in which some villages received village fund transfers. This study used secondary data. We investigated time series data covering a 5-year phase (2010-2014) before the allocation of funds, five years after the allocation (2015-2019), and cross-sectional data covering 382 districts in Indonesia. Data were obtained from the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics, Regional Financial Reports, Financial Reports of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of

Indonesia, and other sources derived from related literature and journals. This study used the difference in difference method approach to determine the magnitude of the impact of implementing village fund allocation policies. This method compares the average factor values observed before the village fund policy and the average factor values after the implemented policy.

Table 2. Difference in Difference Estimation

	Policy with Treatment	Control Policy
After	$Y_1(u_i)/\ D_i = 1$	$Y_1(u_i)/\ D_i = 0$
Before	$Y_0(u_0)/\ D_i = 1$	$Y_0(u_0)/\ D_i = 0$
	$(Y_1/\ D = 1) - (Y_0/\ D = 1)$	$(Y_1/\ D = 0) - (Y_0/\ D = 1)$

Source: Thomas et al (2003)

The control policy is the policy implemented by the government as an intervention. In this case, we define control policy as the policy of allocating village funds to various villages in Indonesia. Meanwhile, policies with treatment are follow-up interventions to ensure that the basic policy objectives are implemented more optimally. Because the object of observation is still limited to the village fund allocation policy, and all villages receive the same treatment of village fund distribution, the treated group is assumed to be ceteris paribus or constant. In other words, the research only focuses on the first difference test with a before-after analysis of the impact of the basic allocation policies. The measurement of the impact of village fund allocation went through various stages [23]. In the end, it was possible to compare the level of effectiveness of village fund allocation in the Java and non-Java models by comparing the magnitude of the impact between the two models. Thus, we grouped data into two separate models or tabulations: Java and non-Java, which model district-level data. The data is divided into two phases, namely before and after. We add up the period ranges of the observed factors. Furthermore, the estimated data is the average value of each factor observed in both the before and after phases. The following calculation measures the average value into the difference in difference calculation box to get the resulting impact value (Khandker et al., 2010; Gertler et al 2016). After obtaining the measurement on both the Java and non-Java models, the next step is to compare the magnitude of the impact generated by the two models. We also use the t-test to support whether there was a difference between before and after the allocation of village funds.

Results and Discussion

This research divides the focus of the study in looking at the impact of development and welfare from village funds on several variables into two models, namely the study of the effects of the Java and non-Java models. This is intended to find out in more detail through regional classification to understand how much positive contribution has been made. We also see the statistical significance of the magnitude of the impact resulting from the two models. To measure the impact, we use the concept of Difference in Difference, which is the calculation of the impact through interventions

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carried out through control and treatment policies. However, the limitation of this research is only up to the study of control policies and assumes a treatment policy with a constant value.

Table 3. Evaluation of the Impact of Water, Sanitation and HDI Model for Java

	Water			Sanitation			HDI	
	(T)	(C)		(T)	(C)		(T)	(C)
After	0	99.616	After	0	77.287	After	0	68.274
Before	0	99.383	Before	0	65.885	Before	0	65.300
Diff.		0.234	Diff.		11.401	Diff.		2.974
Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)	Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)	Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)

Source: data processed

Evaluation through this estimate looks at whether there are differences in conditions before and after the implementation of the village fund control policy and how it contributes to development and welfare indicators in regencies in Indonesia. Table 3, for the Java model, shows that village funds contribute positively to the development indicator of access to clean water and proper sanitation and an indicator of welfare, namely the human development index. These findings are in line with research conducted by Hartojo et al (2022) who found an impact of village funds on economic growth in Indonesia. The resulting impact on the village fund control policy from the government gave a before-after increase of 0.234 for increased access to clean water, 11.401 for access to proper sanitation, and an increase in the human development index of 2.974, after the implementation of village funds. This shows that there is a fairly high dependence of the village on village funds (Suyanto et al., 2022; Susilo et al., 2021). Statistically, through a paired t-test, the three variables show a trend of different conditions from before and after village funds are implemented, indicated by a significance p-value < 0.05.

Table 4. Evaluation of the Education, APM and GRDP Model

	Educ			APM			GRDP	
	(T)	(C)		(T)	(C)		(T)	(C)
Java Model								
After	0	12.588	After	0	96.754	After	0	24.080.904.3
Before	0	11.593	Before	0	92.380	Before	0	19.720.774.0
Diff		0.995	Diff		4.374	Diff		4.360.130.3
Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)	Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)	Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)
Non-Java Model								
After	0	12.351	After	0	94.753	After	0	569.852.372.5
Before	0	11.346	Before	0	89.932	Before	0	377.015.326.1
Diff		1.005	Diff		4.821	Diff		192.837.046.4
Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)	Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)	Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)

Source: data processed

Table 4 shows the different result for the evaluation education by using expected length of schooling, APM and GRDP, the result of non-Java model also shows a difference in circumstances in the form of a positive contribution, indicated by a significance p-value < 0.05 for the three variables.

This means that control policies impact welfare indicators. The resulting impact is a positive increase in the expected length of schooling by 1.005, the junior high school enrollment rate of 4.821, and an increase in per capita income of Rp. 192,837,046.4.

Table 5. Evaluation of the Poverty Rate, Total Poverty and Poverty Line

Java Model								
	Pov Rate			Poverty			Pov Line	
	(T)	(C)		(T)	(C)		(T)	(C)
After	0	12.138	After	0	151.892	After	0	326192.533
Before	0	14.352	Before	0	173.175	Before	0	250595.578
Diff		-2.214	Diff		-21.283	Diff		75596.954
Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)	Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)	Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)
Non-Java Model								
After	0	14.258	After	0	35.395	After	0	361238.796
Before	0	15.524	Before	0	36.629	Before	0	274597.869
Diff		-1.242	Diff		-1.234	Diff		86640.926
Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)	Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)	Sig (2-tailed) – paired t-test		(0.000)

Source: data processed

Table 5 shows the contribution of policies to other welfare indicators, namely the poverty percentage (POV RATE), the number of poor people (POV), and the poverty line (POV LINE). Government control policies also have a significant impact on poverty recovery. This result is consistent with findings from previous studies. Increasing infrastructure from the government's policy can reduce poverty (Wiratama et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023). The Keynesian economic theory emphasizes the role of government intervention in stabilizing and stimulating the economy. The poverty rate and the number of poor people show a negative notation and have the effect of reducing these variables. This result was also found in previous studies. There is a negative effect between village funds and poverty levels (Kalpika Sunu & Suyana Utama, 2019; Saragi et al., 2021). This decrease can be caused by the village's role in increasing village community business ownership (Arifin et al., 2020). This can also be supported by increasing public access to finance. On the other hand, the poverty line increased by Rp. 75.596.954 which means that the poor have been able to meet more basic needs than before. Statistically, there are differences before and after implementing government policies through village funds where the p-value is < 0.05.

The situation is the same as the indicators for welfare non-Java, which show statistically differences in conditions before and after the implementation of the village fund control policy. The policy has had a before and after impact, namely reducing poverty and the number of poor people. Meanwhile, the poverty line as the limit for fulfilling basic needs that the community can do has increased. The use of village funds, both the Java and non-Java models, statistically has had a contribution and improvement impact on observational variables indicating that village funds have affected both allocations on the island Java and non-Java. However, the numbers generated from

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the two models show different numbers. This means that the impact of village funds in the two models has different tendencies. Furthermore, Table 6 compares the magnitude of the impact the two models can produce.

Table 6. Comparison of Java and Non-Java

Variables	Java	Non-Java
Water	0.234	2.798
Sanitation	11.401	11.476
HDI	2.974	3.122
Educ	0.995	1.005
APM	4.374	4.821
GRDP	4360130	192837046
Pov Rate	-2.214	-1.242
Pov	-21.282	-1.234
Pov Line	75596.95	86640.93

Source: data processed

Table 6 shows those results indicate that the existence of village funds has brought about positive shanges in poverty reduction, the poverty line, and overall welfare indicators, both before and after their implementation. It also acknowledges that the impact may vary between the Java and non-Java models, which could be due to regional disparities and specific contextual factors. There is an improvement in access to clean water from greater utilization of village funds non-Java Island. The Human Development Index, per capita income, and poverty line also show more considerable differences in numbers than in the Java model. However, the Java model shows a greater reduction in poverty rates and the number of poor people than the non-Java model. In general, other variables show numbers that are not much different. The observation that the Human Development Index shows more considerable differences in number non-Java suggests that the allocation of village funds in these areas may have led to broader improvements in education, healthcare, and living standards. Investment in human development can lead to a more productive and skilled workforce, contributing to higher income levels and overall economic well-being.

Conclusion

Allocation of village funds is a stimulus to accelerate the village economy. Infrastructure improvement policies are used as a buffer for economic access and empowerment in the form of labor-intensive activities and used as a fiscal stimulus that encourages economic growth at the village level. The effectiveness of development at the village level is closely related to the role of the village government and community empowerment. Therefore village funds have become an instrument for accelerating rural development and alleviating inequality between villages and cities. This study discusses how the impact resulting from the implementation of village fund policies influences the development and welfare indicators in both the Javanese and non-Javanese sample samples. This study also compared the impacts resulting from the implementation of village

funds on the island of Java and non-Java. This study found that village funds impacted development indicators and village welfare in Indonesia before and after the implementation of village fund allocation policies. Furthermore, the resulting impact on improving clean water access infrastructure, human development index, income per capita, and poverty line has better results in the Java model than non-Java. By province, the evaluation showed that there had been an impact. However, some did not show significant results in the intervention, such as increasing poverty rates and the number of poor people, and decreasing per capita income. This research highlights that infrastructure improvements play a significant role in economic access and empowerment. To maximize the impact of village funds, policies should focus on identifying and prioritizing key infrastructure projects that can stimulate economic growth, such as roads, bridges, and utilities. These projects should be tailored to the specific needs of each village.

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