

## Political Power Dynamics in the Formulation of Village Head Term Extension Policies

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**Abstract:** *This journal analyzes the dynamics of political power involved in formulating policies for extending the tenure of village heads. The tenure of the village head who plays a crucial role in village governance is often a topic of debate in the local political context. This study aims to analyze the dynamics of political forces involved in influencing the policy formulation process for extending the village head's term of office, as well as its impact on village governance. In this study using descriptive qualitative analysis method and data in this study were collected through literature studies. The results of the study show that the formulation of a policy for extending the tenure of village heads is influenced by a number of political factors. First, internal factors include the political aspirations of the village head who wants to extend his term of office to continue the development programs that have been started. Second, external factors involve political intervention from local political parties or certain interest groups that wish to maintain or change power at the village level.*

**Keywords:** *Political Power; Policy Formulation; Extension of the Term of Office of the Village Head*

### Introduction

The village head plays an important role in village governance. The tenure of the village head is an issue that is often discussed in local politics. One policy that is often in the spotlight is the extension of the term of office of the village head. The extension of the term of office of the village head can have a significant impact on the dynamics of political power and village governance. Therefore, it is important to understand the political power dynamics involved in the formulation of the village head term extension policy.

The fact that people's sense of justice and order is not met or disrupted can have a significant impact on law formation and legal decisions. A sense of injustice and disruption of public order will trigger

opinions that roll like a snowball and are dangerous if they do not find a channel through legal products or policy decisions (Harianto et al., 2021).

Tolerance is when politicians agree with things they disagree with. Democracy becomes harder to maintain when tolerance norms are low. We will do everything possible to defeat our competitors if they perceive them as a threat (Dewi, 2016).

The issue of change emerged from various sources after the New Order collapsed in 1998. A number of laws relating to villages have changed as a result of the emergence of this issue. Post-reform village laws seem to aim to reduce the enormous power of the village head due to pressure from various parties (Tjoe Kang Long & Widyawati Boediningsih, 2023).

The Basic Moral Principle of Modern Statehood states that democratic legitimacy is the only legitimate source of power (Dewi, 2016)

Political instability arises as a result of increasingly sharp conflicts among political parties in parliament, combined with political and security shifts in the regions (Nadir, 2013)

In the context of policy formulation on extending the term of office of village heads, the dynamics of political power play an important role.

The welfare and progress of the village is certainly a top priority for the village community. This condition often results in excessive desire, especially when the elected village head is asked to select people based on the wishes and proposals of the community. The village head then seeks to accept them, which often leads to subsequent problems. This is because the general public does not understand the mechanisms that must be followed to select and dismiss village officials Sipayung & Sintara, 2023).

The Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia is a democracy based on the principles of deliberation and consensus, also known as the principle of kinship, which comes from the personality and outlook of the Indonesian people. Village head elections are one form of direct

democracy at the village level (Kedungdung & Madura, 2013).

As is known, the dominance of the village head at the grassroots level was very strong during the New Order. This was mainly due to the issuance of Law No. 5/1979 on Village Administration. The regulation of village politics in the New Order era necessitated a closed and monopolistic political system (Luthfy, 2019).

Since 2017, village heads across Indonesia have formed an association to share information and work together. This is shown in the APDESI portal as a community organisation consisting of village heads, village officials, and village officials (both passive and active) (Djoni Gunanto & Sahrul, 2023).

The formulation of such policies involves interactions between various political actors and diverse interests, which can influence the direction and outcome of the policies adopted.

Choosing a leader based on sharia law is what Muslims want; they choose someone they believe can implement Islamic sharia as part of practising the rule kaffah or as a whole. However, we need to understand the method or system used to select leaders who are in accordance with Islamic law (Military et al., 2022)

Characteristics of institutions and rulers: The selection and screening of village officials is conducted by the village head and a committee formed to do so. Subsequently, the sub-district head forms the sub-district team. Hierarchically, these three (3) institutions have the authority and power to carry out functions related to the screening process (Wahidin et al., 2021).

One of the main pillars of democracy is popular participation in the exercise of state power, and elections are the best way to achieve this. The process referred to as "procedural democracy" involves a race of political parties and aspiring political leaders who encourage voters to elect them to important positions in central and local government. (Zahratana & Ridho., 2023)

Public policies and, more specifically, local regulations have been widely studied, but not much research has studied the barriers that prevent public policies or local regulations from being adopted and implemented (Kelibay et al., 2022)

The village head or head of village-level government is selected through an election or appointment process. Extending the term of office of a village head involves changes in the rules or regulations governing that term. This can include extending the pre-determined term of office

or changing the existing boundaries for re-election. The formulation of village head term extension policies involves negotiation, compromise, and interaction between various political interests.

Government Regulation No. 6/2005, Government Regulation No. 49/2008, and Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 74/2016, and Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 1/2018 on Leave of Absence for Governors and Deputy Governors, Regents and Deputy Regents, and Mayors and Deputy Mayors are no longer in accordance with current circumstances. The above regulations are not only non-transparent and non-participatory, but also inadequate because they only involve the president, governor, and minister of home affairs without considering the Constitutional Court's decision which outlines that the filling of regional head positions must be transparent and adhere to democratic principles to avoid maladministration in the process (Usman, 2022).

For local governments, Law No. 6/2014 on Villages defines a village as a legal community unit with territorial boundaries and the authority to regulate, manage governance, and local community interests based on community initiatives, origin rights, and/or traditional rights that are recognised and respected within the

government system of the unitary republic (Kepala et al., 2023).

For local governments, Law No. 6/2014 on Villages defines a village as a legal community unit with territorial boundaries and the authority to regulate, manage the government, local community interests based on community initiatives, origin rights, and or traditional rights that are recognised and respected in the government system of a unitary republic. With a deeper understanding of the dynamics of political power in the formulation of village head term extension policies, it is hoped that this research can provide a reference for policy makers, academics, and related parties in formulating policies that are more effective and responsive to the needs of politics and village governance. In addition, this research can also contribute to a broader understanding of local politics and the dynamics of political power at the village level. As such, this research has important relevance in the context of democratic and effective village governance development.

### **Method**

This research uses descriptive qualitative analysis. Inductive thinking is the basis of descriptive quantitative, which is based on participatory and objective observation of social phenomena (Harahap, 2020). The purpose of researchers using

qualitative methods is because they want to analyse and describe the Dynamics of Political Power in the Formulation of Policies to Extend the Term of Office of the Village Head.

This research data was collected through literature studies, which is a series of actions to read, record, and process research materials. The data used were sourced from books, journals, scientific articles, and literature reviews that discuss the political context and policies for extending the term of office of village heads. The study of documents, articles, and literature can also provide the theoretical basis needed for research analysis and enrich understanding of the issues being researched.

The research similar to the research conducted by researchers is research conducted by Dudi Warsudin and Hayatun Hamid (2023), entitled Theoretical Considerations of the Plan to Extend the Authority of the Village Head for 9 Years Associated with the Concept of the Rule of Law and the Principles of Democracy. Explaining that the extension of the Village Head's term of office for 9 years in one period may pose a risk of arbitrariness and abuse of power. The concept of the rule of law and democratic principles often prioritise limits on power to prevent abuse and maintain a balance of power between

the government and citizens. In a healthy democratic system, limited terms of office help prevent excessive consolidation of power and provide opportunities for an orderly turnover of leadership. This is an important principle of democracy that promotes greater public accountability and participation in political decision-making. In the case of extending the term of office of the Village Head to 9 years in one term, there is a possibility that the incumbent village head may use this length of time to strengthen their power, ignoring the interests of the community. This could undermine democratic principles and harm citizens.

Therefore, it is important to consider a strong system of checks and balances in regulating the tenure of village heads. Strict oversight, fair election mechanisms, and active community participation can help prevent abuses of power and maintain the sustainability of democratic principles and the rule of law.

The use of money in politics does not only occur in general elections at the central and regional levels, but also in village head elections. In fact, village head elections in Indonesia have existed since the colonial era. Even since the VOC (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie) period in Java, people have elected village heads directly, but the voters were only

certain people, such as the rich and descendants of the previous village head (Amanu, 2009).

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Policy Maker Actor**

In Indonesia, the process of making or changing policies involves a number of actors who play an important role. The following are some of the actors that are usually involved in changing or making policies to extend the term of office of village heads.

1. Government: The Indonesian government, particularly through relevant ministries or agencies, plays a central role in designing and initiating policies. They are responsible for drafting laws, considering various aspects, and encouraging legislative sustainability.
2. Local Government: The Governor, Regent/Mayor, or relevant local government officials may play a role in the policy revision process. They may lead the initiative or provide guidance regarding the policy on extending the term of office of the village head.
3. Legislative Institution: The Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) or local legislative body has an important role in authorising the revision of the village head term extension policy. Members of the

DPRD or other legislative representatives can propose changes to the policy and conduct discussions at the legislative level.

4. Civil Society Organisations: Civil society organisations, including customary institutions or other interest groups, can be involved in advocating or providing input on the policy revision. They can conduct campaigns, organise discussions, or convey their opinions to the government regarding the policy.
5. Village Head and Village Government: Village heads or representatives of village governments may also be involved in the process of revising the policy on extending the term of office of village heads. They can provide inputs, experiences, or recommendations related to the extension of the village head term based on their direct experiences at the village level.

### **Term of Office of the Village Head**

In 2021 there was a dispute over the calculation of the term of office of the village head, starting from Law No. 19 the term of office of the village head became 3 periods. Proclamation Number 32 of 2004 or Number 6 of 2014 from Article 39 of Law Number 39 is as follows:

1. The term of office of the village head is 6 (six) years from the date of inauguration.
2. The village head may serve a maximum of 3 (three) consecutive terms or not serve consecutively.

Law No. 42/PUU-XIX/2021 through Constitutional Court Decision No. 1 also regulates that the maximum term of office is 3 periods if calculated with Law No. 42/PUU-XIX/2021. Law No 32 of 2004 and Law No 32 of 2014. Law No 6 of 2014. The history of the term village head after the independence of the Republic of Indonesia actually began with the emergence of Law No.6. Number 19 of 1965 concerning Desapraja for a maximum period of 8 years without any limit on the number of terms. Restrictions on the number of publications first appeared through Law No.1. Law No. 5/1979 states that the term of office of the village government is up to 8 years, and can be re-elected for 1 consecutive term. The reason for 8 years was considered long enough for the village head to perform his duties and to avoid policy reforms caused by the rapid turnover of village heads, and the reason for only re-election in the next period was nothing more than to prevent the government from demoralising the village. Interestingly, during the Reformation era, Law No. 22/1999 was enacted to extend the

term to 10 years or 2 terms of office based on local socio-culture. If we depart from the assumption of limiting power and authority after the fall of the New Order, then the consideration of a 10-year term should have been based on democratisation considerations because it was still the atmosphere of reform.

Although 5 years later, Law No. 32/2004 was enacted, limiting the term of office to 6 years with 2 terms, the issue of the length of office was not really finalised. This can be seen in the emergence of Law No. 6/2014 (Village Law), which increased the number of terms of office from two to three with a six-year term.

### **Input**

Thousands of village heads rallied to demand changes to Village Law No. 6/2014, particularly Article 39 which regulates the term of office of village heads. The article stipulates that the term of office of a village head is six years after taking office, and current village heads can serve up to three consecutive terms, or not. The village head believes that six years is not enough time to develop a village, so another nine years are needed to develop and improve the welfare of the community. If the term of office of the village head is extended to nine years, there are also many positive benefits, including the efficiency of the cost of holding village head elections

(PILKADES) and the optimisation and improvement of village development for the benefit of the people.

The welfare and progress of the village is certainly a top priority for the village community. This condition often results in excessive desire, especially when the elected village head is asked to select people based on the wishes and proposals of the community. The village head then seeks to accept them, which often leads to subsequent problems. This is because the general public does not understand the mechanisms that must be followed to select and dismiss village officials.

Another reason for the lack of six years to optimise village development is that the adjustment of village government authority after the tensions of Pilkades takes a long time to create a conducive/peaceful atmosphere, at least for the first two years. Pilkades adjustment, as well as the situation of a divided community, takes time to adjust to the implementation of the new vision and mission of village officials. And the next four years will not be enough to solve or resolve existing problems in the community, and the village head cannot wholeheartedly improve the welfare of the people. In addition, it also saves the Pilkades implementation budget.

### **Output**

The government and the DPR have responded positively to the demands of village heads and indicated their agreement to the changes in Law No. 6/2014 on the extension of the term of office of village heads. All factions in the DPR, including the Legislation Body, have agreed to the changes. In fact, Commission II of the House of Representatives has proposed the revision of the law to be included in the National Legislation Programme (Prolegnas) of the House of Representatives for the 2019-2024 period. Currently, the DPR is awaiting a decision from the government so that the revision of the Village Law can be implemented, so that the extension of the village head's term of office from six years to nine years can be realised.

The proposal to change the term of office of the village head has also received approval from President Joko Widodo. The aim of this change is to avoid social conflicts that hamper village development. According to Abdul Halim Iskandar, Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration, the extension of the village head's term of office for nine years will provide many benefits for the village community. He argues that by extending the tenure of village heads, they will have more time to improve the welfare of the

communities they lead. In addition, village development can be carried out in an effective manner because it is not affected by the political dynamics that arise due to village head elections. The community can also evaluate the poor performance of the village head so that it can be further improved, and report the results of the evaluation to the Ministry of Home Affairs, which has the authority to dismiss the poorly performing village head, so the community does not need to wait for nine years or the expiration of the term of office of the poorly performing village head to be replaced. However, by extending the term of office of the village head, efforts to improve human resources provided for village heads are increased because the length of the term of office can have a significant impact on village development and community welfare. If the length of the leader's tenure is not accompanied by an increase in the quality of human resources, it will be in vain that the time that should be used to build for the better is wasted to be in the same position without better changes in the future.

### **Conclusion**

The formulation of the policy to extend the term of office of the village head was influenced by a number of political factors. First, internal factors include the political aspirations of the village head who



wants to extend his/her term of office to continue development programmes that have already been initiated. Secondly, external factors involve political intervention from local political parties or interest groups seeking to maintain or change power at the village level.

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