



Extension of Village Head Term of Office in the Village Law Perspective: Governance Implications

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Abstract: The extension of the village head's term of office under the Village Law has sparked debate over the balance between governance stability and democratic principles at the village level. This article examines the legal regulation of the extension of the village head's term of office and its implications for village governance from a normative legal perspective. Using legislative, conceptual, and historical approaches, this study analyzes statutory regulations, legal doctrines, and relevant scholarly works through qualitative legal interpretation. The analysis shows that extending the term of office may strengthen administrative stability and policy continuity in village governance. However, it also increases the risk of power concentration when not accompanied by effective oversight mechanisms. The study argues that the extension of the village head's term of office can be compatible with the principles of good governance only if it is supported by clear implementing regulations that ensure accountability, transparency, and meaningful community participation in village governance.

Keywords: Good governance; Term of office; Village governance; Village head; Village supervision

1. Introduction

Village is the level of government closest to the community and plays a strategic role in delivering public services, promoting sustainable development, and empowering local communities. Within the framework of the Indonesian state administration, villages are no longer understood solely as administrative units under regional governments, but rather as legal community units that possess original rights and local authority to organize and manage their own community interests. The strengthening of the village's position is affirmed through Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages (Republik Indonesia, 2007) which positions the village as a development actor with relatively broad autonomous authority. This condition influences the dynamics of village governance by granting greater authority to village heads in decision-making, resource management, and the coordination of village development (Basri, 2023).

A key role in the structure of village governance is played by the village chief. The village head is in charge of community development, village financial administration, and development planning in addition to acting as the local executive. Revisions to the Village Law have resulted in substantial modifications to the regulations governing the tenure of village heads. Most notably, the term of office has been extended to eight years, with the possibility of a one-year renewal. Because of its consequences for village administration, this transformation has sparked a great deal of discussion among scholars, practitioners, and village people (Sajangbati, 2015).

On the one hand, longer terms of office are seen to be able to enhance the stability of village government, provide village leaders enough time to create and finish medium-term development plans, and lessen the number of expensive elections (Mahfud et al., 2025). According to a number of empirical research, the continuity of policies at the village level and the efficiency of development program implementation are positively connected with leadership stability. However, these modifications have also led to serious worries about the deterioration of power constraints, the decreased responsibility of

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village leaders, and the dwindling involvement of the community in monitoring village government (Taorik et al., 2024).

From the standpoint of administrative and constitutional law, term limitations are essential tools for guaranteeing leadership rotation and limiting the misuse of authority. This idea is important at all governmental levels, including village administration, to avoid one person controlling the majority of the authority for an unreasonably long time. Previous research shows that the internal supervisory function within village administration, especially the role of the Village Consultative Body (BPD), which is meant to act as a democratic check mechanism, tends to deteriorate when the village head's term of office gets excessively long (Padilah et al., 2025). As a consequence, the potential for patronage politics and conflicts of interest increases, ultimately undermining the quality of village governance (Dewi, 2025).

But according to other research, a longer tenure might also present chances to enhance the effectiveness of the village's administrative machinery because of the expertise gained and the deeper bonds that are formed between the community and village leaders. Increased public involvement in village development is sometimes linked to this condition. This suggests that the influence of the village head's tenure on village administration is situational and requires more thorough research (Marta, 2025).

By specifically integrating the Village Law's regulation of the village head's term extension with the values of village governance transparency, accountability, community involvement, and power limitation this article aims to fill the gap in normative legal studies. This study is innovative because it integrates textual legal norm analysis with its implications for excellent village governance principles, which are not well discussed in the present body of literature on village governance legislation. In addition to proposing policy recommendations to strike a balance between the preservation of local democratic ideals and the stability of government, this research seeks to make scholarly contributions to the development of village law (Suharti et al., 2024).

Although the extension of the village head's term of office is often justified on the grounds of governance stability and development continuity, scholarly studies specifically examining how such an extension affects the balance of power within village governance structures remain limited. This limitation indicates the existence of an academic gap within the discourse of administrative and constitutional law at the local level. Without adequate normative-legal analysis, the regulatory change risks being understood merely as an administrative policy adjustment, whereas it carries significant constitutional implications concerning the principles of power limitation and governmental accountability in village administration.

Despite several normative studies on village governance and the regulation of village head tenure, a conceptual gap remains in systematically linking term extensions with the principles of good governance. Previous research has predominantly focused on administrative efficiency, leadership stability, or procedural compliance, without thoroughly examining how extended tenure affects transparency, accountability, community participation, and the limitation of power within village governance structures. This study addresses this gap by integrating textual legal norm analysis with the evaluation of its implications for democratic accountability, participatory decision-making, and institutional checks and balances, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how tenure regulations interact with good governance principles at the village level.

2. Materials and Methods

Analysis of the legal standards, tenets, and doctrines that control the village chief's term extension within the parameters of the village law. This method was selected because, rather than focusing on the actual actions of village authorities or communities, the problems under investigation are juridical-normative in nature, especially those pertaining to modifications to the law and how they affect village government. The purpose of this study is to comprehend how institutional connections, accountability systems,

and power structures are shaped by legislative laws in village government (Sakrina et al., 2024).

Starting with the 1945 Constitution of the (Republik Indonesia, 2007), Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages and its amendments, and ending with implementing regulations at the central and regional government levels, the statutory approach was used to thoroughly examine the legal norms governing the term of office of village heads. By using this method, the researcher may determine the direction of village law policy, possible regulatory discord, and normative harmonisation. The notions of public accountability, village democracy, power restriction, and good governance principles all of which form the cornerstone of village government.

To assess the compatibility of village head tenure regulations with the principles of good governance, this study employs several analytical parameters derived from both legal theory and public administration. The primary parameters include: (1) accountability, evaluated through the presence and effectiveness of internal and external oversight mechanisms such as the Village Consultative Body (BPD); (2) transparency, assessed by examining the accessibility and clarity of procedural rules and decision-making processes; (3) participation, measured by the extent to which community members are involved in planning, monitoring, and decision-making; and (4) power limitation, analyzed in terms of the balance between executive authority and institutional checks to prevent concentration of power. These parameters provide a normative framework to systematically evaluate whether the statutory and regulatory changes regarding tenure extension uphold the principles of democratic, responsible, and effective village governance (Polidu & Rachman, 2023).

Meanwhile, the historical approach was used to examine the evolution of legislation pertaining to the tenure of the village chief and the policy dynamics influencing regulatory modifications. The material of the law analyzed consists of primary, secondary, and tertiary legal sources (Polidu & Rachman, 2023).

All relevant laws gathered from research bibliographies and qualitatively analysed using methods such as grammatical interpretation, systematic analysis, and teleological analysis organised in a descriptive-analytical manner. To elucidate the relationship between the length of the head village's tenure and the level of governance, participation, and oversight systems. It is anticipated that this approach will result in argumentation legislation that is logical, pertinent to practice organization, and contextual (Sari & Kurniawan, 2023).

3. Results and Discussion

The results of the normative analysis of the regulation governing the village head's term of office indicate that the extension of the term to eight years, as stipulated in the amendment to the Village Law, has broad legal implications for the power structure and governance practices at the village level (Ananta, 2025), (Husni & Rahman, 2025). Normatively, this policy is intended to promote stability in village leadership and ensure the continuity of village development in both the medium and long term (Fathurrahman & Nuraini, 2024). This rationale is based on the assumption that longer leadership tenure provides village heads with greater opportunities to understand the social, economic, and institutional characteristics of the village in greater depth, thereby enabling development planning and implementation to be more consistent and well directed (Saragih, 2024).

This normative assumption has become increasingly relevant following the allocation of Village Funds. As Village Funds have emerged as the primary fiscal instrument for village development, the role of village heads has expanded beyond policy implementation to include the management of complex public resources. Village heads play a strategic role in formulating the Village Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMDes), managing the Village Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBDes), and coordinating the implementation of development programs. In this context, a longer term of office is perceived as capable of minimizing administrative disruptions resulting from leadership

transitions and enhancing policy consistency in village development (Walangitan et al., 2025).

Normatively, the extension of the village head's term of office can be justified within the framework of village democracy by considering the principle of deliberative and participatory governance. Extended tenure allows village leaders to engage more deeply with community deliberations, facilitate the consistent implementation of participatory development plans, and strengthen the institutionalization of local democratic practices. Moreover, a longer term can provide sufficient time for the village government to consolidate mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and community oversight, which are essential elements of democratic governance at the village level. These normative arguments frame term extension not merely as an administrative convenience, but as a legal and democratic instrument to enhance governance quality, provided that checks and balances through the Village Consultative Body (BPD) and other oversight mechanisms remain effective (Walangitan et al., 2025).

However, from the perspective of governance and constitutional principles, the extension of the village head's tenure must be balanced against the fundamental doctrine of power limitation (Januarti et al., 2025). The Village Law grants village heads broad executive authority, including financial management and a central role in development decision-making. The combination of extended tenure and extensive authority potentially creates conditions for power concentration in a single individual (Husni & Rahman, 2025), particularly when internal and external oversight mechanisms do not function optimally (Riyadi et al., 2025).

In response to concerns regarding potential abuse of authority, the most strategic form of institutional strengthening lies in reinforcing a multi-layered oversight framework that integrates internal, external, and societal control mechanisms. First, the institutional capacity, legal authority, and functional independence of the Village Consultative Body (BPD) must be significantly strengthened as the primary internal supervisory organ. This strengthening should include clearer regulatory authority in budget approval, systematic monitoring of development implementation, and formal evaluative powers over village head performance.

Second, external supervision by district governments and regional inspectorates should be transformed from reactive administrative inspection into preventive, risk-based, and performance-oriented supervision, particularly in relation to Village Fund governance.

Third, transparency must be institutionalized through mandatory public disclosure of APBD documents, development realization reports, and village performance accountability reports, ensuring accessible information for the community. This mechanism enables effective social control and participatory oversight, which function as democratic correctives to executive dominance.

Thus, the strategic institutional reform is not merely the extension of tenure, but the simultaneous consolidation of checks and balances mechanisms. A longer term of office can contribute to governance stability only when accompanied by strengthened supervisory institutions, structured transparency, and active community participation. Without these safeguards, extended tenure risks weakening accountability and undermining the constitutional principle of power limitation within village governance.

But from the standpoint of governance, the extension of the village chief's tenure needs to be weighed against the core idea of power limitation (Januarti et al., 2025). Village heads have extremely strategic responsibility, as evidenced by a thorough examination of the Village Law. This authority includes executive responsibilities, financial management, and a significant involvement in development decision-making. In village government, the combination of extended tenure and broad authority may lead to the consolidation of power in the hands of one person (Husni & Rahman, 2025), especially when internal and external oversight mechanisms are not functioning optimally (Padilah et al., 2025), (Polidu & Rachman, 2023), (Riyadi et al., 2025).

Table 1. This is a table. Tables should be placed in the main text near to the first time they are cited.

| Supervisory Actor | Forms of Supervision | Power of Influence | Main Challenges |
|--------------------------|--|----------------------|---|
| BPD | Policy monitoring, village deliberation, village regulation approval | Internal, direct | Institutional capacity and independence |
| District government | Administrative guidance and supervision | External, structural | Bureaucratic distance and limited human resources |
| Regional Inspectorate | Village financial audit and inspection | Technical, periodic | Reactive, post-activity |
| Village Community | Social control and participation | Normative-democratic | Access to information and legal literacy |
| Law Enforcement Officers | Law enforcement | Repressive | Ultimum remedium |
| BPD | Policy monitoring, village deliberation, village regulation approval | Internal, direct | Institutional capacity and independence |
| District government | Administrative guidance and supervision | External, structural | Bureaucratic distance and limited human resources |
| Regional Inspectorate | Village financial audit and inspection | Technical, periodic | Reactive, post-activity |
| Village Community | Social control and participation | Normative-democratic | Access to information and legal literacy |
| Law Enforcement Officers | Law enforcement | Repressive | Ultimum remedium |

Village governance oversight is multi-level and involves a range of play-ers with distinct traits. Longer village head tenures make the Village Consultative Body's (BPD) function as the main internal oversight body even more important. Oversight functions are frequently performed only in a formalistic manner due to the BPD's poor institutional capability, both in terms of legal expertise and politi-cal independence.. This condition has the potential to expand the dominance of village heads when extended terms of office are not accompanied by effective over-sight mechanisms (Tohawi, 2025). Additionally, district governments and regional inspectors typically conduct administrative, recurring oversight. Without strong internal oversight procedures in place, external supervision is frequently reactive and only becomes effective after legal problems or audit results have material-ised (Ananta, 2025).

According to empirical results from the Audit Board of Finance, short-comings in accountability and transparency in village financial management con-tinue to be a de-fining feature of governance issues in villages (Setyaningrum et al., 2024). The majority of audit findings pertain to weak internal control mechanisms, noncompliant budget utili-sation, and insufficient participative planning. If the ex-tension of the village head's term of office is not balanced with the improvement of monitoring mechanisms and public information transparency, it may prolong the buildup of governance concerns. (Yusuf & Amiq, 2024).

On the other hand, a conceptual analysis based on the principles of good governance shows that leadership stability does not always have a negative im-pact on village gov-ernance. In fact, stability can be a prerequisite for the effective-ness and efficiency of government organizations, especially in the implementation of multi-year village de-velopment programs. Frequent replacement of village heads has the potential to cause

policy fragmentation (Suryapusita, 2024), changes priority development (Saragih, 2024), as well as obstruction strategic pro-program completion village (Pariangu, 2023). However, research it also emphasizes that stability leadership only give impact positive if accompanied by transparency, participation society, and supervision that strong (Dewi, 2025).

Tabel 2 Term of Office Head Village

| Principles of Good Governance | Short Term of Office (≤ 6 Years) | Long Term of Office (≥ 8 Years) |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Accountability | Relatively well maintained | Tends to weaken |
| Transparency | Depends on leadership | Potential to decrease |
| Community Participation | Dynamic | Tends to stagnate |
| Program Effectiveness | Currently | Tall |
| Control of Power | More balanced | The risk of concentration of power |

4. Conclusions

The extension of the village head’s term of office aims to ensure organizational sustainability and stable implementation of village development programs. Normative legal analysis shows that this policy strengthens the position of the village head within the governance structure, potentially affecting the balance of power and the quality of accountability. However, a longer tenure may reduce the effectiveness of internal supervision and social oversight if it is not accompanied by strengthened institutional roles and openness in decision-making.

Therefore, the direction of policy reformulation should focus on balancing governance stability with power control by embedding principles of transparency and public participation in all stages of decision-making, reinforcing the supervisory role of the Village Consultative Body (BPD) and local government oversight, and ensuring access to public information to enable community monitoring. A multi-layered supervision mechanism of this nature allows the benefits of extended tenure to be realized while safeguarding democratic accountability, preventing concentration of power, and strengthening good governance in village administration.

If power restriction mechanisms are not institutionally strengthened, the long-term implications for local democracy may be significant. The weakening of checks and balances can lead to the personalization of authority, reduced political competition, declining public trust, and diminished community participation in governance processes. Over time, such conditions may transform village democracy into a merely procedural system, where electoral legitimacy exists but substantive accountability and participatory governance gradually erode. Consequently, the quality of local democracy would deteriorate, undermining the constitutional ideals of decentralized and community-based governance.

5. Patents

Not applicable. This study did not result in any patents or intellectual property registrations.

Supplementary Materials: Not applicable.

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