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## The Selection and Appointment Process of Village Officials: North Lampung as a Case Study

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### Abstract

The process of appointing village officials is strictly regulated by Law No. 6 of 2014. Village officials are designated by the village head following consultation with the subdistrict head, who acts on behalf of the regent or mayor. This research delves into the appointment and dismissal processes of village officials within the context of Sidodadi Village, North Lampung, Indonesia. It underscores deviations from prescribed regulations, notably the absence of a formal selection team and the prevalence of character-based assessments. Community perceptions raise concerns about age limits and perceived direct appointments, which may hinder effective governance. To address these issues, the study recommends incorporating integrity requirements for village head candidates and enhancing socialization efforts to align with existing regulations, ultimately aiming to improve village governance practices. The findings shed light on the challenges and opportunities in optimizing local administration and service delivery.

### Keywords

Appointment Process, Village Officials, Character-Based Assessments, Local Administration, Challenges

## 1. Introduction

In delivering services to village communities, it is essential for the village government to maintain stringent service standards within its bureaucratic framework to ensure that the community receives optimal services from all government agencies represented by the village

head (Derks & Romijn, 2019; Pahlevi et al., 2022). This commitment to high service standards is a fundamental aspect of Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning villages. This law places a significant emphasis on the quality of services provided by village governments to promote the well-being of the community and maintain economic and social stability through the effective execution of pre-planned programs.

To address the demands for democratic representation and the effective governance of villages, Law Number 6 of 2014 provides valuable opportunities for the village government to collaborate with village officials, recognizing them as integral components of the local governance structure (Susan & Budirahayu, 2018). This provision encourages the active involvement of village officials in the governance framework, thereby enhancing the delivery of essential services and ensuring that the unique needs of the community are met. By integrating village officials into the governance structure, the village government can harness their expertise and dedication to better serve the community (Fisk, et al., 2016).

Village entities, functioning as autonomous regions, are vested with a distinct authority to autonomously manage their internal affairs, a prerogative clearly delineated in Article 26 (2) of the Village Law. This specific provision empowers the village head to carefully select and, when necessary, dismiss village officials based on the specific human resources requirements and demands of their respective villages (Agustina, 2019). This authority ensures that appointed officials possess the necessary qualifications and attributes essential for effectively fulfilling their roles within the community.

The process of appointing village officials is strictly regulated by Law No. 6 of 2014. Village officials are designated by the village head following consultation with the subdistrict head, who acts on behalf of the regent or mayor (Mulyadi et al., 2018). Additionally, the appointment of village officials is detailed in the Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs (Peraturan Menteri Dalam Negeri/Permendagri) of the Republic of Indonesia Number 67 of 2017, which amends Regulation Number 83 of 2015. This Permendagri provides a comprehensive framework for the selection and appointment of village officials, specifying that they encompass personnel who play pivotal roles in policy formulation and coordination, often housed within the village secretariat. It also includes individuals responsible for supporting the village head's duties in policy implementation, often serving as technical implementers and regional elements (Kristiyanto, 2022).

The meticulous process and criteria for appointing village officials ensure that individuals with the necessary skills and qualifications are chosen to serve the community effectively and efficiently. This commitment to a transparent and objective appointment process is integral to maintaining the integrity of village governance. The authors' motivation to conduct this research is rooted in understanding and analyzing the intricacies of these processes within the context of Sidodadi Village, North Lampung.

## **2. Research methods**

In this study, the authors employ qualitative and descriptive research methods, along with inductive analysis techniques. The primary objective is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the subject through qualitative approaches. Qualitative research methods are utilized for the

examination of natural phenomena, with researchers serving as the primary data collection agents. Data collection techniques encompass triangulation, while data analysis is both inductive and qualitative, prioritizing understanding over generalization. The data collection methods employed include documented surveys, observations, and interviews. The data analysis approach adopted in this study follows the Miles and Huberman analysis model, which involves data reduction, validation, presentation, and drawing conclusions. The Triangle Method is applied to ensure data validity.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

#### **3.1 Village Officials Selection Process**

The village order recruitment process is a pivotal procedure involving the meticulous selection of individuals at the village level (Jacqueline et al., 2017). These selected individuals are entrusted with assisting the village head in effectively carrying out their multifaceted duties, in strict accordance with the job requirements meticulously stipulated in prevailing regulations. This process is underpinned by the principles set forth in Article 48 of Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning villages, which is an authoritative cornerstone of village governance.

Within the intricate framework of this law, village apparatus encompasses a diverse array of roles, including village secretaries, regional supervisors, and technical implementers (Pakage & Satriya, 2021). These village apparatus members are entrusted with responsibilities that contribute profoundly to the well-being of their communities. The procedures for appointing and, if necessary, dismissing these village apparatus members are meticulously outlined in Permendagri Number 83 of 2014. This regulatory framework provides village administrators with a crystal-clear and legally sound basis for carrying out their roles, while also delineating the scope of their authorities.

However, when delved into the specific context of the selection mechanism for village officials, particularly within Sidodadi Village, it nestled within the jurisdiction of the Sungkai Selatan District, North Lampung Regency, concerns come to the fore. It becomes evident that the process of selecting village officials does not align with the prescribed procedure, which unequivocally entails the formation of a team or committee. This procedural requirement is enshrined in a ministerial regulation that unequivocally states, "The Village Head may establish a team comprising a Chairperson, a Secretary, and at least one Member." This team is entrusted with the pivotal responsibility of orchestrating and overseeing the meticulous selection of village officials.

Remarkably, it emerges that one primary rationale cited for deviating from the recommended procedure is the pressing constraint of time. In the crucible of real-world governance, time often emerges as a precious commodity, frequently compelling expedited decision-making. In response to these time constraints, the village head opted to proceed with the appointment of village officials based on valuable input and recommendations from the community, bypassing the formation of the essential selection team or committee (Antlöv et al., 2016).

Yet, it is paramount to underscore that the repercussions of omitting the initial stage, namely the formation of a selection team or committee, reverberate throughout the entire selection process. When the foundational step is bypassed, it inadvertently casts a shadow over the subsequent stages, potentially impacting the transparency and objectivity of the selection process

itself (Simangunsong & Hutasoit, 2018). Hence, the significance of adhering to the proper procedure from the very inception of the selection process cannot be overstated, as it forms the bedrock of fair and effective governance.

### **3.2 The Screening Stage for Village Ranking Candidates**

In the progression of the selection process, following the formation of the team in accordance with relevant regulations, the next critical phase is the screening of potential candidates for village ranking positions. This phase is central to the comprehensive evaluation of candidates' qualifications and suitability for their prospective roles (Aspinall & Rohman, 2017). However, it's imperative to recognize that the screening stage harbors certain vulnerabilities, chiefly stemming from its exclusive oversight by the Village Head, without active participation from the local community or Sidodadi Village's institutions.

The village head has elucidated the procedure, emphasizing a distinctive approach during the screening of prospective village ranking candidates. Instead of conducting exhaustive file assessments, the village head emphasizes the evaluation of candidates' character and their ability to shoulder the responsibilities entrusted to them. Once a candidate affirms their preparedness to undertake these responsibilities, the village head proceeds to appoint and recommend them to the *camat* (subdistrict head). While character assessment is undeniably significant, it must be noted that this process deviates from the specific provisions articulated in Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs No. 83 of 2015, governing the Appointment and Dismissal of Village Officials.

This regulatory framework, as delineated in Article 4, paragraphs (1) and (2), explicitly prescribes the formation of a dedicated screening team. Comprising a chairman, a secretary, and a member, this team assumes the pivotal role of meticulously screening and assessing candidates for village apparatus positions. It is the responsibility of this team to impartially and comprehensively evaluate the qualifications, experience, and alignment of candidates with the job requirements. However, it is a matter of concern that, during the appointment of village ranks, the prescribed team formation, as mandated by the regulatory framework, was conspicuously absent, representing a notable departure from the regulatory guidelines.

### **3.3 Challenges and Issues in Village Officials Selection**

Following the completion of the initial screening process, the subsequent stage involves a further evaluation, which includes written and specialized tests. However, similar to the selection stage, this process is exclusively overseen by the village head without active involvement from the local community or institutions within Sidodadi Village. Notably, the selection of village officials also raises concerns. One of the concerns is related to the age limit, which some candidates do not meet. The age limit is specified in Article 2, paragraph (1), part b of Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 83 of 2015. This regulation stipulates that village officials should be at least 20 years old but not more than 42 years old. Selecting village officials beyond this age limit is problematic and raises questions within the community. Some community members are aware that these appointments do not adhere to existing regulations; instead, they are made through direct appointments. This realization discourages some individuals from nominating themselves for village positions.

As outlined in Permendagri Number 67 of 2017 concerning the Appointment and Termination of Village Officials, the intended goals have not been effectively achieved at the research site. The policy content covers various aspects, including the interests affected by the policy, the types of benefits to be produced, and the desired degree of change. Village officials can indeed be terminated or dismissed from their positions, but such termination or dismissal must adhere to the rules governing the mechanism for dismissing village apparatus. They cannot be terminated unilaterally or without valid reasons, as stipulated in Permendagri.

Village officials can be dismissed by the village head when the person in question violates the prohibitions established in regulations, including regulations issued by the government and existing restrictions within the village (Kadir & Idris, 2021). The implementation of policies related to the established guidelines and rules has not been carried out in accordance with the existing regulations. In this case, there is still a lack of understanding by the village head regarding Permendagri Number 67 of 2017, which has a significant impact on the community, causing discomfort with the process of appointing and dismissing village officials at the research site.

Based on this, it can be observed that the goals set in Permendagri Number 67 of 2017 have not been achieved as intended. Specifically, the objective of establishing an effective Village Government has not been realized, and the village administration has not operated in line with its intended functions. In this context, the key actor responsible for the appointment of village officials is the village head, who holds full authority in this process. The village head consults with members of the Village Consultative Body (Badan Permusyawaratan Desa/BPD) to select individuals deemed suitable for appointment as village officials. The implementation of these regional regulations involves various parties, including village heads, BPD members, community leaders, and they also seek guidance from the Subdistrict Head.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The examination of the village officials selection process in Sidodadi Village has highlighted significant issues. The deviation from established procedures, such as the omission of a selection team, raises concerns about transparency and fairness. Furthermore, the screening process and adherence to age limits have not consistently followed the regulatory framework, casting doubt on the process's integrity. The lack of understanding regarding key regulations also hampers effective implementation. To achieve the intended goals of an effective Village Government, it is essential to prioritize adherence to established procedures, community involvement, transparency, and ongoing education for village officials and leaders. Only through these measures can Sidodadi Village and similar communities realize the vision of a well-functioning Village Government.

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