# Opportunities and Challenges of Regional Autonomy in the Era of Globalization (Case Study of Silimabanua Village, Somambawa Sub-District, South Nias District)

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| Article Info | ABSTRACT |
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| | Regional autonomy in the era of globalization is important to encourage village independence and innovation in the face of information and technology. Villages become active actors in development by managing resources and designing programs according to their needs. Autonomy is a strategy to strengthen competitiveness without leaving local identity. This study aims to analyze the opportunities and challenges of regional autonomy in the era of globalization in Silimabanua Village, Somambawa Sub-district, Nias Selatan Regency, The method in this study uses qualitative with a case study approach. There were 35 informants in this study with data collection using primary data through interviews. Research in Silimabanua Village shows that village autonomy is running quite well. The village government is considered to have authority, community participation is high, and development is helped despite constraints in funds and human resources. Globalization is felt strongly and responded to positively. Technology has begun to be utilized in services, although not optimally. Residents suggested technology training, MSME development, and digitization of services.<br><br>*This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.* |

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## INTRODUCTION

Regional autonomy provides an opportunity for each region to develop according to its resource potential. With the freedom to determine policies, public services become closer, more equitable, and according to the needs of the community. This autonomy aims to realize a just and prosperous government through the delegation of some tasks to the regions. However, challenges still exist, such as the suboptimal role of the bureaucracy, the tug of authority between levels of government, and the dominant top-down service pattern that makes people still the object, not the subject of development [1].

Globalization is the process of increasing interconnectedness and interdependence among nations and among people in areas such as trade, culture, and communication, which blurs national boundaries. According to Keohane and Nye, globalization makes an object or behavior a common feature throughout the world without being bound by region. Although it does not yet have a standard definition, globalization became widely known in the 1980s and grew rapidly after the Cold War. Its development was driven by advances in communication

and transportation technology, which made the world more connected and interdependent in social, political, economic, and environmental aspects[2].

The implementation of regional autonomy aims to facilitate the management of local resources and the improvement of public services, by giving greater authority to village governments. Silimabanua Village, as an area with agricultural potential and local culture, has the opportunity to develop these sectors independently. However, in the midst of globalization, which opens access to markets, technology and information, the village faces the pressures of global economic competition and cultural challenges, such as the attraction of outside cultures that can erode local values [3].

Remote villages often face a variety of complex problems. First, high fiscal dependence on the central government makes it difficult for regions to manage and develop local potential independently, due to limited funds sourced from the village's own revenue. Second, infrastructure inequality and the low quality of human resources, especially in terms of digital literacy and managerial skills, hamper the application of information technology in public services, such as the effective use of e-government applications and village financial management through APBDes. Third, weak bureaucratic performance, characterized by a lack of professionalism, low accountability and minimal transparency, contributes to declining public trust in local government policies and services. These problems are the main obstacles in optimizing regional autonomy, especially in facing the challenges of globalization [4].

Research by Khairi Ardiansyah et al. (2024) in Causa journal emphasized that the main challenges of village autonomy include overlapping regulations, low apparatus capacity, and culture [5]. Wawan Kokotiasa (2022) in the Journal of Village Government Administration underlines the dilemma between a positive response to globalization through the affirmation of global strategies and the potential for marginalization due to capitalist market mechanisms [6].

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Economically, globalization has put significant pressure on local village products, as many of them do not have strong enough competitiveness to compete with cheaper and more massive imported goods in the market. On the other hand, fiscal dependence on the central government is still high, so the ability of villages to move independently in developing their economic potential is very limited. In addition, the low level of digital literacy among village officials and communities, coupled with inadequate telecommunications infrastructure, is a major obstacle in utilizing technology to support governance and community empowerment [8].

By considering opportunities such as the potential of the agricultural sector, cultural tourism, and the strength of local communities that are still maintained, and on the other hand challenges in the form of global market competition, limited bureaucratic capacity, and digitalization inequality, this study is expected to provide more targeted policy recommendations. The results of this study are expected to be strategic input for the sub-district and district governments in strengthening the implementation of regional autonomy, especially in Silimabanua Village, so that it is able to adapt and develop in the midst of changing global dynamics.


**METHOD**

This research uses a quantitative method with a case study approach that aims to analyze the opportunities and challenges of regional autonomy in the era of globalization. The informants in this study amounted to 50 people who were selected to obtain relevant data. Data collection was conducted by utilizing primary data through interviews and direct observation in the field. Furthermore, the data obtained was analyzed systematically to identify and understand the dynamics of regional autonomy in the context of globalization more deeply.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Regional autonomy is the authority given to local governments to regulate and manage government affairs and the interests of local communities in accordance with regional aspirations and potential. In the era of globalization, the implementation of regional autonomy is becoming increasingly complex because regions are not only dealing with internal dynamics, but must also be able to respond to global changes and challenges. Globalization has both positive and negative impacts on the implementation of regional autonomy. On the one hand, globalization opens opportunities for regions to access technology, information, investment, and international markets [9]. This encourages regions to improve competitiveness through local economic development, improvement of public services, and optimal utilization of potential resources. Local governments are required to be more innovative, adaptive, and professional in managing government affairs to answer the challenges of the times. But on the other hand, globalization also presents serious challenges, such as pressure on local products due to competition with imported goods, development inequality between regions, and high fiscal dependence on the central government. In addition, unequal infrastructure, low capacity of regional apparatus, and lack of digital literacy and quality of human resources are obstacles in realizing effective and sustainable regional autonomy [10].

Silimabanua Village, located in Somambawa Sub-district, South Nias Regency, has a population of 1,233 people. Of this number, 473 people are male, while the other 760 people are female. This population composition shows that there are more women than men in this village. Based on religious data, the population of Silimabanua Village adheres to two religions, namely Protestant Christianity and Catholic Christianity. The number of Protestant Christians reaches 1,061 people, while the number of Catholic Christians is 172 people. Thus, the majority of Silimabanua Village residents are Protestant Christians, and there are no adherents of other religions in this village. In terms of social status or livelihood, most of the residents of Silimabanua Village work as farmers. In addition, there are 17 people who work as civil servants (PNS) and 17 others who work as entrepreneurs.

This shows that the agricultural sector is still the main source of livelihood for the village community. Geographically, Silimabanua Village has clear boundaries with the surrounding villages. To the south, the village borders Sitolubanua Village. To the north, it borders Somambawa Village. To the west, it borders Hilidohona Village, and to the east, it borders Fanedanu Village. This geographical location puts Silimabanua Village in a strategic position among several other villages in Somambawa Sub-district.

Based on the results of interviews conducted with informants in the study regarding opportunities from regional autonomy, the main challenges faced, the influence of social media globalization, the positive impact of globalization, the use of technology, government services, the role of village governments to face challenges in the era of globalization can be seen in the following table:

**Table 1 Informant Characterization**

| Characterization | Frekuensi (f) | Persentase (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | | |
| Man | 18 | 36,0 |
| Woman | 32 | 64,0 |
| Age | | |
| < 30 Years | 31 | 62,0 |
| ≥ 30 Years | 19 | 38,0 |

Based on the characteristics of the informants in the study, 18 respondents were male and 32 respondents were female. At age shows age < 30 years 21 respondents and age ≥ 30 years. This indicates that the characteristics of informants in this study are dominated by female gender and age < 30 years.

**Table 2. Research Results**

| Question | Research Results |
|---|---|
| The village government has its own authority in managing its territory | Based on the results of research conducted on 50 informants through interviews, 40 informants said that the village government has its own authority in managing its territory and 10 informants did not say otherwise. |
| Regional autonomy helps progress development in Silimabanua Village | Based on the results of research conducted on 50 informants through interviews, 25 informants said they were very helpful, 18 informants said they were quite helpful, and 7 informants said they were not helpful. |
| The community is often involved in village meetings related to village development and programs | Based on the results of research conducted on 50 informants through interviews, 31 informants said they were always involved in village meetings related to village development and village programs, 17 informants said sometimes, and 2 informants said never related to village development and programs. |
| Key opportunities from village autonomy | Based on the results of research conducted on 50 informants through interviews, 26 informants said the main challenges faced were limited funds, 15 said human resource shortages, 5 respondents said weak supervision, and 3 informants said a lack of community participation |
| Pengaruh globalisasi (media sosial, budaya luar, internet, teknologi) dalam kehidupan | Based on the results of research conducted on 50 informants through interviews, 28 informants said they felt the influence of globalization (social media, outside culture, internet, technology), 20 informants said they felt it, and 2 informants said they did not feel it |
| The influence of globalization has a positive impact on village communities | Based on the results of research conducted on 50 informants through interviews, 28 informants said that the influence of globalization was quite positive, 19 informants said it was very positive, and 3 informants said it was negative. |
| The village government has used information technology (e.g. social media, apps, whatssap) in services or announcements. | Based on the results of research conducted on 50 informants through interviews, 40 informants said that some had used information technology (for example social media, whatssap applications) and 10 informants did not use services or announcements. |
| Satisfied with current village government services | Based on the results of research conducted on 50 informants, 33 informants said they were quite satisfied with the current village government services, 14 informants said they were very satisfied, and 3 informants said they were not satisfied with the current village government services. |
| Satisfied deBased on the results of research conducted to 50 Suggestions for village governments in facing the challenges of globalization | Based on the results of research conducted with 50 informants, 26 informants suggested improving technology education and training for citizens, 10 informants suggested developing micro-enterprises and local creative economy, 10 informants said establishing cooperation with the central government and the private sector, and 4 informants said accessing and utilizing digital technology in public services. |

Village autonomy has become a crucial issue in the context of community development and empowerment in Indonesia. The results of your research provide an interesting picture of the perceptions and experiences of the community and government of Silimabanua Village regarding village autonomy, the impact of globalization, and the use of technology. In general, the data shows that village autonomy in Silimabanua is running quite well with the support of community participation and the utilization of technology, although there are still some challenges that need to be overcome..

1. Village Development Authority and Progress:

Most informants (40 out of 50) agreed that village governments have their own authority in managing their areas. This indicates a good understanding of the decentralization of authority at the village level. This support is reinforced by the fact that the majority of informants (25 very helpful, 18 quite helpful) felt that regional autonomy has helped progress development in Silimabanua village. This suggests that village autonomy is considered effective in promoting local development.

2. Community Participation

The level of community participation in village meetings is high, with 31 informants stating that they are always involved and 17 saying that they are sometimes involved. This is a positive indicator that the principles of participatory democracy are starting to be applied at the village level. Community involvement is essential to ensure that development is in line with the needs and aspirations of the community.

3. Tantangan Otonomi Desa:

While village autonomy provides many opportunities, this study identified limited funding (26 informants) as a major challenge. This is a classic problem in the implementation of regional autonomy in many places, where budget availability is often a barrier. In addition, the lack of human resources (15 informants) and weak supervision (5 informants) are also concerns, pointing to the need for capacity building of village officials and accountability mechanisms. The lack of community participation (3 informants), although a minority, still needs to be considered so that it does not become an obstacle in the future.

4. The Influence of Globalization and the Use of Technology:

Globalization, which includes social media, outside culture, the internet and technology, is felt strongly (28 informants) or noticeably (20 informants) by almost all informants. The majority of informants (28 moderately positive, 19 very positive) also saw a positive impact of globalization on village communities. This shows that village communities in Silimabanua are open to change and innovation. The village government has also started to adopt information technology (IT), such as social media and WhatsApp, in its services and announcements (33 informants have used some). This is a step forward that shows awareness of the importance of digitizing public services in the village.

5. Service Satisfaction and Suggestions:

The level of community satisfaction with village government services is currently quite high (33 moderately satisfied, 14 very satisfied). This reflects the relatively good performance of the village government. Suggestions from informants to face the challenges of globalization focus on improving education and technology training for residents (26 informants), developing micro-enterprises and local creative economy (10 informants), establishing cooperation with the central government and the private sector (10 informants), and utilizing digital technology in public services (4 informants). These suggestions are highly relevant and demonstrate the community's understanding of the importance of adaptation and innovation.

Technological autonomy in the village is the ability of the village to independently plan, develop, and utilize technology according to local potential without dependence on outside parties. This is an important part of the Smart Village concept. The benefits include increasing the efficiency of public services through village applications or social media, empowering the local economy through e-commerce and digital training, and improving the quality of education through access to online platforms. In addition, technology enables data-driven decision-making, increases community participation, and supports the sustainable management of natural resources. Transparency and accountability are also improved through the digitization of financial management, and village security can be enhanced through monitoring systems or emergency applications [11].

The challenges in implementing technological autonomy in villages are complex. One of the main obstacles is the digital divide, where many villages still do not have adequate internet access or supporting technology devices. In addition, limited human resources in terms of digital understanding and skills also hamper the optimal utilization of technology. Another obstacle is the limited budget for infrastructure development and technology training. Data security and privacy aspects are also important issues that need special attention. On the other hand, resistance to change from the community or village officials, dependence on external parties in technology development, as well as the challenge of maintaining and sustaining the system that has been built, are equally important issues. The low digital literacy of the community also makes the use of technology not fully effective and equitable [12].

In line with the study on the Role of BUM Desa in Improving the Village Community Economy (Case Study in Village X, Year Y) is very relevant in the context of village economic autonomy. BUM Desa is an important instrument in strengthening the local economy through business units that are managed independently by the village. The utilization of technology is also often part of the BUM Desa development strategy, such as in digital marketing or financial systems. In addition, the study titled Implementation of the Village Fund Policy and its Impact on Infrastructure Development and Community Welfare is also very relevant because village funds are a tangible manifestation of fiscal autonomy. This study evaluates the effectiveness of using village funds, which are often allocated for infrastructure development, human resource training, and technology development.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of research with 50 informants in Silimabanua Village, it can be concluded that the implementation of village autonomy has gone quite well. The majority of informants stated that the village government has its own authority in managing its territory, which is a strong indicator that the principle of decentralization has been implemented at the village level. In addition, regional autonomy is considered to have contributed positively to the progress of village development, although there are still obstacles such as limited funds and human resources. The level of community participation in village meetings is also relatively high, indicating that the practice of participatory democracy has begun to be implemented.

The influence of globalization through social media, the internet, and external culture is felt strongly by the community and most respond positively to it. The village government has also begun to utilize information technology such as WhatsApp and social media in public services, although not yet fully optimized. The level of satisfaction with village government services is also quite high, indicating a real effort to improve service quality. The community also provided constructive suggestions to face the challenges of globalization, such as the need for technology training, development of local MSMEs, and wider use of digital technology. Village governments are advised to be more serious in expanding the use of information technology in public services equally. In addition, it is important to conduct digital literacy training for village officials and communities to improve their ability to adapt to technological developments and face the challenges of globalization more readily and independently.

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