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Who Benefits from Revision the Village Law? A Reflection on Political Governance

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Abstract: The paper discusses the revision of Indonesia's Village Law, specifically analyzing its socio-political impacts. The study reflects on the extension of the village head's term and other legislative changes through a political governance lens. The revisions in Law No. 3 of 2024 have sparked controversy, with critics highlighting potential issues such as abuse of power, reduced democratic engagement, and declining public participation. The paper employs a literature review method, conceptually utilizing the six principles of Good Governance—legitimacy, transparency, accountability, rule of law, responsiveness, and effectiveness—as an evaluative framework. The findings indicate that the extension of village heads' terms, coinciding with the 2024 national elections, serves elite political interests rather than the public good. It has led to concerns about diminished village-level democracy and governance quality. The study concludes that the revised law, while intending to improve governance, mainly benefits political elites, raising doubts about its long-term contribution to village development and democracy.

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I. Introduction

This study focuses on evaluating government policies to determine their effectiveness in achieving governance objectives, particularly in promoting public welfare. Evaluating a policy is crucial not only to assess its implementation but also to determine whether it has fulfilled the values and objectives it set out to accomplish. As Dunn (2017) states, “evaluation is about facts and values,” highlighting that the underlying values of a policy serve as a reference for assessing its implementation. These values are also relevant in determining whether a government policy aligns with the aspirations, needs, and expectations of the public or merely serves the interests of a select few elites. Policy evaluation should also be considered within the broader context of governance politics, where the exercise of government power is instrumental in shaping policies. Governance politics refers to how government power is used to make decisions and formulate policies aimed at achieving governance objectives (Soekarnoputri, 2018). Ultimately, policy evaluation helps assess whether the government is capable of designing and implementing political policies that effectively promote public welfare.

A significant policy change in 2024 was the revision of Law No. 6 of 2014, resulting in Law No. 3 of 2024 on Villages. The general explanation of Law No. 3 of 2024 states that the revision was necessary because several provisions in the previous law no longer aligned with the social dynamics, legal developments, and constitutional life of Indonesia. The changes include revisions regarding the position of villages, village governance, principles and objectives of village regulations, duties, rights, responsibilities, requirements, and term limits for village heads, as well as village finances, village development, and transitional provisions for the terms of current village heads.

Several studies suggest that the extension of the village head’s term of office, one of the key changes in the revision, may lead to several problems. These include: (1) power abuse driven by political motives that could negatively impact policy implementation at the village level (Ardyansyah et al., 2024); (2) potential violations of citizens’ political rights and the creation of an authoritarian power structure (Maulana et al.,

2024); and (3) reduced public participation in leadership succession (Pariangu et al., 2023). The findings indicate that the extension of the village head’s term is politically motivated, particularly in the context of the 2024 elections for the President, Parliament, and Regional Representatives. The revision was proposed and debated in a political climate shaped by the election, raising concerns that it primarily serves electoral interests rather than genuine improvements in governance.

Based on the identified issues, it is clear that the challenges faced both before and after the revision of the Village Law have largely centered around legal, political, democratic, economic, and governance aspects. However, research focusing on political governance remains limited. According to Maschab (2013), studying village governance from a political governance perspective is essential for several reasons: (1) it offers insights into how the “state” operates at the micro-level; (2) villages are often viewed as small government units, designed to be easily controlled by the central government, which calls for a comprehensive approach due to the diversity of issues faced by different villages that impact national development; and (3) villages are both the foundation and the target of national development efforts..

Governance politics also refers to actions aimed at directing and controlling the affairs of a state, city, or community. It involves the management of political and social systems, often shaped by various norms, governance patterns, and existing networks (Paulin, 2019). In the context of governance politics, it is crucial to understand how decision-making processes are navigated by actors across different levels of government, ranging from the central government to the village level.

The village is a governmental organization with specific political authority, forming part of the broader state administration. Villages hold the legal authority as independent community units to manage their affairs. This authority is inherent and not granted by any external party. Consequently, the village is regarded as having original autonomy, distinct from other autonomous regions such as districts, cities, and provinces, which derive their autonomy from the central government (Maschab, 2013). As the smallest unit

of government, the village is where governance politics plays out, and within its boundaries, political and governance processes, as well as development and community empowerment activities, take place.

In the context of villages, governance politics refers to how power is exercised by village governments in making decisions and implementing political policies to achieve the goals of village governance, which include promoting public welfare at the village level. The authority to make decisions is the foundation of governance at the village level, as regulated in Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages.

However, in the decade since its implementation, various issues have emerged, including village head corruption, inefficiencies in managing village funds, and limited public participation (Pamungkas, 2019). These problems can be classified into legal, economic, and governance aspects.

Village development plays a crucial role in governance politics, necessitating a reflection on the implementation of the Village Law both before and after its revision. This reflection aims to assess the impact of these changes on village governance. To achieve this, an approach is required to evaluate the implementation of the Village Law from various governance-related perspectives. One effective approach is to use the six principles of Good Governance outlined by Keping (2018), which include Legitimacy, Transparency, Accountability, Rule of Law, Responsiveness, and Effectiveness. These principles provide a framework for evaluating changes in village governance, focusing on identifying improvements in each of these aspects.

This study draws on relevant literature to offer a deeper analysis, aiming to reflect on village governance from a political governance perspective. A key question that emerges from this reflection is, "Who benefits from the revision of the Village Law?" This question is particularly important in the context of concerns surrounding the extension of the village head's term of office. Critics argue that the extension is politically motivated, raising concerns about the integrity of governance at the village level, particularly with

respect to power dynamics, leadership renewal, and public participation.

The findings from existing literature highlight several challenges that existed both before and after the revision of the Village Law, encompassing legal, economic, and governance-related issues. However, the political governance aspect remains underexplored. Studying village governance from a political governance perspective, as emphasized by Maschab (2013), offers valuable insights into decision-making processes at the micro-level and how these decisions influence broader governance dynamics.

Maschab also emphasizes that villages are both the foundation and target of national development, and the governance of villages plays a critical role in the success of national policies. As such, understanding governance politics at the village level is essential for assessing the challenges faced and identifying opportunities for improvement.

Ultimately, evaluating village governance requires a multi-faceted approach that incorporates the core principles of good governance. By utilizing Keping's principles, this study aims to assess whether the changes brought about by the revision of the Village Law have improved village governance or whether they serve other interests. The goal is to understand who benefits from these revisions and their broader implications.

II. Methods

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a literature review method to explore the revision of the Village Law from a socio-political perspective. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research aims to investigate social issues by delving into underlying meanings and explaining how and why certain phenomena occur. Through this approach, the study seeks a deeper understanding of the processes and dynamics involved in village governance and political decision-making, particularly regarding the ongoing revisions to the law.

The literature review method, which is central to this study, involves gathering data from various research journals sourced from multiple outlets. As Arikunto (2014) notes, this

method is essential for gaining a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. By drawing from these diverse sources, the study aims to conduct a thorough assessment of the socio-political factors influencing village governance in Indonesia.

Data collection in this study focuses on both primary and secondary literature, an essential part of any literature review. The first step involves gathering all relevant materials that provide insight into the topic, followed by a systematic review and selection process. The collected data is then processed and filtered to focus on the most pertinent information, ensuring that the study is well-supported by existing literature. Darmalaksana (2009) emphasizes that this process allows for a coherent and structured understanding of the issue at hand, contributing to the credibility of the research findings.

For this study, the secondary data consists of textbooks, journal articles, and other scholarly works focusing on village governance through a political governance lens. Specifically, 14 articles published within the last five years were selected as the primary sources of literature, as outlined in Table 1. These articles were chosen based on their relevance to the research topic and their contribution to understanding governance in the context of Indonesia's village law. This approach ensures the study relies on up-to-date information, providing a fresh perspective on the subject matter.

To analyze the data, this research applies Keping's (2018) Political Governance Framework. The framework is used to examine various aspects of governance as they relate to village management in Indonesia. Keping's framework identifies six core elements that define effective governance, which this study utilizes to assess the strengths and weaknesses of current village governance practices. These elements include legitimacy, transparency, accountability, rule of law, responsiveness, and effectiveness, each serving as a lens through which the revision of the Village Law is analyzed.

For example, legitimacy in governance refers to the extent to which the public recognizes and accepts the authority of the government. This concept is particularly important in the context of village governance, where the

relationship between local leaders and villagers can significantly impact the success or failure of policy implementation. The study investigates how the changes to the Village Law influence this relationship and whether the government can maintain or strengthen its legitimacy through these reforms.

Transparency, another key aspect of good governance, involves the open sharing of information between the government and the public. This principle is particularly relevant when considering the need for public involvement in the decision-making process. By evaluating the transparency of the village governance system, the study aims to determine how effectively local authorities communicate with villagers and whether sufficient information is provided to enable meaningful public participation.

Accountability focuses on the responsibility of public officials and other actors in governance. In the context of village governance, accountability is crucial to ensure that local leaders fulfil their duties ethically and efficiently. This study evaluates whether the current accountability mechanisms are sufficient and explores how they might be enhanced under the revised Village Law.

The rule of law, which emphasizes the supremacy of legal principles over individual actions, is another central focus. This study examines how the rule of law is upheld in village governance and whether the revision of the Village Law strengthens or undermines legal structures at the village level. Specifically, it explores how legal protections for villagers are impacted by the changes and whether the law effectively curtails potential abuses of power.

Responsiveness refers to the government's ability to address the needs and demands of its citizens in a timely and effective manner. In the context of village governance, this study evaluates how responsive local leaders are to the concerns of villagers and whether the revision of the Village Law enhances the capacity of village administrations to meet public expectations.

Finally, effectiveness pertains to the efficiency and productivity of governance structures. This study assesses how well the current village governance system functions and whether the revised law improves its

overall effectiveness. This includes evaluating administrative procedures, organizational structures, and resource management at the village level.

By applying Keping's framework, this research provides a comprehensive analysis of how village governance aligns with the principles of good governance. The insights derived from this analysis are expected to contribute to the broader discourse on governance reform in Indonesia, offering recommendations for enhancing village governance in light of the ongoing revisions to the Village Law. The findings will be valuable for policymakers, scholars, and other stakeholders seeking to improve governance at the village level, particularly in areas such as transparency, accountability, and responsiveness.

Table 1. Selected Articles for Literature Review Analysis

No	Name (Year)	Article	Research Database
1	Harun, P. N, et al (2023)	Public Sentiment Analysis on the Revision of the Village Law on Twitter Using Naive Bayes and Feature Selection with Particle Swarm Optimization	Garuda
2	Ardyansyah, R.A, et al (2024)	Controversy Over the Extension of the Village Head's Term to 8 Years for 2 Periods: A Sociological Law Perspective	Google Scholar
3	Indrayani, L, et al (2024)	The Process of Drafting Village Regulations Based on Law Number 6 of 2024 Concerning Villages (Case Study in Bangun Sari Baru Village, Tanjung Morawa District, Deli Serdang Regency)	Garuda
4	Jalo, F.G, et al (2024)	The Relationship Between the Power of the Village Head and the Village Consultative Body in the Implementation of Development in Mundinggasa Village and Natanangge Village, Maukaro District, Ende Regency, Based on Village Law Number 6 of 2014	Garuda
5	Syachbrani, W (2024)	Implementation of Accountability in Village Financial Management (Study on the Application of Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation No. 20 of 2018)	Google Scholar
6	Ningsih, W, et al (2020)	Analysis of Accountability in the Management of Village Fund Allocation (Case Study in Four Villages Across Four Districts in Sawahlunto City, West Sumatra Province)	Google Scholar
7	Pamungkas, B.A (2019)	Implementation of Village Autonomy After Law Number 6 of 2014 Concerning Villages	Google Scholar
8	Sarip, S (2020)	Legal Politics and the Politicization of Village Law in Indonesia's Constitutional System	Google Scholar

9	Sapitri, W (2022)	Law Enforcement on Bribery Practices in the Sale of Village Head Positions by the Probolinggo Regional Head Based on Law Number 20 of 2001, Amendment to Law Number 31 of 1999 on the Eradication of Corruption Crimes	Google Scholar
10	Nugroho, J, et al (2022)	The Role of the Village Head in Creating Social and Cultural Resilience in the Community According to Law Number 6 of 2014 Concerning Villages (Study in Pakel Village, Gucialit District, Lumajang Regency)	Google Scholar
11	Tiofilus, T (2023)	The Responsiveness of Village Government in Managing Village Funds in 2021 (Descriptive Study in Gernis Jaya Village, Sepauk District, Sintang Regency, West Kalimantan Province)	Google Scholar
12	Hidayat & Sari (2024)	Implications of Extending the Village Head's Working Period on the Effectiveness of Village Government	Google Scholar
13	Anzori, M.D, et al (2022)	Implementation of Good Corporate Governance (GCG) in the Management of Village-owned Enterprises (BUMDes) Towards Independent and Prosperous Villages Viewed from Law Number 6 of 2014 Concerning Villages and Law Number 11 of 2020 Concerning Job Creation	Garuda
14	Somali (2021)	Village Governance, Journal of Social and Political Sciences	Google Scholar
15	Winarwan et al. (2025)	Normative Juridical Study on the Second Amendment to Law Number 6 of 2014 on Villages in Law Number 3 of 2024: The Implications for Enhancing Village Independence in Indonesia	Google Scholar

Source: Researcher, 2024.

III. Results and Discussions

A. The Legitimacy of the Village Law Eroded by Elite Political Consensus

Legitimacy is used to assess whether a law is recognized by society as a political consensus between the government and the people. Regarding the Village Law, in terms of legitimacy, the key consideration is whether the law, as a legal product, holds legitimacy and whether village communities voluntarily acknowledge and fully comply with it, both before and after the revision. The legitimacy of a law is measured by the extent to which it is recognized by society as a product of political consensus between the government and the people. In the context of the Village Law, a crucial aspect of legitimacy is whether this law, as a legal product, genuinely holds legitimacy and is voluntarily accepted and adhered to by village communities, both before and after its revision.

The study by Winarwan et al. (2025) found that the revision of the Village Law, as stipulated

in Law Number 3 of 2024, has the potential to reduce village autonomy due to increasing budgetary dependence on the central government and external interventions. Furthermore, the shift in terminology to “local community” creates ambiguity in defining and implementing village policies. The reduction in transparency within village governance also heightens the risk of power abuse, making this revision more restrictive rather than strengthening village autonomy.

Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages was later revised by Law No. 3 of 2024, with one of the major changes being the extension of the term of office for village heads, from 6 years for a maximum of 3 terms to 8 years for a maximum of 2 terms, whether consecutive or non-consecutive. Research by Rizky and Aulia (2024) found that the extension of the village head’s term in the revised Law No. 3 of 2024 is highly political, given its proximity to the 2024 elections. It appears to accommodate the pragmatic interests of village heads by extending their terms by 2 additional years.

This benefits political elites contesting the 2024 elections, as they can “hold captive” village heads, who command significant voter bases, by offering them this “sweet reward.” This is reinforced by the opinion of the Executive Director of the Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of Regional Autonomy (KPPOD), Herman N Suparman, who stated that the discourse on extending the tenure of village heads emerged as an effort to capitalize on the momentum of the 2024 Regional and National Elections by village heads and national-level politicians. This is driven by the fact that the number of villages, reaching 83,843 (BPS, 2021), is considered to have significant potential, especially for DPR and regional politicians (Prayogi, 2023).

Even before its enactment, the revision of the Village Law sparked responses from various groups, including the public on social media, where public opinion was almost evenly divided between positive and negative sentiments. The initial assessment was temporary, as data was collected on March 24, 2022, and the difference in sentiment was marginal, about 4%, indicating that, at that time, the issue was still a matter of public discourse. If we were to reassess using the same method after Law No. 3 of 2024 has been

enacted, the results would likely differ (Harun, Danny, & Zy, 2023).

Based on findings from several studies discussed earlier, it can be concluded that, from a legitimacy perspective, the implementation of the Village Law and its revision still faces practical challenges. However, the proposed revision has introduced political dynamics, largely influenced by elite interests in the lead-up to the election, which have sparked varied reactions across different societal groups. Structurally, the Village Law provides a significant framework for accelerating rural development. However, its implementation has been hindered by various challenges, particularly concerning the welfare and competency of village governments. The proposed revision, which seeks to extend the tenure of village heads, raises concerns that it may primarily serve the interests of political elites vying for power in the 2024 general election. Additionally, this revision has triggered widespread public discourse, including debates on social media, reflecting the divided opinions on its potential implications.

B. The Loss of Transparency in the Agenda and Its Implementation

Transparency is evaluated throughout the political activities of the government, from policy-making to policy implementation, as well as the evaluation and oversight of government policies accessible to the public. Transparency allows the public to participate in every process of governance. In the case of the Village Law, the evaluation of transparency involves assessing whether the process of formulating the Village Law and its derivative regulations was conducted openly and whether information about the implementation of the law was properly communicated to the public, both before and after its revision. However, based on Morawa et al. (2024), the process of revising the Village Law was conducted with minimal public participation and lacked transparency. The extension of the village head’s term of office, for instance, was not accompanied by adequate explanations to the public regarding the reasons, benefits, and urgency of the change.

Regarding its implementation, we find that, during the 10 years following the enactment of Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages, transparency

issues arose in the institutional relationships within village governments, notably the lack of effective communication between the village head and the Village Consultative Body (BPD), which created obstacles to village development (Candra et al., 2023). Disharmony in institutional relations undoubtedly impacts governance, development, and community affairs. The leadership of not only the village head but also the district heads and higher-level government agencies is crucial in providing guidance and oversight for effective village governance and development.

Based on findings from the studies above, it can be concluded that, from a transparency perspective, the process of drafting the revision of the Village Law was conducted with minimal public participation and a lack of information disclosure. Furthermore, transparency issues in the implementation of the Village Law, particularly regarding institutional relationships within village governance, such as poor communication between village heads and Village Consultative Bodies (BPD), have posed challenges to village development. Transparency is essential for enhancing public trust in the formulation and implementation of the Village Law, including its revision process. Strong institutional transparency will ultimately lead to greater transparency towards the public, ensuring that transparent village governance positively impacts government administration, development, and empowerment efforts aimed at improving community welfare.

C. Pseudo Accountability in the Implementation of the Village Law

Accountability refers to the government's responsibility for every policy decision, ensuring that it can fulfill its duties and obligations properly. Concerning the implementation of the Village Law, both before and after its revision, the evaluation of accountability involves examining whether the law enables the actors involved to fulfill their functions and responsibilities. One aspect of accountability in village governance is the management of village funds. In several case studies, it was found that village governments do not always meet accountability standards in the management of village finances. Syachbrani (2024) found that the accountability of financial management in Munte Village, Tana Lili District, North Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi, did not

meet the assessment indicators set by Ministerial Regulation No. 20 of 2018 at the stages of planning, implementation, and reporting. However, in the phases of administration and accountability, financial management adhered to the regulations. Efforts from related parties are necessary to support village governments in managing village funds responsibly. The role of the central and regional governments is crucial in enhancing the competencies of village officials and in providing supervision and guidance over village financial management. In addition to the role of the central and regional governments, active participation from the public in the management and oversight of village funds is highly necessary.

These findings are corroborated by Ningsih and Arza (2020), who analyzed the accountability of fund allocation management in four villages in Sawahlunto, West Sumatra. Their study found that, in terms of strategy, the concept of community involvement had been applied, evidenced by the implementation of participation and responsiveness principles reaching 80%. However, in terms of transparency, some villages had not fully grasped the information related to this strategy. During the implementation phase, the fund allocation program in the four villages adopted principles of participation, transparency, and accountability. Meanwhile, at the accountability stage, the principle of accountability had been applied, as seen in the field implementation, where the use of funds was accounted for both physically and administratively, although not yet perfectly.

The findings from several studies indicate accountability issues in the planning, implementation, and reporting of village funds. This raises concerns about possible misuse of funds. Financial management in Munte Village did not fully meet regulations, creating risks of irregularities (Syachbrani, 2024). There are also gaps in transparency, making oversight difficult (Ningsih et al., 2020). Some villages are still unaware of the strategies employed by village governments in managing these funds. Accountability is closely tied to transparency; both aspects must be fulfilled in village governance, as they are two sides of the same coin. Furthermore, accountability is not limited to administrative matters but also involves ensuring that leadership at the village level can be held

accountable by effectively fulfilling their duties and responsibilities.

D. The Rule of Law Ignored by Political Elites and the Villages Themselves

The rule of law principle asserts that the law must serve as the highest authority in governing all aspects of administration. However, concerns have emerged that this principle has not been fully respected and upheld in the revision of the Village Law. Aulia et al. (2024) highlight that, from philosophical, sociological, and juridical perspectives, the ideal term of office for village heads should be set at five years, with the possibility of two terms, to support development and leadership regeneration. An excessively long tenure risks fostering abuses of power, necessitating the establishment of effective oversight mechanisms. Therefore, the normalization of tenure should strike a balance between stability and change, consider the social context, and adhere to the principles of good governance to enhance accountability and public participation.

This situation also affects law enforcement in villages, which are often politicized, treating villages as mere administrative entities (Sarip, 2020). Ideally, the Village Law should promote village autonomy and prevent hierarchical intervention from the central government. Continuous monitoring of these derivative regulations is needed to ensure that village legal politics are more supportive of autonomy and local wisdom, rather than just administrative compliance under central control.

Furthermore, the legal loophole created by the revision of the Village Law opens opportunities for corruption in the appointment of acting village heads (Sapitri, W., 2022). Politically, since the introduction of village funds, the position of village head has become prestigious not only for the community but also for civil servants appointed by regional heads as acting village heads when a village head position becomes vacant. It is not surprising that the position of village head has become a business opportunity for corrupt political practices by certain regional head officials. A thorough review of the criteria for village head candidacy and transparent management of village funds is essential, along

with preventive and repressive legal enforcement measures.

Based on the findings from various studies above, it can be concluded that the principle of the rule of law in the Village Law can be observed in both its formulation and implementation, before and after the revision. However, the revision has the potential to encourage authoritarianism at the village level and enable corruption in the appointment of village heads. Furthermore, law enforcement in villages is often politicized by certain elite interests through fraudulent practices during village head elections, which are not legally prosecuted due to protection from elites affiliated with the perpetrators. Sarip (2022) also explains the potential for such occurrences. The rule of law can be realized if all relevant stakeholders, including the central, local, and village governments, as well as the community itself, commit to upholding the law and ensuring reporting and oversight in cases of power abuse.

E. Slower Responsiveness in Villages

Responsiveness measures the government's ability to respond to societal dynamics and demands. Regarding villages, this aspect evaluates whether the Village Law, both before and after its revision, has enabled relevant stakeholders to swiftly address village dynamics, such as conflicts and social changes. Nugroho & Santoso (2022) found that village heads play a crucial role in maintaining social and cultural resilience and resolving conflicts in villages. Village heads must mobilize the village government at all levels to work with the community to manage social and cultural potential effectively, turning it into village assets while also preventing conflicts arising from misunderstandings.

However, in practice, as discussed by Umbu Pariangu & La Ode Muhammad Elwan (2023), the extension of village head terms as a result of the revised Village Law has reduced the responsiveness of village governments. Village heads who hold office for extended periods tend to lose enthusiasm in dynamically responding to community demands. This, in turn, can lead to decreased community participation in village development, as they feel there is no space to express their aspirations. The responsiveness of village governments can also be observed in

the management of village funds. Tiofilius (2023) found that the responsiveness of the government in managing village funds in 2021 was still suboptimal, as many members of the community felt that the village government had not fully met their needs. Village fund management should be based on the prioritized needs of the local community, and village governments must be responsive to community dynamics and demands.

Overall, the essence of responsiveness in village governance is heavily dependent on its leadership, specifically the village head. The village head plays a crucial role in maintaining social and cultural stability, as well as addressing emerging conflicts. However, the extension of the village head's term often diminishes their responsiveness, as prolonged tenure can lead to decreased motivation and enthusiasm in dynamically addressing community needs. This poses a serious issue, as it may result in reduced opportunities for community involvement in development processes. There is a need for changes in governance to make village administration more responsive and effective in meeting the sustainable needs of the community. To enhance the effectiveness of village governance, reforms are necessary to ensure timely and sustained responses to the needs of the village population.

F. Effectiveness That Remains Weak in Villages

One of the objectives of the revision of the Village Law is to enhance the effectiveness of village governance. However, practical realities in the field may indicate contradictory outcomes. According to Hidayat & Sari (2024), extending the village head's tenure does not necessarily improve governance effectiveness but is instead influenced by subjective and political interests. The effectiveness of village governance is primarily determined by the quality of the village head's leadership, partnerships with various stakeholders, and active community participation. Therefore, the success of village governance relies more on leadership capacity and community engagement than on the mere length of tenure.

Another study by Cahyati et al. (2024) found that the discourse on extending the village head's term of office is predominantly driven

by political elites, while civil society largely opposes it, perceiving it as a potential threat to democratic values. For instance, the community in Girikerto Village expressed skepticism toward this proposal, arguing that it primarily reflects the interests of the elite rather than those of the broader society. Although the village head's performance is generally considered satisfactory, the study also highlights persistent issues of uneven development. Moreover, extending the village head's term could reduce the effectiveness of village governance if not accompanied by improvements in leadership capacity and strong accountability mechanisms. Therefore, this study underscores the importance of incorporating community perspectives into policymaking to ensure greater fairness, inclusivity, and participation.

To improve the effectiveness of village governance, the application of Good Governance principles is necessary. Somali et al. (2014) found that several factors hinder the implementation of good governance, including limited community participation, human resource constraints, and the low discipline of village officials. On the other hand, factors that support the implementation of good governance in village governance include strong collaboration and communication. The effectiveness of village governance is significantly influenced by the application of Good Governance principles, particularly in fostering good cooperation and communication between the village government and the community.

Overall, the effectiveness of village governance is significantly influenced by leadership capacity and the application of Good Governance principles. The role of the village head is crucial in building networks, ensuring community participation, and overseeing and mentoring village officials and Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDES). However, weak oversight, limited participation, and constrained human resources contribute to inefficiencies in the management of village funds and BUMDES. To address these challenges, it is essential to enhance the capacity of village officials and strengthen Good Governance principles, enabling village governance to be more responsive and better equipped to face the dynamics and challenges within the community.

IV. Conclusion

The revision of the Village Law through the enactment of Law No. 3 of 2024 highlights a tension between efforts to improve village governance and concerns about strengthening political elite dominance. The extension of the village head's tenure from six to eight years, although intended to enhance stability and ensure the smooth implementation of development programs, raises concerns about the potential for power abuse and a reduction in public participation during village head elections. This policy could lead to political stagnation, where longer-serving village heads become less responsive to the evolving needs of the community, triggering political apathy. Furthermore, the extension of the tenure, which coincides with the 2024 elections, introduces a political dimension, where village heads may be used as tools for the electoral interests of political elites, ultimately reinforcing the existing political status quo.

The extension of the village head's term carries the risk of power abuse, reduces public participation in leadership transitions, and undermines the democratic process at the village level. A longer tenure may lead to political stagnation, where village heads become less responsive to community needs, and residents become disengaged from local governance, potentially causing political fatigue and decreasing participation in decision-making. Moreover, this revision, which coincides with the 2024 elections, raises concerns that the policy is primarily driven by the interests of political elites seeking to secure electoral advantages. Village heads, who hold significant influence within their communities, may be used as political instruments, reinforcing the existing power structures and perpetuating the "elite-centric" political culture.

Despite claims that the revision of the Village Law is necessary to adapt to social and legal developments, several provisions reflect political motives that overshadow the welfare of rural communities. The research highlights ongoing challenges in the law's implementation—both before and after the revision—including widespread corruption, inefficiencies in managing village funds, and limited public participation in local decision-making processes. These issues not only undermine the law's intended goals of

empowering rural communities but also raise concerns about the law being used as a tool for political gain rather than addressing the real needs of village populations.

From a political governance perspective, the revision and implementation of the Village Law must align with the core principles of legitimacy, transparency, accountability, rule of law, responsiveness, and effectiveness. However, this revision has sparked public dissatisfaction, reflecting a lack of broad acceptance. There has been minimal transparency in the drafting and implementation process, marked by low public involvement and unclear communication, particularly regarding the extension of the village head's term. Accountability in the management of village funds remains a significant issue, with many villages failing to meet established financial standards. The rule of law at the village level is also increasingly influenced by political interests, causing villages to be perceived more as tools of the state rather than autonomous entities. This erosion of the rule of law further strengthens the power of political elites and diminishes the village's ability to function independently. Additionally, the responsiveness of village governments is hindered by the longer tenure of village heads, which reduces public participation and weakens democratic processes. The effectiveness of village governance, especially in managing Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) and providing basic services, continues to be insufficient.

Thus, we arrive at the central question: Who truly benefits from the revision of the Village Law? Although the stated aim is to improve village governance, in reality, this law mostly benefits political elites and village heads who seek to extend their grip on power. The term "elite-crazy" reflects the political pragmatism and self-interest driving this change. If this trend continues, villages will remain tools for political elites to achieve electoral gains and consolidate power. This raises concerns about the future of village governance, where villages could become objects of political interests, no longer spaces for inclusive development and collective decision-making, but mechanisms dominated by elites, marginalizing the people.

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