



## Emerging Trends in Rural Governance: A Bibliometric Analysis of Policies and Strategies for Developing Underprivileged Villages

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**Abstract.** This study investigates emerging trends in rural governance, focusing on policies and strategies for the development of underprivileged villages. A bibliometric analysis of relevant publications from 2020 to 2024 was conducted to identify key patterns and trends in rural governance research. The findings highlight the significance of decentralization, community empowerment, and participatory governance in enhancing rural development. Key challenges, such as poverty, geographic isolation, and limited infrastructure, are emphasized as barriers to sustainable growth in underprivileged villages. The study also explores the role of leadership, stakeholder engagement, and digital technologies in improving governance capacity. A holistic approach integrating evidence-based policy-making, local community involvement, and technological advancements is recommended to address these challenges. The research offers insights into the global context of rural governance, with Indonesia emerging as a key focus for development strategist.

**Keywords:** Rural Governance, Underprivileged Villages, Decentralization, Community Empowerment, Participatory Governance, Leadership, Stakeholder Engagement, Digital Technology.

**Abstrak.** Penelitian ini mengkaji tren terkini dalam tata kelola pedesaan, dengan fokus pada kebijakan dan strategi pengembangan desa tertinggal. Analisis bibliometrik terhadap publikasi terkait dari 2020 hingga 2024 dilakukan untuk mengidentifikasi pola dan tren utama dalam penelitian tata kelola pedesaan. Temuan menunjukkan pentingnya desentralisasi, pemberdayaan masyarakat, dan tata kelola partisipatif dalam meningkatkan pembangunan pedesaan. Tantangan utama seperti kemiskinan, isolasi geografis, dan keterbatasan infrastruktur menjadi hambatan dalam mencapai pertumbuhan berkelanjutan di desa tertinggal. Penelitian ini juga mengeksplorasi peran kepemimpinan, keterlibatan pemangku kepentingan, dan teknologi digital dalam meningkatkan kapasitas tata kelola. Pendekatan holistik yang mengintegrasikan pembuatan kebijakan berbasis bukti, keterlibatan masyarakat lokal, dan kemajuan teknologi direkomendasikan untuk mengatasi tantangan ini. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan tentang konteks global tata kelola pedesaan, dengan Indonesia sebagai fokus utama untuk strategi pembangunan.

**Kata kunci:** Tata Kelola Pedesaan, Desa Tertinggal, Desentralisasi, Pemberdayaan Masyarakat, Tata Kelola Partisipatif, Kepemimpinan, Keterlibatan Pemangku Kepentingan, Teknologi Digital.



## 1. Introduction

Rural governance plays a pivotal role in ensuring sustainable development, particularly in underprivileged villages. Effective governance encompasses transparency, accountability, and stakeholder engagement to address challenges such as poverty, geographic remoteness, and limited institutional capacity.<sup>1</sup> In Indonesia, Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages (UU Desa) provides a legal framework for empowering villages by granting autonomy in planning development and managing financial resources.<sup>2</sup> However, despite its implementation, many villages continue to face structural deficiencies, highlighting the need for innovative governance models.<sup>3</sup>

According to Presidential Regulation (*Peraturan Presiden/Perpres*) No. 63 of 2020, Indonesia identifies underprivileged regions that require targeted policy interventions to bridge socio-economic gaps and ensure equitable development. The regulation mandates specific measures for regional acceleration programs focused on education, infrastructure, and institutional capacity-building.<sup>4</sup> However, fragmented policy implementation and lack of coordination between government agencies hinder the effectiveness of these initiatives.<sup>5</sup>

From an organizational culture perspective, the values and norms upheld by village administrators significantly influence governance effectiveness. Rigid bureaucratic cultures often hinder innovation and responsiveness in village public service delivery.<sup>6</sup> Conversely, an organizational culture that fosters collaboration,

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<sup>1</sup> Lucy Auditya, Husaini Husaini, and Lismawati Lismawati, "Analisis pengaruh akuntabilitas dan transparansi pengelolaan keuangan daerah terhadap kinerja pemerintah daerah," *Jurnal Fairness* 3, no. 1 (2013): 27. See also, Edah Jubaedah, "Implementasi kebijakan transparansi keuangan di daerah," *Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi: Media Pengembangan Ilmu dan Praktek Administrasi* 8, no. 3 (2011): 04.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Bender, "DESA: Optimization of variable structure modelica models using custom annotations," In *Proceedings of the 7th International Workshop on Equation-Based Object-Oriented Modeling Languages and Tools*, pp. 45-54. 2016. See also, Presiden Republik Indonesia, "Undang-Undang Nomor 6 Tahun 2014 Tentang Desa," 18-April-2 ACM International Conference Proceeding Series § (2014),

<sup>3</sup> Dedy Yulawana et al., "Classification and prediction of rural socio-economic vulnerability (IRSV) integrated with social-ecological system (SES)," *Decision Science Letters* 11, no. 3 (2022): 229.

<sup>4</sup> Kementerian Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia (Kemensesneg), "Peraturan Presiden Republik Indonesia No. 63 Tahun 2020 tentang Penetapan Daerah Tertinggal Tahun 2020–2024," *Kementerian Sekretariat Negara* 018390 (2020): 6.

<sup>5</sup> Robertus M. Bambang Gunawan, *GRC (Good Governance, Risk Management, And Compliance)-Rajawali Pers*, (Jakarta: PT. RajaGrafindo Persada, 2021), 32.

<sup>6</sup> Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational culture and leadership*, (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2010): 54. See also, Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and changing organizational culture: Based on the competing values framework*, (New Jersey: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 43.

innovation, and openness to change has been proven to enhance the effectiveness of rural development policies.<sup>7</sup>

Similarly, transformational leadership plays a crucial role in driving change and enhancing governance capacity in underprivileged villages. Visionary, innovative, and community-responsive leadership has been shown to accelerate service delivery improvements and social welfare in rural areas.<sup>8</sup> However, in many cases, villages lack leaders with the capability to effectively manage change, and there is persistent resistance to policy innovation.<sup>9</sup>

Stakeholder engagement is another key factor in determining the success of rural governance. Emphasize that active participation of local communities and stakeholders in village development planning increases policy legitimacy and enhances the effectiveness of development programs.<sup>10</sup> However, studies in Indonesia indicate that public participation in village deliberations needs to be strengthened, particularly in ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups.<sup>11</sup>

In the digital era, the use of technology and data science has the potential to accelerate the transformation of underprivileged village governance. Implementing data-driven information systems for development planning and financial management enables more accurate decision-making and promotes greater transparency in village governance.<sup>12</sup> However, technological infrastructure limitations and low digital literacy at the village level pose significant barriers to implementing digital-based governance.<sup>13</sup>

To address these challenges, a more holistic governance approach is needed, integrating evidence-based policymaking, digital technology utilization, and cross-

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<sup>7</sup> Chad A. Hartnell, Amy Yi Ou, and Angelo Kinicki, "Organizational culture and organizational effectiveness: a meta-analytic investigation of the competing values framework's theoretical suppositions," *Journal of applied psychology* 96, no. 4 (2011): 677.

<sup>8</sup> Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness through Transformational Leadership*, (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 1994), 65. See also, Jixia Yang, Zhi-Xue Zhang, and Anne S. Tsui., "Middle Managers' Role in Transformational Leadership: Influencing Motivation and Performance," *Academy of Management Journal*, 52, no. 1, (2009): 149.

<sup>9</sup> Suparno, "Model Pengawasan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Terhadap Pemerintah Daerah Dalam Rangka Mewujudkan Good Governance (Studi Di Kota Salatiga Periode 2014-2019)," *Jurnal Jurisprudence* 6, no. 2 (2017): 128.

<sup>10</sup> R. Edward Freeman, *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*, (Cambridge: Cambridge university press, 2010), 21. See also, John M. Bryson, "What to do when stakeholders matter: stakeholder identification and analysis techniques," *Public management review* 6, no. 1 (2004): 29.

<sup>11</sup> Sony Yuwono, "Keterlibatan Pemangku Kepentingan Dalam Proses Pembuatan Kebijakan Publik Di Indonesia: Studi Kasus Di Kota A," *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik*, 20, no. 2 (2017): 182.

<sup>12</sup> Yanuar E. Restianto and Laeli Budiarti, "Peranan Sistem Pengawasan Keuangan Desa Dalam Mendukung Efektivitas Audit," *Akuntansi* 45 5, no. 1 (2024): 815-839.

<sup>13</sup> Gunawan, GRC (*Good Governance, Risk Management, And Compliance*), 27.

sector collaboration. Nazelia et al.<sup>14</sup> highlight the importance of building a data-sharing culture among government institutions to strengthen policy integration and enhance governance effectiveness in underprivileged villages. Additionally, improving the capacity of village administrators and fostering active community participation in decision-making are crucial factors in achieving more inclusive and sustainable rural development.

To provide a comprehensive analysis of emerging governance trends for sustainability and rural development, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

RQ 1: What are the most relevant publications on rural governance and underprivileged village development?

RQ 2: Who are the most prolific authors based on the number of publications per year?

RQ 3: Which institutions have contributed the most to rural governance research?

RQ 4: Which countries have contributed the most to rural governance research?

RQ 5: Which countries are cited the most in publications related to rural governance?

RQ 6: Who are the most cited authors in the field of rural governance and village development?

RQ 7: What are the key keywords frequently associated with rural governance research?

RQ 8: What are the trending topics in rural governance research?

## 2. Methods

This study used RStudio and Scopus in a series of organized procedures. Initially, search terms were established, with “Rural Governance” as the main phrase. Using the phrases (“Local Governance”, “Village Administration”, “Rural Development”, “Village Autonomy”, “Community Empowerment”, “Participatory Governance”, “Regional Government”), a search for these terms was performed in Scopus on titles and abstracts. In this research, the keyword “Rural Governance” was used to initiate a search on titles and abstracts in Scopus. The search results were then filtered to ensure specificity by applying several filters: open access publications, final publication stage, source type restricted to journals, subject area, keywords, and English language. The results were then refined and exported in .bib format for further processing.

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<sup>14</sup> Dinar Shabrina Nazelia et al., “Transformasi Supervisi Pendidikan: Tantangan Dan Peluang Di Era Digital,” *Jejak Pembelajaran: Jurnal Pengembangan Pendidikan* 8, no. 5 (2024): 28.

The data was then organized using RStudio in accordance with the research questions (RQ). The following statements were run in RStudio with the syntax: `install.packages("bibliometrix")`, `library(bibliometrix)`, and `biblioshiny()`. As a result, the previously saved file was transferred to a bibliometric analysis link, enabling more in-depth data analysis.

Other tools such as VOSviewer and Publish or Perish were used to answer different research questions. First, the keyword "Rural Governance" was used on titles, abstracts, and keywords to search Scopus between 2020 and 2025 using the Boolean search technique on Scopus with the following format: "TITLE-ABS ( "Village Governance" OR "Rural Governance" OR "Local Governance" OR "Village Administration" OR "Rural Development" OR "Decentralization" OR "Village Autonomy" OR "Community Empowerment" OR "Participatory Governance" OR "Regional Government") AND PUBYEAR > 2014 AND PUBYEAR < 2026 AND PUBYEAR > 2019 AND PUBYEAR < 2026 AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE, "j")) AND (LIMIT-TO (OA, "all")) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTAGE, "final")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOCP")) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Indonesia"))". To find trends and patterns in the data, the retrieved articles were first saved in .RIS file format before being displayed and analyzed.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Rural Governance and Rural Development Policies

Rural governance refers to the systems, structures, and processes through which decisions affecting rural communities are made and implemented.<sup>15</sup> It involves the interaction of various actors, including local governments, civil society, and the private sector, in shaping the development and administration of rural areas. Unlike urban governance, which typically deals with more centralized and structured systems, rural governance often operates within decentralized frameworks, where local authorities hold significant autonomy in decision-making.<sup>16</sup> This decentralization, however, presents both opportunities and challenges, as rural governments must balance local autonomy with the oversight of higher-level authorities.<sup>17</sup> Effective rural governance requires strong institutional

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<sup>15</sup> Pan Sun et al., "How does spatial governance drive rural development in China's farming areas?," *Habitat International* 109, no. 4 (2021): 102320.

<sup>16</sup> Ian Merrell, "Blockchain for decentralised rural development and governance," *Blockchain: Research and Applications* 3, no. 3 (2022): 100086.

<sup>17</sup> Sicheng Chen et al., "Decentralization, local information, and effort substitution: Evidence from a subnational decentralization reform in China," *Governance* 23 (2024): 201.

frameworks that can support responsive and inclusive policies that address the unique needs of rural populations.<sup>18</sup>

The role of local governments in rural governance is pivotal. Decentralized governance allows for more context-specific and flexible policies that are better suited to the diverse challenges faced by rural areas, such as poverty, limited infrastructure, and lack of access to services.<sup>19</sup> Research has shown that local governments in rural areas often face resource constraints, limited administrative capacity, and challenges in public service delivery, which can hinder the effectiveness of governance. However, local authorities also have an advantage in terms of being more closely connected to the communities they serve, enabling them to implement more targeted solutions.<sup>20</sup> In this context, rural governance requires not only strong leadership but also mechanisms for citizen participation, transparency, and accountability to ensure that local policies meet the needs of rural communities [Click or tap here to enter text](#).

In addition to local governance, the participation of rural communities in decision-making processes is essential for the success of rural governance. Participatory governance in rural settings ensures that local knowledge, experiences, and needs are integrated into policy-making, leading to more effective and sustainable development outcomes. Furthermore, stakeholder engagement fosters social cohesion, trust, and cooperation, which are crucial for addressing complex rural issues such as land management, agricultural development, and climate change adaptation. The integration of local voices into governance processes not only improves policy legitimacy but also strengthens the overall governance framework by ensuring that decisions are more democratic and reflective of the community's priorities.<sup>21</sup>

Underprivileged villages are rural areas characterized by limited access to essential services, inadequate infrastructure, and lower socio-economic development compared to more prosperous regions.<sup>22</sup> These villages often face high levels of poverty, unemployment, and educational disparities, which impede their ability to thrive and achieve sustainable development. The causes of

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<sup>18</sup> Chatzichristos Georgios, and Hennebry Barraí, "Social innovation in rural governance: A comparative case study across the marginalised rural EU," *Journal of Rural Studies* 99 (2023): 209.

<sup>19</sup> Anwesha Dutta and Harry W. Fischer, "The local governance of COVID-19: Disease prevention and social security in rural India," *World development* 138 (2021): 105234.

<sup>20</sup> Bernadett Kiss et al., "Citizen participation in the governance of nature-based solutions," *Environmental Policy and Governance* 32, no. 3 (2022): 247.

<sup>21</sup> Joydeep Guha and Bhaskar Chakrabarti, "Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through decentralisation and the role of local governments: A systematic review," *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance* 22 (2019): 12.

<sup>22</sup> Walter Leal Filho et al., "Using the sustainable development goals towards a better understanding of sustainability challenges," *International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology* 26, no. 2 (2019): 183.



underdevelopment in these villages are multifaceted, including historical neglect, lack of investment, and geographical isolation.<sup>23</sup> The lack of access to basic services such as healthcare, clean water, and education further exacerbates the challenges faced by these communities, creating a cycle of poverty that is difficult to break.<sup>24</sup>

Efforts to improve the living conditions in underprivileged villages often focus on poverty alleviation programs, infrastructure development, and social empowerment. Rural development programs that emphasize community-driven initiatives and local participation have been found to be effective in addressing the unique challenges of underprivileged villages.<sup>25</sup> Involving local residents in decision-making processes ensures that development strategies are tailored to the specific needs of the community, leading to more sustainable and inclusive outcomes. However, despite the importance of such participatory approaches, underprivileged villages often face barriers to accessing resources and support, including limited political influence, inadequate administrative capacity, and lack of external assistance.<sup>26</sup> As a result, overcoming these barriers and creating an enabling environment for development remains a key challenge in addressing the needs of underprivileged villages.

Finally, the role of government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in improving the living conditions of underprivileged villages is critical. While governments are responsible for creating policies that promote inclusive development, NGOs often play a vital role in implementing grassroots-level interventions and providing services in areas where the state is absent or ineffective.<sup>27</sup> Collaborative partnerships between governmental bodies, NGOs, and local communities are essential for ensuring that development initiatives are sustainable and address the root causes of poverty and inequality. Through such partnerships, underprivileged villages can access the resources, knowledge, and support needed to improve their socio-economic conditions and build a more equitable future.

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<sup>23</sup> Fayaz Gul Mazloun Yar, and Majid Yasouri, "Rural Development Challenges in Addition to Effective Solutions to Overcome Obstacles," *Zhongguo Kuangye Daxue Xuebao* 29, no. 3 (2024): 84.

<sup>24</sup> ZRM Abdullah Kaiser, Afzal Hossain Sakil, and Fatema Akter, "Urban Poverty: Causes, Current Trends, Consequences, and Pathways to Sustainable Solutions," In *the Palgrave Handbook of Global Social Problems*, pp. 1-17. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2024.

<sup>25</sup> Wong, Susan, and Scott Guggenheim, "Community-driven development: myths and realities," *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper* 84, no. 2 (2018): 42-69.

<sup>26</sup> Abdul Wahid et al., "Barriers to empowerment: Assessment of community-led local development organizations in Pakistan," *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* 74 (2017): 1364.

<sup>27</sup> Mohammad Ismail Bhuiyan, and Md Aminul Haque, "NGOs' initiatives and grassroots approach for accessing to health care services for the slum people in Dhaka," *Frontiers in Health Services* 4 (2024): 1386698.

Rural development policies are strategies and actions implemented by governments and other organizations to improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of rural areas. These policies aim to address issues such as poverty, limited access to resources, and underdeveloped infrastructure, which are prevalent in many rural regions. The goals of rural development policies are to enhance livelihoods, promote sustainable economic growth, and improve living standards in rural communities.<sup>28</sup> However, rural development policies must be tailored to the unique characteristics of rural areas, taking into account local needs, resources, and the socio-economic context.<sup>29</sup> A one-size-fits-all approach is often ineffective in addressing the diverse challenges faced by rural areas, requiring policies that are flexible, inclusive, and context-specific.

One key component of rural development policies is the promotion of agricultural development, as agriculture remains the primary livelihood for most rural populations. Rural development policies often focus on improving agricultural productivity, supporting smallholder farmers, and promoting sustainable farming practices that enhance food security while preserving natural resources.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, rural development policies aim to diversify rural economies by fostering non-agricultural sectors such as rural tourism, small industries, and service-based businesses.<sup>31</sup> By diversifying economic opportunities, these policies seek to reduce rural dependency on agriculture and create more stable and resilient economies in rural areas. Furthermore, rural development policies emphasize the importance of improving access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure to create a more equitable society and ensure that rural residents can benefit from the same opportunities as urban populations.

The effectiveness of rural development policies is often contingent upon strong governance, effective policy implementation, and active community participation. Research suggests that successful rural development requires not only top-down policy interventions but also bottom-up approaches that involve local communities in decision-making and implementation processes.<sup>32</sup> Local

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<sup>28</sup> Shah Fahad et al., "Analyzing the status of multidimensional poverty of rural households by using sustainable livelihood framework: policy implications for economic growth," *Environmental Science and Pollution Research* 30, no. 6 (2023): 16109.

<sup>29</sup> Andrea Cattaneo et al., "Economic and social development along the urban–rural continuum: New opportunities to inform policy," *World Development* 157 (2022): 105941.

<sup>30</sup> Van Touch et al., "Smallholder farmers' challenges and opportunities: Implications for agricultural production, environment and food security," *Journal of Environmental Management* 370 (2024): 122536.

<sup>31</sup> Agus Sudrajat et al., "Vocational village model: Bridging the gaps towards sustainable rural development," *Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development* 8, no. 13 (2024): 7021.

<sup>32</sup> Giuseppe Gargano, "The bottom-up development model as a governance instrument for the rural areas. The cases of four local action groups (LAGs) in the United Kingdom and in Italy," *Sustainability* 13, no. 16 (2021): 9123.



participation ensures that policies are more closely aligned with the needs and aspirations of rural populations, leading to greater ownership and sustainability of development initiatives. Moreover, policies that encourage partnerships between government agencies, NGOs, and the private sector can help leverage resources and expertise, enhancing the overall impact of rural development efforts.<sup>33</sup> In summary, rural development policies must address the multi-dimensional challenges of rural areas through a comprehensive, participatory, and context-sensitive approach to ensure long-term and sustainable development outcomes.

### **3.2. Bibliometric Analysis of Village Development Policy**

Issues pertaining to rural governance and development are discussed in several journals each year. These periodicals employ a range of methodologies, including mixed, qualitative, and quantitative approaches. This indicates that studies on rural governance and development have remained relevant in recent years. The information is recorded in Table 1.

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<sup>33</sup> Yang Yu et al., “Integrating Rural Development, Education, and Management: Challenges and Strategies,” *Sustainability* 16, no. 15 (2024): 6474.

**Table 1.** Research Articles Related to Rural Development

Authors	Indonesia's Regional Studied	Research Focus	Findings	Policy Focus the Use
Fatem et al. <sup>34</sup>	Tambrau Regency, West Papua (also known as Southwest Papua)	The research focuses on the impact of conservation policies and their interaction with traditional hunting practices of Indigenous communities in Tambrau, West Papua. It explores the tension between conservation policies and local livelihoods, particularly regarding hunting as a subsistence and cultural activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study found that hunting is still a critical livelihood and cultural practice for Indigenous communities in the region. However, the introduction of conservation regencies and stricter regulations have led to clashes between hunters and conservation officials.</li> <li>Hunting practices have been changing with the arrival of modern weapons, new actors, and market-driven pressures, which has led to over-hunting and threats to wildlife.</li> <li>Indigenous identity is increasingly emphasized in forest management policies, yet the enforcement of hunting regulations often marginalizes local communities and undermines their traditional rights.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The paper discusses decentralized conservation policies in Tambrau, with a focus on Indigenous land rights and environmental justice. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing local authority in conservation efforts and the need for place-based policies that address local concerns while still achieving broader conservation goals. The study advocates for a more inclusive approach to conservation, one that involves local communities in decision-making processes and acknowledges their rights and traditional practices.</li> </ul>
Yuliawan et al. <sup>35</sup>	Lampung Province, Indonesia	The research focuses on rural socio-economic vulnerability in Lampung, specifically integrating a social-ecological systems (SES) framework to assess rural vulnerability at the village level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study developed an Integrated Rural Socio-Economic Vulnerability (IRSV) index that incorporates various indicators such as agricultural land cover, water availability for crops, and community aspects like farmer groups and village leader education.</li> <li>The study found significant differences in vulnerability across villages in Lampung, with high vulnerability linked to areas with lower agricultural productivity, limited water management, and less educated village leaders.</li> <li>Random Forest was identified as the best predictive model for rural vulnerability, achieving high classification accuracy in predicting vulnerability across various villages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The research emphasizes the use of the SES framework to improve rural development and adaptation strategies to climate change and socio-economic challenges. It highlights the need for improving local governance, particularly in water management and educational programs for village leaders, to reduce rural vulnerability and enhance resilience in the face of socio-economic and environmental stresses.</li> </ul>
Herianti & Marundha <sup>36</sup>	West Sumatra Province, Indonesia, analyzing 19	The research focuses on regional economic performance and the effects of fiscal decentralization and income inequality on the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study found that fiscal decentralization has a positive and significant effect on regional financial performance, indicating that greater local autonomy in managing finances can improve economic outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study recommends improving regional financial autonomy and effective management of regional resources to strengthen fiscal decentralization and reduce income inequality. It</li> </ul>

<sup>34</sup> Sepus M. Fatem et al, "Conservation policy, Indigeneity, and changing traditional hunting practices in West Papua," *Forest and Society* 7, no. 2 (2023): 362.

<sup>35</sup> Dedy Yuliawana et al., "Classification and prediction of rural socio-economic vulnerability," 224.

<sup>36</sup> Eva Herianti and Amor Marundha, "Examining the effects of fiscal decentralization and income inequality on the economic performance of west Sumatra province, Indonesia," *Global Business & Finance Review (GBFR)* 29, no. 7 (2024): 67.

	districts/cities within the province	economic performance of the districts and cities in West Sumatra.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Income inequality also significantly affects regional financial performance, suggesting that addressing income disparities can enhance overall economic stability and growth.</li> <li>The findings align with Rostow's economic growth model and provide insight into how fiscal decentralization and income inequality play critical roles in shaping regional economic conditions.</li> </ul>	suggests that local governments focus on increasing Regional Original Revenue (PAD) and creating inclusive economic growth to foster more balanced development across West Sumatra.
Indow et al. <sup>37</sup>	West Papua, specifically in three villages: Yamboi Village (lowland ecological zone), Sakumi Village (highland ecological zone), and Watitindau Village (island zone), all within the Domberai customary area.	The research focuses on ethnobotany and the impact of the Remote Indigenous Community (RIC) Empowerment Program on the sustainability of local food crops in indigenous communities. It assesses the effect of this program on local agricultural knowledge and the use of traditional food crops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study found that local food crops such as bananas, sweet potatoes, and taro still play an important role in the communities despite the introduction of rice and other external foods through the RIC program.</li> <li>Local food preferences vary across villages, with high satisfaction levels observed in more remote areas like Watitindau Village, which is less influenced by external food crops.</li> <li>The RIC program and increased transportation access have led to some changes, including a shift toward rice consumption in certain villages, although traditional food crops remain essential.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study emphasizes the importance of empowering remote indigenous communities while preserving their traditional knowledge and food security through sustainable practices. The RIC program aims to enhance local agricultural sustainability and cultural preservation, with recommendations for maintaining traditional food crop cultivation and improving access to resources for indigenous communities.</li> </ul>
Daud & Solemana <sup>38</sup>	North Maluku Province, Indonesia, focusing on districts and cities within the region.	The research focuses on regional economic development and the effects of fiscal decentralization on economic growth and the Human Development Index (HDI) in the regions of North Maluku. The study specifically analyzes the effects of fiscal decentralization on economic growth and human development at the district and city level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fiscal decentralization has a positive but not significant effect on economic growth in the region, indicating that fiscal decentralization alone may not significantly contribute to economic growth.</li> <li>However, fiscal decentralization positively and significantly affects the Human Development Index (HDI), suggesting that better allocation of fiscal resources improves human development outcomes such as health and education.</li> <li>The study found that economic growth also positively influences HDI, linking better economic performance to improved human welfare.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study emphasizes the importance of optimizing local revenue generation and reforming fiscal policies to reduce dependency on central government transfers. It highlights the need for local governments to enhance their own revenue sources, promote regional innovation, and improve tax collection to improve fiscal decentralization and the human development outcomes in the region.</li> </ul>

*Source: Processed by Researcher (2025)*

<sup>37</sup> Lazarus Indow et al., "Implementation of the remote indigenous community empowerment program on the sustainability of the local food crops in West Papua, Indonesia," *Biodiversitas Journal of Biological Diversity* 22, no. 12 (2021): 15.

<sup>38</sup> Nahu Dauda and Rusman Solemana, "Effects of fiscal decentralization on economic growth and human development index in the Indo-nesian local governments," *Management Science Letters* 10 (2020): 3977.

Rural villages play a critical role in national development, yet they continue to face significant vulnerabilities due to geographic remoteness, socio-economic dependence on primary sectors, and limited access to infrastructure and governance support. Research in Lampung Province highlights how village governance, including effective water management and leadership education, can mitigate these vulnerabilities and improve socio-economic resilience.<sup>39</sup> However, rural development policies often fail to account for the distinct characteristics of these areas, leading to biased assessments that prioritize urban metrics over rural-specific needs.

In regions such as West Papua, conservation policies are increasingly integrated with local governance and Indigenous rights. However, while these initiatives aim to empower Indigenous communities, they often result in conflicts between traditional practices and newly imposed regulations. Policies restricting hunting, for example, have led to tensions between local hunters and conservation officials, demonstrating the need for more locally adaptive policies that balance conservation objectives with livelihood sustainability.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, fiscal decentralization in Indonesia has aimed to improve economic performance and reduce regional income inequality, but disparities persist due to uneven financial management and revenue distribution.<sup>41</sup>

Government initiatives targeting remote Indigenous communities have attempted to enhance local food security, yet modernization pressures and policy interventions sometimes lead to the erosion of traditional agricultural practices. The introduction of alternative food systems and economic incentives can displace local crop cultivation, which has long been a cornerstone of rural food security in regions like West Papua.<sup>42</sup> Effective rural policies must, therefore, strike a balance between development goals and the preservation of traditional knowledge and practices.

Fiscal decentralization and regional autonomy have further shaped rural governance, with varying impacts on economic growth and human development. While decentralization has improved local financial management, it has not necessarily led to equitable economic outcomes across all rural areas.<sup>43</sup> Ensuring that decentralization benefits rural communities requires stronger institutional support, better financial transparency, and policies that address local challenges rather than applying one-size-fits-all solutions. A more inclusive and context-

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<sup>39</sup> Dedy Yuliawana et al., "Classification and prediction of rural socio-economic vulnerability," 224.

<sup>40</sup> Fatem et al., "Conservation policy, Indigeneity," 365.

<sup>41</sup> Herianti and Marundha, "Examining the effects of fiscal decentralization," 71.

<sup>42</sup> Indow et al., "Implementation of the remote indigenous community," 25.

<sup>43</sup> Dauda and Solemana, "Effects of fiscal decentralization on economic growth," 3978.

sensitive approach to rural governance is essential to achieving long-term development and resilience in these communities.

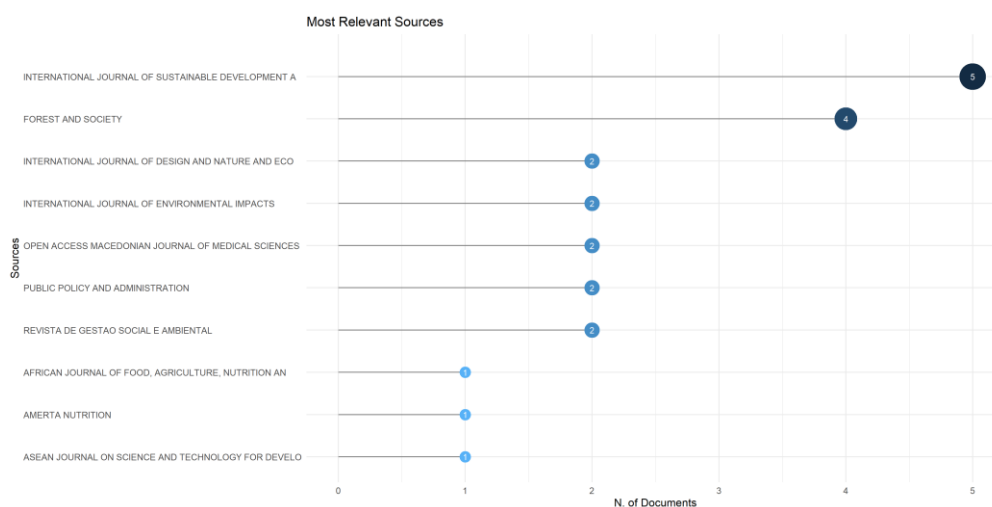


**Figure 1.** Main Information

*Source: Processed by Researcher (2025)*

Statistics published on Rural Governance show significant developments in recent years. The data collected covers the period 2020 to 2024, with a total of 60 documents published from 48 different sources. The annual growth rate in this study reached 31.61%, indicating an increase in interest and attention to the topic. The publication involved 252 authors, with only 4 of them publishing works individually, while the rest collaborated in groups. The average number of authors per document is 4.27, which shows a fairly high level of cooperation in this study. In addition, 16.67% of the publications involved international collaboration, indicating that Rural Governance research is not only limited to one region, but is of global concern.

In terms of content, there are 252 keywords used by the authors in their publications, which reflect various aspects of the study of Rural Governance. However, interestingly, there are no references recorded in this statistic (0 references). The average age of the documents in this dataset is 2.58 years, which suggests that research in this area is relatively new and growing. In addition, each document obtained an average of 3,183 citations, which shows a fairly strong academic impact. Thus, this research increasingly shows its relevance in academic studies and makes a significant contribution to the understanding and development of policies related to Rural Governance in various regions. Overall, these statistics reflect the rapid growth in Rural Governance research, with extensive collaboration and increasing relevance at the global level.

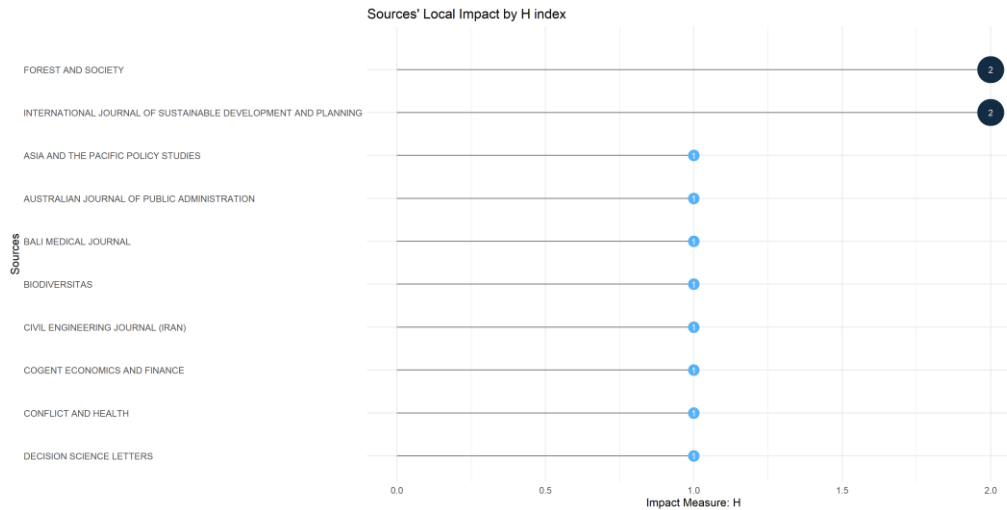


**Figure 2.** Most Relevant Sources

*Source: Processed by Researcher (2025)*

Based on the Most Relevant Sources chart, it can be concluded that research on Rural Governance is spread across various academic journals. The International Journal of Sustainable Development A is the most relevant source with a total of 5 published documents. Forest and Society took second place with 4 documents published. In addition, several other journals such as the International Journal of Design and Nature and Eco, the International Journal of Environmental Impacts, the Open Access Macedonian Journal of Medical Sciences, Public Policy and Administration, and the Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental each have 2 documents that contributed to this study. Meanwhile, other journals such as the African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Amerta Nutrition, and the ASEAN Journal on Science and Technology for Development have 1 document each. Thus, research on Rural Governance is not only focused on one field of study but is spread across various disciplines, reflecting a multidisciplinary approach in discussing issues related to rural governance.

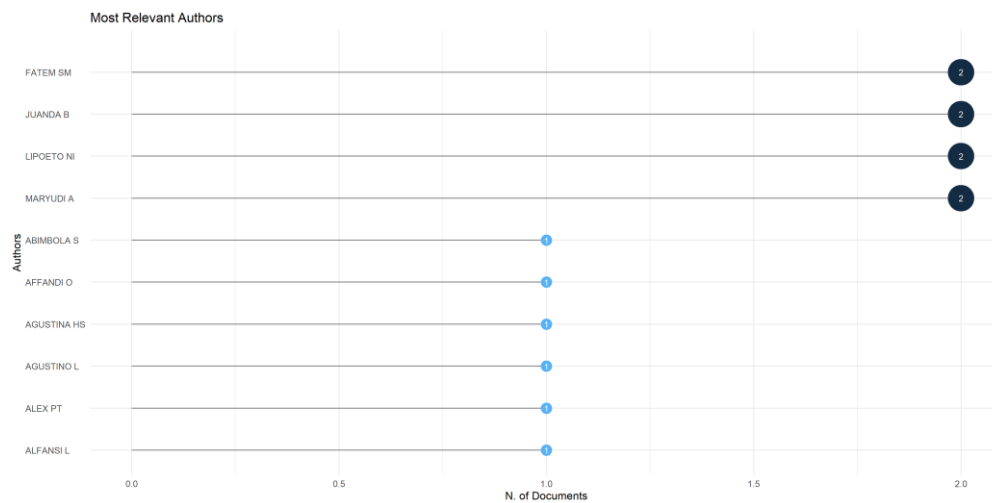




**Figure 3.** Sources' local by H index

*Source: Processed by Researcher (2025)*

Based on the Sources' Local Impact by H Index graph, it can be concluded that the journals with the highest local impact in Rural Governance research are Forest and Society and International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning, each with an H-index of 2. This suggests that these two journals have a greater influence in terms of citations and research impact in this area. In addition, there are several other journals with an H-index of 1, which means they also have a relevant contribution but with a lower citation impact. These journals include Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies, Australian Journal of Public Administration, Bali Medical Journal, Biodiversity, Civil Engineering Journal (Iran), Cogent Economics and Finance, Conflict and Health, and Decision Science Letters. Thus, research on Rural Governance is not only centered on specific journals, but also spread across various cross-disciplinary publications, reflecting a multidisciplinary approach in discussing issues of rural governance and its sustainability.

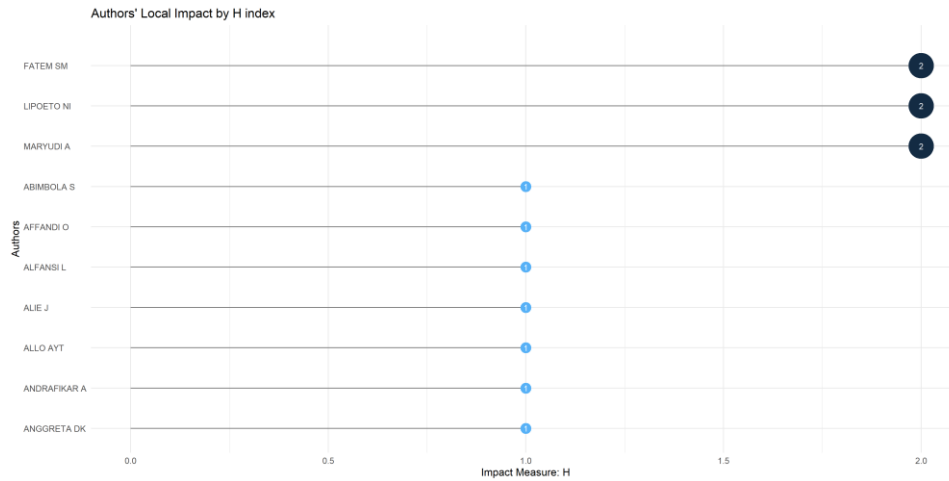


**Figure 4.** Most Relevant Author

*Source: Processed by Researcher (2025)*

Based on the Most Relevant Authors chart, several authors have made significant contributions to Rural Governance research. Fatem et al.<sup>44</sup> A are the authors with the highest number of publications, each publishing 2 documents. This shows that they have active involvement in research related to this topic. In addition, there are several other authors who also contributed with 1 document, namely Abimbola S, Affandi O, Agustina HS, Agustino L, Alex PT, and Alfansi L. Although the number of their publications is smaller, their contributions are still relevant in the development of Rural Governance studies. Thus, the research on Rural Governance is not only supported by some of the lead authors, but also by various other academics, showing extensive collaboration in this study.

<sup>44</sup> Fatem et al., “Conservation policy, Indigeneity,” 367.

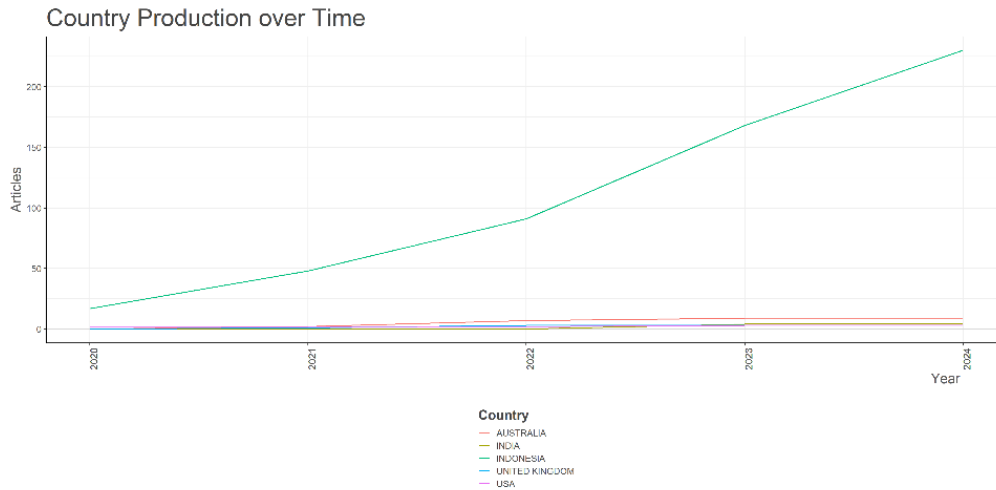


**Figure 5.** Authors' local impact by H index.

*Source: Processed by Researcher (2025)*

Based on the Authors' Local Impact by H Index graph, some authors have a higher academic impact in Rural Governance research. Fatem et al.<sup>45</sup> A are the authors with the highest H-index, which is 2, indicating that their publications have a larger number of citations than other authors. In addition, several other authors such as Abimbola S, Affandi O, Alfansi L, Alie J, Allo AYT, Andrafikar A, and Anggreta DK have an H-index of 1, which shows a contribution that remains relevant even with a lower citation rate. Thus, the research on Rural Governance is supported by some of the lead authors with higher academic impact, but also involves contributions from various other researchers, suggesting diversification in this study.

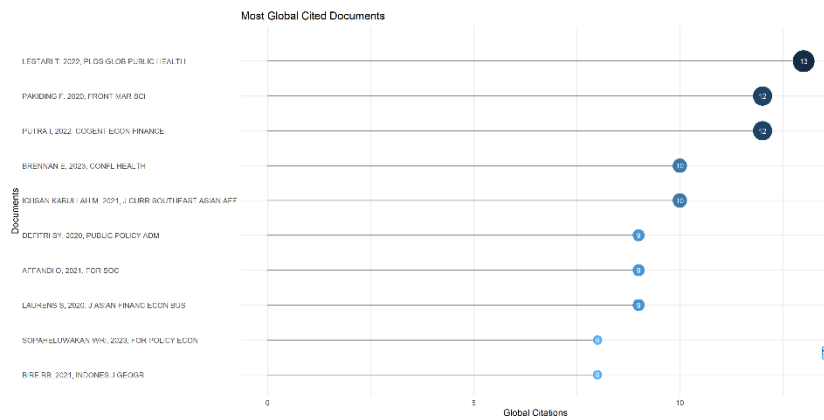
<sup>45</sup> Fatem et al., "Conservation policy, Indigeneity," 369.



**Figure 6.** Country production over time

*Source: Processed by Researcher (2025)*

Based on the Country Production over Time graph, the number of publications on Rural Governance has increased from 2020 to 2024 in various countries. Indonesia is showing the most significant growth, with the number of publications increasing consistently every year and reaching more than 200 articles by 2024. This trend shows that the issue of Rural Governance is a major concern for academics in Indonesia, likely due to its relevance to rural development policies and the challenges of rural governance in the country. Meanwhile, other countries such as Australia, India, the United Kingdom, and the USA also showed an increase in the number of publications, but on a smaller scale compared to Indonesia. Publications from these countries tend to be stable with no significant spikes. Thus, this trend reflects the growing research on Rural Governance globally, with the largest contribution coming from Indonesia, which plays a major role as a center for studies in this field.



**Figure 7.** Most Cited Countries

*Source: Processed by Researcher (2025)*

Based on the Most Global Cited Documents chart, some documents have a higher number of global citations, demonstrating a significant academic impact in Rural Governance research. The document with the highest citations is Lestari R, 2022, PLOS Global Public Health, with 13 global citations, followed by Pakdong F, 2020, Front Mar Sci and Putra I, 2022, Cogent Econ Finance, each with 12 citations. In addition, several other documents also have a fairly high number of citations, have a lower number of citations, but still make an important contribution to this study. Thus, this graph shows that some publications have a greater influence in global research related to Rural Governance, with some key documents gaining significant academic attention through high citations.

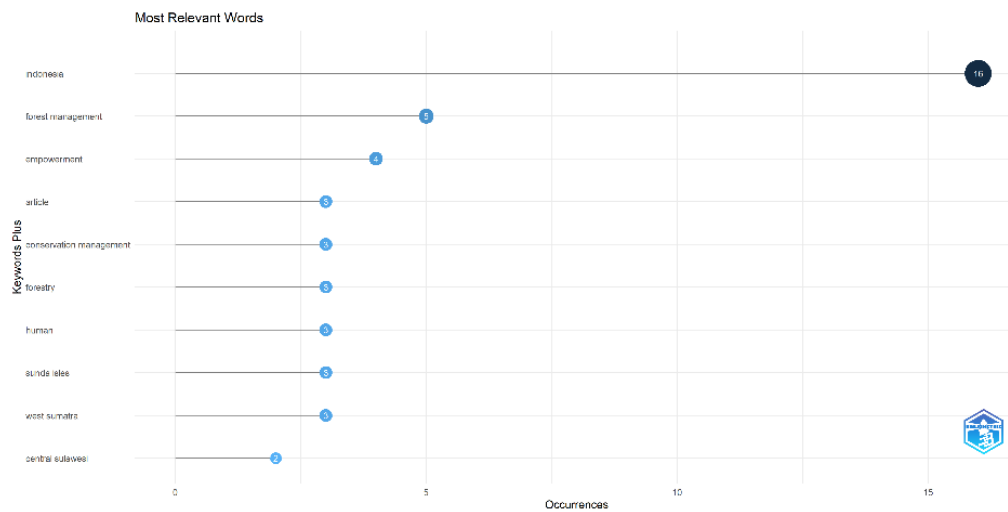


**Figure 8.** Trend topics

*Source: Processed by Researcher (2025)*

Based on the Trend Topics chart, there are two main terms that are trending in Rural Governance research, namely “Indonesia” and “forest management”. “Indonesia” emerged as the topic with the highest frequency, indicating that research in this field is largely associated with the Indonesian context. This is in line with the increasing trend of publications from the country, as seen in the previous Country Production over Time chart. In addition, “forest management” is also one of the relevant topics in this study, although with a lower frequency than “Indonesia”. The existence of this term indicates that forest governance remains an important part of the study of rural development and environmental sustainability. Thus, this trend suggests that research on Rural Governance is increasingly leading to specific issues, such as forest governance, with Indonesia as one of the main centers of study in this area.





**Figure 9.** Most Relevant Word

*Source: Processed by Researcher (2025)*

Based on the Most Relevant Words chart, the keyword that most often appears in the Rural Governance research is “Indonesia”, with the highest number of occurrences, which is 16 times. This shows that research in this area is very closely related to the Indonesian context, corroborating the findings of previous analyses regarding the dominance of publications from the country. In addition, another keyword that also often appears is “forest management” (5 times), which indicates that forest management is one of the main issues in the study of Rural Governance. The keyword “empowerment” (4 times) shows the relevance of this research to community empowerment, which is an important aspect in rural governance. Other keywords, such as “conservation management,” “forestry,” “human,” “Sunda Isles,” “West Sumatra,” and “Central Sulawesi,” appear about 2-3 times each, signaling the geographic and thematic focus of the research in several regions of Indonesia. Thus, this graph confirms that research related to Rural Governance not only focuses on policy aspects, but also covers issues of natural resource management, community empowerment, and case studies in various regions in Indonesia.



on publication statistics, the number of research related to Rural Governance has increased significantly from 2020 to 2024. This increase can be seen from the number of documents issued every year with an annual growth rate of 31.61%. In addition, the study also shows a fairly high level of academic collaboration, with 16.67% of publications involving international collaboration, and an average of 4.27 authors per document, indicating that this field is increasingly attracting the attention of academics around the world.

In terms of publication sources, the analysis of Most Relevant Sources shows that the International Journal of Sustainable Development A and Forest and Society journals are the main sources for the publication of research on Rural Governance. In addition to the high number of publications, these journals also have a considerable academic impact based on the H-index, which shows that research in this field is gaining wide recognition in the scientific community.

Some authors have also made significant contributions in this field, as seen in the Most Relevant Authors and Authors' Local Impact by H-Index. Names such as Fatem et al.<sup>46</sup> emerged as the most influential authors with a high number of publications and academic impact. The collaboration between authors is also quite extensive, reflecting cooperation in various aspects of Rural Governance research.

In terms of geographical distribution, the Country Production Over Time graph shows that Indonesia is the country with the highest number of publications in this study, with a very significant increasing trend every year. This shows that issues related to rural governance are a major concern for academics and policymakers in Indonesia. Meanwhile, other countries such as Australia, India, the United Kingdom, and the USA are also contributing in this field, albeit on a smaller scale.

In terms of academic impact, several documents in the Most Global Cited Documents show a high citation rate, signaling their influence in global research on Rural Governance. Articles from Lestari et al.<sup>47</sup> have the highest number of citations, indicating that their research has made a significant contribution to the development of this study globally.

The growing topics in the Rural Governance research can also be seen through the Trend Topics chart. The keyword “Indonesia” became the most dominant topic, indicating that research in this field is heavily focused on the country. In addition, “forest management” has also emerged as one of the main trends, showing that forest management is an integral part of rural governance. Further analysis of Most Relevant Words and Word Clouds further strengthens these findings, with keywords such as “empowerment,” “conservation management,”

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<sup>46</sup> Fatem et al., “Conservation policy, Indigeneity,” 371.

<sup>47</sup> Trisasi Lestari et al., “Impacts of tuberculosis services strengthening and the COVID-19 pandemic on case detection and treatment outcomes in Mimika District, Papua, Indonesia: 2014–2021,” *PLOS global public health* 2, no. 9 (2022): e0001114.

“forestry,” and “human” appearing frequently. Words such as “West Sumatra,” “Sunda Isles,” and “Central Sulawesi” suggest that the study also has a geographic focus in different regions of Indonesia. In addition, the relationship of this research with social aspects can be seen from the appearance of words such as “child,” “pregnancy,” “health program,” and “disease control.”

Based on the various analyses that have been carried out, it can be concluded that Rural Governance research has experienced rapid growth, with Indonesia as the main center of study in this field. The focus of research in this field covers various aspects, such as natural resource management, community empowerment, and rural health. This trend shows that rural governance is increasingly becoming a major concern in the context of global sustainability and development. Thus, this research provides important insights for academics, policymakers, and practitioners in designing better strategies to improve rural governance in a sustainable manner.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The Rural Governance research shows significant growth, with Indonesia as the main center of the study. The focus of the research includes forest management, community empowerment, and natural resource conservation, with special attention to regions such as West Sumatra and Central Sulawesi. In addition to environmental aspects, this research also highlights the social dimension and welfare of rural communities. With its high academic collaboration and broad publication impact, this research contributes significantly to the development of sustainable and inclusive rural governance strategies for academics, policymakers, and practitioners.

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