



Research Article



## A Deconstruction of Rural Governance Policy to Drive Local Economies

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Received: March 20, 2025 / Revised: July 15, 2025/ Accepted: July 18, 2025

**Abstract:** Rural governance policies play a critical role in determining the trajectory of local economic development, particularly in marginalized or agrarian regions. However, in practice, the centralistic and technocratic approach still dominates, positioning villages as policy implementers rather than locally based policy designers. This article examines the structure of village governance policy in Indonesia and its impact on local economic development through a deconstruction approach. Through a case study of Panggungharjo Village in Yogyakarta, this research analyzes how local actors successfully transformed village governance by dismantling the political, administrative, and policymaking frameworks. This research uses a socio-legal method with a discourse analysis approach to uncover power relations, participatory practices, and institutional innovations at the village level. This research compares village governance in India's Panchayati Raj and Germany's federal system to enrich the analysis. The research findings indicate that, firstly, the village governance structure in Indonesia is still dominated by a hierarchical and technocratic administrative approach, which limits the space for village initiatives in designing development based on local needs. Second, the village governance models in India and Germany offer valuable lessons for Indonesia, with India excelling in citizen political participation and Germany excelling in bureaucratic efficiency and technology-based public services. The combination of strong community engagement and institutional capacity building is crucial for building inclusive, adaptive, and sustainable village governance in Indonesia. Third, the ideal model of good village government governance is supported by strong leadership, adequate institutional capacity, and high public trust in the governance process.

**Keywords:** Deconstruction; Government; Local Economy; Policies; Rural Governance;



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## INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is currently a key agenda item that is being vigorously implemented by various countries, both developed and developing. <sup>1</sup>One of the significant contributions of this concept is its emphasis on long-term sustainability, which not only addresses current needs but also considers the rights and needs of future generations. <sup>2</sup>However, in practice, our understanding of the interests of future generations remains speculative and limited. Many uncertainties are inherent in sustainable development planning, as the preferences, needs, and priorities of future generations cannot be determined, except in terms of basic biological needs. Therefore, it is essential for every current development policy to consider the

<sup>1</sup> Ahmad Mohd Khalid, Seema Sharma and Amlendu Kumar Dubey, 'Concerns of Developing Countries and the Sustainable Development Goals: Case for India', *International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology*, 28.4 (2021), 303–15 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504509.2020.1795744>

<sup>2</sup> Nikolaos Kavadis and Steen Thomsen, 'Sustainable Corporate Governance: A Review of Research on Long-term Corporate Ownership and Sustainability', *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, 31.1 (2023), 198–226 <https://doi.org/10.1111/corg.12486>



conservation of potential resources and development space, ensuring that sustainability can be truly realized across generations. However, global attention to sustainable development tends to be focused on the urban context. Various studies and policies tend to highlight urban sustainability aspects, whether in terms of spatial planning, infrastructure, or the green economy, while rural sustainability is often overlooked.<sup>3</sup> This has become a serious issue, especially for developing countries like Indonesia, where rural areas still account for the majority of the land area and population. This disparity in attention creates a gap in the capacity of rural areas to grow sustainably and independently.<sup>4</sup>

The rapid development of the duality between urban areas and city-rural regions has had a significant impact on the challenges of rural area growth. This dynamic creates structural tensions between growth centers located in urban areas and peripheral regions that still largely depend on natural resources and subsistence economies.<sup>5</sup> One of the tangible consequences of this phenomenon is the emergence of villages that experience marginalization in terms of social, economic, and political aspects, often referred to as marginal villages or rural marginal communities. This condition is generally triggered by various structural factors, such as uneven geographical development between regions, spatial disparities in the distribution of infrastructure and public services, uncontrolled massive urbanization, and highly contextual and specific issues in each rural area.<sup>6</sup> As a result, most villages struggle to catch up and face significant challenges in optimally and sustainably developing their local economic potential.<sup>7</sup>

One of the components that influences rural development is good village government governance.<sup>8</sup> Governance is one of the key terms in the field of development.<sup>9</sup> The UNDP emphasizes governance as the policies, values, and institutional systems through which society manages its political, economic, and social affairs, with a focus on the association between civil society, the private sector, and the state.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, the World Bank indicates that governance refers to the institutions and traditions through which authority is exercised in a country for the

<sup>3</sup> Águeda Veloso, Fernando Fonseca and Rui Ramos, 'Insights from Smart City Initiatives for Urban Sustainability and Contemporary Urbanism', *Smart Cities*, 7.6 (2024), 3188–3209 <https://doi.org/10.3390/smartcities7060124>

<sup>4</sup> Xuefeng Li and others, 'Index System of Sustainable Rural Development Based on the Concept of Ecological Livability', *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, 86 (2021), 106478 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eiar.2020.106478>

<sup>5</sup> Andreas Kallert and others, 'The Cultural Political Economy of Rural Governance: Regional Development in Hesse (Germany)', *Journal of Rural Studies*, 87 (2021), 327–37 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2021.09.017>

<sup>6</sup> Kallert and others.

<sup>7</sup> Yuniarto Hadiwibowo and others, 'Sustainable Regional Economic Development by Developing Villages', *European Journal of Development Studies*, 3.1 (2023), 22–28 <https://doi.org/10.24018/ejdevelop.2023.3.1.201>

<sup>8</sup> Jing Shen and Rung Jiun Chou, 'Rural Revitalization of Xiamei: The Development Experiences of Integrating Tea Tourism with Ancient Village Preservation', *Journal of Rural Studies*, 90. January 2021 (2022), 42–52 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2022.01.006>

<sup>9</sup> Zaitul Zaitul, Desi Ilona and Neva Novianti, 'Good Governance in Rural Local Administration', *Administrative Sciences*, 13.1 (2023), 19 <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci13010019>

<sup>10</sup> Abu Alrob Haifa, Ouazzani Touhami Zineb and Qannam Ziad, 'Good Governance: Concept, Basics, and Relationship to Sustainable Development from a Palestinian Perspective', *Sustainable Development*, 31.4 (2023), 2122–36 <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.2530>



common good, including (1) the selection, monitoring, and replacement processes by authorities and (2) the government's ability to manage implementation and its resources effectively. The dynamics of village government governance remains interesting to study today. The reason is that changes upon changes occur without being separated from the development of knowledge, social, political, and economic factors that cannot be predicted globally.<sup>11</sup> From the perspective of governance modes, village governments, commonly referred to as rural governments, have been widely studied since the wave of decentralized policies in several countries.<sup>12</sup> Several experts have introduced various models and methods, and official institutions have formally established others. Its orientation is governance that is more rational, objective, and, of course, also democratic.<sup>13</sup>

Globally, rural governance has shifted from a top-down approach to a more participatory and community-based model.<sup>14</sup> For example, Germany has an administrative federalism program that can drive locally based economic innovation. Meanwhile, in India, the Gram Panchayat system empowers villages to manage their governance and development affairs independently, with robust social control mechanisms in place.<sup>15</sup> This comparison shows that the success of rural governance policies depends highly on institutional structures, power relations, and spaces for participation. In Indonesia, Law Number 6 of 2014 on Villages has been enacted, which mandates that Villages implement the principles of accountable, well-managed, open, clean, effective, and efficient village governance. These principles represent effective village governance. The leading indicators are transparency, participation, and accountability. However, even though villages have the status of autonomous entities legally regulated by Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, in practice, this autonomy is often limited by administrative and technocratic structures.<sup>16</sup> The reason is that, from the perspective of public administration, there are always two equally strong and opposing interests as the basis for developing village government governance, namely the assumption of "state interest as an objective consensus" and/or "the interest of independence and the rights of rural society." In simple terms, if the interests of the state are prioritized, the village government is considered a sub-unit of affairs that politically receives decisive intervention from the central government. On

<sup>11</sup> Andrea J. Nightingale, Noémi Gonda and Siri H. Eriksen, 'Affective Adaptation = Effective Transformation? Shifting the Politics of Climate Change Adaptation and Transformation from the Status Quo', *WIREs Climate Change*, 13.1 (2022) <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.740>

<sup>12</sup> Chengzhi Yi and Xinyi Qiu, 'From Local Government to Local Governance: A Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 84.1 (2025), 102–24 <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8500.12644>

<sup>13</sup> Ritwick Ghosh, 'Data-Driven Governance and Performances of Accountability: Critical Reflections from US Agri-Environmental Policy', *Science as Culture*, 33.1 (2024), 70–96 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09505431.2023.2175654>

<sup>14</sup> Jiansheng Liu and others, 'Beyond Government-Led or Community-Based: Exploring the Governance Structure and Operating Models for Reconstructing China's Hollowed Villages', *Journal of Rural Studies*, 93 (2022), 273–86 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2019.10.038>

<sup>15</sup> Ananya Samajdar, 'Balancing Representation, Participation and Capacity for Democracy and Development: An Assessment of India's Rural Local Government System', in *Handbook on Asian Public Administration* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2023), pp. 327–44 <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781839104794.00031>

<sup>16</sup> Wasisto Raharjo Jati, 'From A Semi-Federal to An Administrative-Technocratic Model: The Paradigm Shift in Decentralization in Contemporary Indonesia', *BISNIS & BIROKRASI: Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi Dan Organisasi*, 31.1 (2024) <https://doi.org/10.20476/jbb.v31i1.1437>



the other hand, if the autonomy of the rural government is prioritized, the intervention from the central government weakens. Thus, the village government is politically authorized to regulate its local governance.<sup>17</sup>

Village government governance can also influence local rural economic development. The capability of local governments in governance can enhance local rural economic development.<sup>18</sup> However, rural economic development currently faces challenges in adjusting decentralization policies following the enactment of the Village Law. At least there are two things to be concerned about. First, the strengthening of power localization drives the development of rural governance that denies objective control or system centralization. As a result, strategists, policymakers, and leaders operate without considering factors beyond the local context. This, in turn, produces negative impacts, such as local arrogance and the powerlessness of rural governance in facing global challenges. The increase in decentralization without clear standards can weaken a country's prosperity. Second, there is a dilemma in the direction of local economic development. Although rural governance is considered the most effective strategy for local economic development, it often faces challenges and failures. The granting of local autonomy is often hindered by political and moral issues that stem from a weak understanding of the developments of the global market. Therefore, rural economic development relies heavily on the government taking various steps to create pathways for rural communities to achieve economic freedom.<sup>19</sup>

The current state of rural governance underscores an urgent need for a critical examination of the existing policy framework.<sup>20</sup> To date, village development in Indonesia remains heavily influenced by hierarchical power structures and technocratic regulations.<sup>21</sup> This often hinders the emergence of local innovations and limits the autonomy of villages in responding to the contextual needs of their residents. In this context, the deconstruction of village governance policies becomes an important approach.<sup>22</sup> As a key concept in postmodernism, deconstruction seeks to challenge power structures and dominant narratives, opening space to re-examine basic

<sup>17</sup> Desy Hariyati, Defny Holidin and Imas Cempaka Mulia, 'Centralized Local Development versus Localized Central Arrangement in Village Autonomy Policy Implementation in Indonesia', *BISNIS & BIROKRASI: Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi Dan Organisasi*, 27.2 (2021) <https://doi.org/10.20476/jbb.v27i2.11275>

<sup>18</sup> Su Dinh Thanh and Canh Nguyen Phuc, 'Fiscal Decentralization and Economic Growth of Vietnamese Provinces: The Role of Local Public Governance', *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics*, 91.1 (2020), 119–49 <https://doi.org/10.1111/apce.12255>

<sup>19</sup> Stavros Kalogiannidis and others, 'Risk, Vulnerability, and Resilience in Agriculture and Their Impact on Sustainable Rural Economy Development: A Case Study of Greece', *Agriculture*, 13.6 (2023), 1222 <https://doi.org/10.3390/agriculture13061222>

<sup>20</sup> Yu Peng and others, 'Effectiveness in Rural Governance: Influencing Factors and Driving Pathways—Based on 20 Typical Cases of Rural Governance in China', *Land*, 12.7 (2023), 1452 <https://doi.org/10.3390/land12071452>

<sup>21</sup> Erlan Wijatmoko, Armaidy Armawi and Teuku Faisal Fathani, 'Legal Effectiveness in Promoting Development Policies: A Case Study of North Aceh Indonesia', *Heliyon*, 9.11 (2023), e21280 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e21280>

<sup>22</sup> Hui Wang and Changfu Chen, 'Polycentric Governance for Rural Production-Living-Ecological Space: Lessons from an Ethnic Mountain Village in China and Implications for Global Sustainable Development', *Habitat International*, 163 (2025), 103489 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.habitatint.2025.103489>





assumptions that are often taken for granted.<sup>23</sup> Deconstruction not only questions who is considered the "empowered" subject but also challenges how terms like participation and independence are interpreted and implemented in rural development practices.<sup>24</sup> Through this approach, policies are no longer positioned as something normative and final, but rather as social constructs that can be critiqued and restructured to be more responsive to the socio-economic realities of rural communities. This approach creates space for the development of more inclusive, contextual, and reflective development strategies that better reflect local dynamics.<sup>25</sup>

A concrete example of the success of this alternative approach can be seen in Panggungharjo Village, Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta.<sup>26</sup> Instead of implementing government programs procedurally, this village government initiated various breakthroughs in managing Village Funds, ranging from the construction of social infrastructure to the development of creative economies, digital-based services, and cooperatives that support the local economy.<sup>27</sup> This success stems from a collaborative relationship pattern among the village government, residents, and external actors, as well as the courage to redefine policies in response to the real needs of the residents. This contrasts with many other villages that tend to follow the central agenda without adjusting to the local context.<sup>28</sup> However, the success of Panggungharjo Village is not without the challenges that arise from the tension between the standardization of national policies and the need for local adaptation. Centrally designed policies often cannot accommodate the diversity of local conditions, while local innovations cannot always be directly replicated in different contexts.<sup>29</sup>

The problem of this research lies in the gap between the design of rural governance policies and their practical implementation at the local level. Although the policy framework allows for village autonomy, its implementation is often hindered by various structural and contextual factors that were not fully anticipated in the policy design. Several previous studies have indeed discussed rural development to enhance the local economy, but they generally focused on external factors. For example, Sascha Kraus (2021) discussed village economic growth in his research, based on government policies that support community entrepreneurship and innovation, but did not address

<sup>23</sup> Katherine R. Allen and Angela C. Henderson, 'Family Theorizing for Social Justice: A Critical Praxis', *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 14.3 (2022), 364–83 <https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12450>

<sup>24</sup> Katie Tavenner and Todd A. Crane, 'Hitting the Target and Missing the Point? On the Risks of Measuring Women's Empowerment in Agricultural Development', *Agriculture and Human Values*, 39.3 (2022), 849–57 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-021-10290-2>

<sup>25</sup> Ruth McAreavey, 'Finding Rural Community Resilience: Understanding the Role of Anchor Institutions', *Journal of Rural Studies*, 96 (2022), 227–36 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2022.10.014>

<sup>26</sup> Utami, Titis Istiqomah and Lieza Corsita, 'Implementation of Community-Based Waste Management to Improve Environmental Health in Villages', *Sustainable Applied Modification Evidence Community*, 1.2 (2024), 1–8 <https://doi.org/10.69855/samec.v1i2.90>

<sup>27</sup> Agustina Setiawan, 'The Role of Village Government in Digital-Based Community Empowerment in Tourism Villages', *Journal of Governance*, 9.3 (2024) <https://doi.org/10.31506/jog.v9i3.28017>

<sup>28</sup> Evald Bundgaard Iversen, Leonie Lockstone-Binney and Bjarne Ibsen, "Can the Participation of Civil Society in Policy Networks Mitigate against Societal Challenges in Rural Areas?", *Journal of Rural Studies*, 113 (2025), 103495 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2024.103495>

<sup>29</sup> Laely Nurhidayah and others, 'Responding to Sea Level Rise: Challenges and Opportunities to Govern Coastal Adaptation Strategies in Indonesia', *Maritime Studies*, 21.3 (2022), 339–52 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40152-022-00274-1>



how to deconstruct village governance policies.<sup>30</sup> Andreas Kallert (2021) discusses the conceptualization of competitive economies from regional policies but does not focus on the role of village institutional actors, instead concentrating on infrastructure equity policies.<sup>31</sup> Chetan Choithani (2021) discusses proactive government policies that stimulate local economic restructuring and livelihood opportunities but focuses more on creating government policy solutions in response to the shift in agricultural livelihoods.<sup>32</sup> Nasrun Annahar (2023) states that the success of inclusive governance greatly depends on supporting factors and challenges in decentralized villages.<sup>33</sup> Ikeu Kania (2021). This research aims to investigate the role of BUMDes in promoting rural entrepreneurship and strengthening rural economic development.<sup>34</sup>

This research differs from previous studies, which generally focus on external aspects of village development, such as support for entrepreneurship (Kraus, 2021), regional infrastructure (Kallert, 2021), or economic restructuring due to shifting livelihoods (Choithani, 2021), without critically examining the structure of village governance policies themselves. In contrast, this research offers a new perspective through a policy deconstruction approach to critically assess the assumptions and structures of village governance, while highlighting the role of local actors in shaping contextual development directions. Furthermore, this research utilizes an empirical case study from Panggungharjo Village and enriches the analysis through a comparison of village governance practices in India and Germany, making it unique in its attempt to develop a more responsive, participatory, and locally tailored village governance framework in Indonesia.

This research aims to fill that gap. There are three main things offered. First, we introduce the concept of policy deconstruction as a tool for critically assessing village policies. Second, we highlight the important role of local actors in shaping the direction of village development according to their needs. Third, we compare practices in Indonesia with those in other countries to draw relevant lessons. Considering these factors, this research aims to deconstruct the rural governance policies implemented in Panggungharjo Village, to understand the dynamics of implementation, the factors influencing policy effectiveness, and their impact on local economic development. Through an in-depth analysis of the experiences of Panggungharjo Village and comparisons with international practices, this research aims to contribute to the development of a more effective and contextually relevant rural governance framework. The significance of this research lies in its contribution to

<sup>30</sup> Sascha Kraus and others, 'The Role of Innovation and Knowledge for Entrepreneurship and Regional Development', *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 33.3–4 (2021), 175–84 <https://doi.org/10.1080/22797254.2021.1872929>

<sup>31</sup> Kallert and others.

<sup>32</sup> Chetan Choithani, Robbin Jan van Duijne and Jan Nijman, 'Changing Livelihoods at India's Rural–Urban Transition', *World Development*, 146 (2021), 105617 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2021.105617>

<sup>33</sup> Nasrun Annahar, Ida Widianingsih, Entang Adhy Muhtar, and others, 'The Road to Inclusive Decentralized Village Governance in Indonesia', *Sustainability*, 15.11 (2023), 8616 <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15118616>

<sup>34</sup> Ikeu Kania, Grisna Anggadwita and Dini Turipanam Alamanda, 'A New Approach to Stimulate Rural Entrepreneurship through Village-Owned Enterprises in Indonesia', *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, 15.3 (2021), 432–50 <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEC-07-2020-0137>



the development of rural governance theory based on Indonesia's empirical experiences, while also providing practical implications for the development of policies that are more responsive to local needs and potentials. The results of this research are expected to provide policymakers, development practitioners, and academics with valuable insights into the complex dynamics of rural governance in Indonesia.

## METHOD

This research employs the socio-legal method, which combines normative and empirical approaches,<sup>35</sup> to understand how rural governance policies, particularly within the framework of Law Number 6 of 2014 on Villages, are practiced and interpreted in specific social contexts. Through a case study of Panggungharjo Village, Bantul Regency, this research analyzes how local actors reform institutions, reinterpret policy narratives, and build community-based economic strength. Data collection techniques were employed through in-depth interviews, document studies (RPJMDs, Perdes, and BUMDes reports), and participatory observation, with analysis based on reconstruction and critical discourse analysis approaches to trace power relations and ideology in policy implementation.<sup>36</sup> This socio-legal approach allows the research to capture the dynamics between law as written norms and social practices in the field, as well as to compare it with participatory village governance practices in other countries, such as policies in Germany and Gram Sabha in India, to identify contextual and responsive policy strategies to local needs.<sup>37</sup>

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Regulatory Framework for Village Government Governance*

The structure of village government governance has so far been built on a centralized and technocratic administrative framework.<sup>38</sup> Law No. 6 of 2014 provides legal space for village autonomy;<sup>39</sup> However, at the implementation level, its derivative regulations often still rely on hierarchical procedures, with villages playing a more limited role as implementers of central programs rather than as designers of development based on local needs.<sup>40</sup> As a result, many villages are unable to realize their economic potential fully and instead rely on central fund allocations without

<sup>35</sup> Khusniati Rofi'ah, Martha Eri Safira and Muhammad Ikhlas Rosele, 'The Effectiveness of Accelerating Halal Product Certification: Regulations and Companions', *Journal of Human Rights, Culture and Legal System*, 4.2 (2024), 449–76 <https://doi.org/10.53955/jhcls.v4i2.203>

<sup>36</sup> Filzah Wafiyah, Moh Farih Fahmi and Muhammad Ufuqul Mubin, 'Effectiveness Of Halal Certification Assistance In Self-Declare Pathway For Micro And Small Enterprises In Surabaya', *ADILLA : Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Syari'ah*, 7.2 (2024), 134–50 <https://doi.org/10.52166/adilla.v7i2.6455>

<sup>37</sup> Asep Nana Mulyana, Sukron Ma'mun and Zul Karnen, 'Restorative Justice as a New Paradigm in the Enforcement of Hate Speech Laws in Indonesia', *Journal of Justice Dialectical*, 3.1 (2025), 27–45 <https://doi.org/10.70720/jjd.v3i1.65>

<sup>38</sup> Muhammad Mutawalli Mukhlis and others, 'Regional Government Autonomy in Indonesia: The Ambiguity of the Federalism of Republic Model', *Malaysian Journal of Syariah and Law*, 13.1 (2025), 33–57 <https://doi.org/10.33102/mjls.vol13no1.760>

<sup>39</sup> Hariyanto Hariyanto, 'Implications of State Policy Through Village Funds Towards the Cultural Values of Mutual Cooperation in the Village', *DE LEGA LATA: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum*, 7.1 (2022) <https://doi.org/10.30596/dll.v7i1.8721>

<sup>40</sup> Malse Yulivestra and others, 'Factors Cause the Failure of Policy Implementation of Traditional Customary Governance System (Nagari) in West Sumatera Province, Indonesia', *Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology*, 9.5 (2025), 1274–81 <https://doi.org/10.55214/25768484.v9i5.7136>



implementing long-term strategic initiatives.<sup>41</sup> Through a deconstructionist approach, this structure can be critically re-examined. Darrarida, in the theory of legal deconstruction, argues that legal deconstruction involves reviewing village regulations and policy structures not as final and reinterpreted in the light of local needs.<sup>42</sup> This indicates that village law is not static, but rather dynamic, contextual, and open to the community's collective reflection process.<sup>43</sup> Deconstruction is not just about dismantling the formal logic of regulations but also questioning the power relations and narratives that shape governance practices.<sup>44</sup> For example, terms such as "community empowerment" are frequently used in policies. However, in practice, they do not reflect a genuine redistribution of control over resources or the creation of participatory spaces. Village residents' participation is often procedural rather than substantive.<sup>45</sup> In this context, deconstruction helps reveal how a governance system that appears democratic still marginalizes local actors from the decision-making space.<sup>46</sup>

To understand how such deconstruction can move beyond theory and be applied in practice, it is important to examine real-world examples where local governments challenge and reinterpret centralized governance norms. One such example is Panggungharjo Village, which demonstrates how a village can reconstruct its governance framework by prioritizing community agency and rejecting passive implementation of top-down directives. Panggungharjo Villages provides a concrete example of how the structure can be reformed from within. This village government refuses to merely follow the central program's directives and instead reorganizes the citizen-based governance system. There are three scopes as parameters in deconstructing the governance policy of Panggungharjo Village.<sup>47</sup>

First, Deconstruction of the Political Governance of the Panggungharjo Village Government, the political discussion in this research is classified into several aspects. the bureaucracy of political organizations is always associated with authority or

<sup>41</sup> Christo Coetzee and others, 'Financing Disaster Risk Reduction: Exploring the Opportunities, Challenges, and Threats Within the Southern African Development Community Region', *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science*, 14.3 (2023), 398–412 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13753-023-00499-6>

<sup>42</sup> Terrance Molobela and Dominique Emmanuel Uwizeyimana, 'New Public Management and Post-New Public Management Paradigms', *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science* (2147- 4478), 12.8 (2023), 327–34 <https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v12i8.2941>

<sup>43</sup> Rudolf Wirawan and others, 'Pathways to Well-being in Tarumajaya, West Java: Post-COVID 19 Supporting Better Access to the Commons through Engagement and a Critical Systemic Reflection on Stories', *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, 41.4 (2024), 681–704 <https://doi.org/10.1002/sres.2983>

<sup>44</sup> Ismael Blanco, Vivien Lowndes and Yunailis Salazar, 'Understanding Institutional Dynamics in Participatory Governance: How Rules, Practices and Narratives Combine to Produce Stability or Diverge to Create Conditions for Change', *Critical Policy Studies*, 16.2 (2022), 204–23 <https://doi.org/10.1080/19460171.2021.1984265>

<sup>45</sup> Aulia Akbar and others, 'The Role of Participatory Village Maps in Strengthening Public Participation Practice', *ISPRS International Journal of Geo-Information*, 10.8 (2021), 512 <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijgi10080512>

<sup>46</sup> Aino Hirvola, 'Building Illusory Unity with Ernesto Laclau – Why "Closure" Should Not Be a Dirty Word in Planning Theory', *Planning Theory*, 2025 <https://doi.org/10.1177/14730952251343701>

<sup>47</sup> Huirong Chen and Sheena Chestnut Greitens, 'Information Capacity and Social Order: The Local Politics of Information Integration in China', *Governance*, 35.2 (2022), 497–523 <https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.12592>





power and how such authority is delegated.<sup>48</sup>In the context of this research, all these aspects are interpreted as efforts to develop the local economy of Panggungharjo village. Therefore, the researcher aims to approach the governance process from the perspective of the conception of political authority or power and how it is delegated as an effort in the economic sector of Panggungharjo village.<sup>49</sup> Here are the data on the political and institutional innovation of Panggungharjo Village.

Table 1 Political and Institutional Innovation of Panggungharjo Village

General Aspects	Conditions in Other Villages	Practice in Panggungharjo Village
<b>Village Deliberation</b>	Administrative formalities	Cross-group deliberative forum
<b>Power Relations</b>	Top-down from the center	Horizontal and contextual negotiation
<b>Village Leadership</b>	Administrative elite	Collection facilitator and change catalyst
<b>Information System</b>	Manual and non-transparent	Citizen data-based digital services
<b>Economic Development</b>	Central-dependent model	Cooperative and community ownership model

Source: Processed by the Author

Based on the data above, in general, village governance in Indonesia is still largely influenced by the old hierarchical and centralistic patterns, where the village government acts as the executor of central policies, rather than as a designer of locality-based development.<sup>50</sup>Models like this tend to reproduce imbalanced power relations, limit citizen participation, and hinder the social and economic innovations needed by the village community.<sup>51</sup>However, the Panggungharjo Village Government successfully deconstructed the traditional power structure. One of the initial steps taken was to open deliberative spaces for residents to determine the direction of village development.<sup>52</sup>The village deliberation is no longer treated as a forum for administrative formalities,<sup>53</sup>but has been reformed into a participatory platform for citizens across various groups, from farmers, MSME actors, women, to youth.<sup>54</sup>The

<sup>48</sup> Cita Pertiwi and others, 'Digital Utilization for Rural Economic Recovery: Village Adaptation and Strategy', in *Proceedings of the 9th International Conference on Indonesian Social and Political Enquiries (ICISPE 2024)* (Atlantis Press SARL, 2025), pp. 120–30 [https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-436-5\\_10](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-436-5_10)

<sup>49</sup> Ilham Yuli Isdiyanto and Anom Wahyu Asmorojati, 'The Urgency of Village Mediation Institution as a Mechanism for Dispute Resolution: The Case of Wukirsari Village in the Special Region of Yogyakarta', *Sodality: Jurnal Sosiologi Pedesaan*, 9.2 (2021) <https://doi.org/10.22500/9202134212>

<sup>50</sup> Edward Aspinall and others, 'Analysing and Explaining Variation in Village Governance Regimes across Indonesia', *South East Asia Research*, 33.1 (2025), 12–31 <https://doi.org/10.1080/0967828X.2025.2483168>

<sup>51</sup> Liu and others.

<sup>52</sup> Minardi Minardi and Jaka Triwidaryanta, 'How Does Law No. 6/2014 on Villages Reshape the Role and Function of Padukuhan? Case Study in Bantul Regency, Indonesia', *Jurnal Studi Ilmu Pemerintahan*, 5.1 (2023), 67–78 <https://doi.org/10.35326/jsip.v5i1.4905>

<sup>53</sup> Novita Tresiana and others, 'Deliberative Democracy Innovations at Citizen Level: Challenges of Local Government in Indonesia', *Lex Localis*, 21.4 (2023), 807–32 <https://doi.org/10.4335/21.4.807-832>

<sup>54</sup> Sapna Poti and Simy Joy, 'Digital Platforms for Connecting Actors in the Agtech Space: Insights on Platform Development from Participatory Action Research on KisanMitr', *Journal of Indian Business Research*, 14.1 (2022), 65–83 <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIBR-04-2021-0145>



development planning process is based on participatory data obtained from periodic social, economic, and community resource mapping.<sup>55</sup>

This political transformation is also supported by innovations in information technology that enable real-time public information transparency.<sup>56</sup> The village government developed a digital service system based on citizen data that allows the community to monitor the budgeting process, distribution of social assistance, and ongoing development activities.<sup>57</sup> This step significantly enhances the transparency and accountability of the village government, while also strengthening the community's sense of ownership over village programs.<sup>58</sup> This approach reflects deconstruction not only as an effort to dismantle the old structure but also to form a new system that is more adaptive and collaborative. The deconstruction of political governance is also evident in the way the Panggungharjo Village Government redefine its relationship with the supradesa government.<sup>59</sup> Unlike other villages that tend to be passive in facing vertical pressures from the district or ministries, Panggungharjo actively negotiates policies to fit the local context.<sup>60</sup> For example, when the central government promoted labor-intensive programs, Panggungharjo instead developed a cooperative-based community work model that not only absorbed labor but also built shared ownership of economic outcomes. This relationship reflects a form of local political agency that is not only compliant with regulations but also critical and contextual in their implementation.<sup>61</sup>

Furthermore, this deconstructive approach has successfully built a new political culture at the village level, a culture that emphasizes trust, inclusivity, and social dialogue as the foundation of governance.<sup>62</sup> The village apparatus is no longer seen as an administrative elite distant from the community, but as facilitators working alongside the residents. In this context, village democratization is not just about the

<sup>55</sup> Nora Fagerholm and others, 'A Methodological Framework for Analysis of Participatory Mapping Data in Research, Planning, and Management', *International Journal of Geographical Information Science*, 35.9 (2021), 1848–75 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13658816.2020.1869747>

<sup>56</sup> Seok-Jin Eom and Jooho Lee, 'Digital Government Transformation in Turbulent Times: Responses, Challenges, and Future Direction', *Government Information Quarterly*, 39.2 (2022), 101690 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2022.101690>

<sup>57</sup> Gatot Hery Djatmiko, Obsatar Sinaga and Suharno Pawirosumarto, 'Digital Transformation and Social Inclusion in Public Services: A Qualitative Analysis of E-Government Adoption for Marginalized Communities in Sustainable Governance', *Sustainability*, 17.7 (2025), 2908 <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17072908>

<sup>58</sup> Hafiez Sofyani, Suryo Pratolo and Zakiah Saleh, 'Do Accountability and Transparency Promote Community Trust? Evidence from Village Government in Indonesia', *Journal of Accounting & Organizational Change*, 18.3 (2022), 397–418 <https://doi.org/10.1108/JAOC-06-2020-0070>

<sup>59</sup> H. P. Styawan, Budiyanto and I. B Riharjo, 'Improving Village Governance through Competency Certification: A Case Study in Burneh Village', *Asian Journal of Management, Entrepreneurship and Social Science*, 5.2 (2025), 483–507 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.63922/ajmesc.v5i02.1319>

<sup>60</sup> Virna Emily Tobing-David, Isbandi Rukminto Adi and Mu'man Nuryana, 'Conditions of Sustainable Welfare: A Cross-Case Empirical Analysis of 22 Locality-Based Welfare Systems in Decentralised Indonesia', *Sustainability*, 16.4 (2024), 1629 <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16041629>

<sup>61</sup> Sean Bradley, Israa H. Mahmoud and Alessandro Arlati, 'Integrated Collaborative Governance Approaches towards Urban Transformation: Experiences from the CLEVER Cities Project', *Sustainability*, 14.23 (2022), 15566 <https://doi.org/10.3390/su142315566>

<sup>62</sup> Tove H. Malloy, 'The Law of Diversity and Indonesia's Village Law: Creating Procedures for Completeness in Diverse Societies', in *Courts and Diversity* (Brill | Nijhoff, 2024), pp. 95–117 [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004691698\\_005](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004691698_005)



direct election of village heads, but about how the decision-making process is carried out collectively, transparently, and reflectively in response to the evolving socio-economic dynamics.<sup>63</sup> The success of Panggungharjo Village in deconstructing its political governance is also inseparable from the transformative leadership capabilities possessed by the village head.<sup>64</sup> The village head position himself not as a single authority, but as a catalyst for change that encourages the community to become the main subjects of development.<sup>65</sup> Leadership oriented towards the values of collaboration and social justice shapes a governance system that is resilient to external changes and responsive to the internal needs of the village.<sup>66</sup> This process demonstrates that changes in political governance not only require regulatory revisions but also a paradigm shift in viewing the relationship between the state and citizens.<sup>67</sup>

From a theoretical perspective, Panggungharjo's approach aligns with post-structuralist critiques of development discourse. Michel Foucault stated that power is not only located within the state, but is dispersed through discourse, institutions, and everyday practices. In this framework, Panggungharjo has produced an alternative discourse on village governance, namely governance that not only emphasizes procedural compliance but also interconnection, dialogue, and empowerment.<sup>68</sup> This approach is also in line with modern governance principles that emphasize multi-actor engagement, cross-sector collaboration, and institutional innovation.<sup>69</sup>

In practice, the deconstruction of political governance in Panggungharjo has led to the institutionalization of substantive democratic values that have a tangible impact on the lives of the community. Development decisions no longer stem from elite consensus, but rather from needs articulated collectively by the community.<sup>70</sup> This allows for the emergence of various policy innovations such as citizen cooperatives,

<sup>63</sup> Salahuddin Salahuddin, Rifai Rifai and Rahmad Hidayat, 'Leadership, Corruption, and Inequality: Village Development in a Non-Democratic Context', *The International Journal of Politics and Sociology Research*, 12.4 (2025), 256–66 <https://doi.org/10.35335/ijopsor.v12i4.270>

<sup>64</sup> Abdur Rozaki, 'From Political Clientelism to Participatory Democracy', *Engagement: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 6.1 (2022), 1–16 <https://doi.org/10.29062/engagement.v6i1.1185>

<sup>65</sup> Bonaventura Ngarawula, Arif Firmanto and Catur Wahyudi, 'Actor Relationship Model in Empowering Local Farmers Community Base Sustainable Development to Increase Productivity (Study of Social Interaction Between Field Extension Officers and Farmers in Rubaru District, Sumenep Regency)', *International Journal of Research in Social Science and Humanities*, 04.11 (2023), 27–49 <https://doi.org/10.47505/IJRSS.2023.V4.11.3>

<sup>66</sup> Roselyne Cheruiyot and Robert Venter, 'Complex Systems and Sustainable Leadership: Enhancing Resilience and Sustainability of Community-Based Social Enterprises in Soweto, South Africa', *Sustainability*, 16.19 (2024), 8555 <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16198555>

<sup>67</sup> Guangbin Yang, 'The Paradigm Shift of Political Science from Being "Change-Oriented" to "Governance-Oriented:" A Perspective on History of Political Science', *Chinese Political Science Review*, 6.4 (2021), 506–45 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41111-021-00188-z>

<sup>68</sup> Aji Baskoro, 'Strengthening Good Village Governance Strategy: Transparency, Accountability, and Inclusive Rural Development', *Bestuurskunde: Journal of Governmental Studies*, 5.1 (2025), 39–50 <https://doi.org/10.53013/bestuurskunde.5.1.39-50>

<sup>69</sup> Boglárka Vajda and others, 'The Role of Entrepreneurial Clusters in Advancing Circular Bioeconomy and Innovation: A Case Study from Romania', *Sustainability*, 17.9 (2025), 3787 <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17093787>

<sup>70</sup> Yurui Li and others, 'Collective Action Improves Elite-Driven Governance in Rural Development within China', *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10.1 (2023), 600 <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-02089-9>



community-based waste management, and solidarity food programs, all of which are designed through a deliberative process.<sup>71</sup> This is the form of village political governance that paves the way for sustainable social and economic transformation. Thus, the deconstruction of political governance carried out by the Panggungharjo Village Government is not merely an effort of administrative renewal, but a paradigm transformation that targets the roots of power relations, the meaning of participation, and the policy structure itself. This success shows that the village is not just the smallest administrative unit of the state, but also a living political space where alternative discourses can grow and have a real impact on the welfare of its citizens.<sup>72</sup>

Second, Deconstruction of Public Service Governance in Panggungharjo Village. One important aspect of the transformation of Panggungharjo Village is its successful reorganization of public service governance.<sup>73</sup> There are fundamental aspects in deconstructing, namely, (1) Is the service provided based on needs or formulated hierarchically? (2) Is it decentralized or centralized? Moreover, (3) Is it institution-based or not? Panggungharjo Village demonstrates unique governance, especially in public services. The village government carries out two structural responsibilities: as part of the central government through the Village Law, and as a sub-unit of the Pakualaman Sultanate, which has special responsibilities. These special affairs include governance, institutions, culture, land, and spatial planning.<sup>74</sup>

Table 2. Integration of Special Affairs in Panggungharjo Public Service

Special Affairs	Implications for Public Services
Governor Election	Village services consider local cultural and political legitimacy as a form of respect for the sultanate's authority
Institutional	Formation Establishment of village institutions based on local values and traditions, strengthening community participation
Culture	Culture-based services, language, and local social practices as an inclusive approach
Land	Optimization of SG and PAG land for the development of cooperatives, SMEs, and community-based economic services
Spatial Planning	Development of geo-spatial and socio-spatial based on community living needs

Source: Processed by the Author

<sup>71</sup> Ana Margarida Esteves and others, 'Sustainable Entrepreneurship and the Sustainable Development Goals: Community-led Initiatives, the Social Solidarity Economy and Commons Ecologies', *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 30.3 (2021), 1423–35 <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.2706>

<sup>72</sup> Yongqi Zhao and others, 'Politics of Urban Renewal: An Anatomy of the Conflicting Discourses on the Renovation of China's Urban Village', *Cities*, 111 (2021), 103075 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2020.103075>

<sup>73</sup> Ward Berenschot, Wigke Capri and Devy Dhian, 'A Quiet Revolution? Village Head Elections and the Democratization of Rural Indonesia', *Critical Asian Studies*, 53.1 (2021), 126–46 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14672715.2021.1871852>

<sup>74</sup> Maciej Nowak, Giancarlo Cotella and Przemysław Śleszyński, 'The Legal, Administrative, and Governance Frameworks of Spatial Policy, Planning, and Land Use: Interdependencies, Barriers, and Directions of Change', *Land*, 10.11 (2021), 1119 <https://doi.org/10.3390/land10111119>





In practice, this privilege is not merely an administrative complement. However, it serves as the foundation for organizing all service sectors, from social and spatial planning to the provision of educational and cultural services, as well as land management and economic resource management.<sup>75</sup> These principles serve as the basis for carrying out the five main functions of the village, as outlined in the Village Law: governance, development, empowerment, coaching, and disaster management.<sup>76</sup> This approach combines sound governance principles such as cleanliness, transparency, and accountability with the local values of the sultanate. This reflects the deconstruction of the public service structure, which is typically fragmented and sectoral, into a holistic and contextually oriented service system.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, in terms of government development, Panggungharjo Village has established three types of institutions, as shown in the data below:

Table 3 Community Institutions of Panggungharjo

No.	Type	Institutions
1	Village Community Institutions	Bamuskal Village Community Empowerment Institution Driving Team Empowerment and Welfare Family Pakarti Youth organization "United" Farmers Group
2	Village Institutions	JPS Executing Agency Sadepa Earth Stage Village-Owned Enterprises Sustainable Stage PSID LMD (Mediation Institution) Village)
3	Social Community Organizations	DMI IPHI

Source: Profile Village Panggungharjo 2023

All the institutions described above are outside the tasks and functions of sub-bureaucracy and the structural authority of village officials. That means the actors from each of these institutions are not part of the core structure of the village government. They are actors who have duties, which can be referred to as the extension of the authority and responsibilities of the village government. That means the three fields above are the extended arms of governmental responsibility.<sup>78</sup>

Third, Deconstruction of the Governance of the Panggungharjo Village Government Policy. The Jagabaya of Kalurahan Panggungharjo explained that there are at least three forms of policies created to support the local economic development of Panggungharjo, as well as mandates from the central government and the

<sup>75</sup> Dimitrios Kalfas and others, 'Urbanization and Land Use Planning for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A Case Study of Greece', *Urban Science*, 7.2 (2023), 1–23 <https://doi.org/10.3390/urbansci7020043>

<sup>76</sup> Arwanto Harimas Ginting and others, 'Village Government's Risk Management and Village Fund Administration in Indonesia', *Sustainability*, 15.24 (2023), 16706 <https://doi.org/10.3390/su152416706>

<sup>77</sup> Muhammad Syukri, 'Indonesia's New Developmental State: Interrogating Participatory Village Governance', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 54.1 (2024), 2–23 <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2022.2089904>

<sup>78</sup> Muhamad Nur Afandi and others, 'Collaborative Governance in a Mandated Setting: Shifting Collaboration in Stunting Interventions at Local Level', *Development Studies Research*, 10.1 (2023) <https://doi.org/10.1080/21665095.2023.2212868>



Sultanate-Pakualaman. The three types of regulations are Village Regulations (PERDES), Kalurahan Regulations (PERKAL), Village Head Regulations, and Village Head Decrees. Each has its scope. The village government established these three regulations as part of a process to recalibrate the local economic development of the Panggungharjo community.<sup>79</sup> First, PERDES or Perka. This policy was created to regulate various aspects of village life that require formal regulation. PERDES or PERKAL usually includes more general and broad rules, such as natural resource management, village spatial planning, and local economic development policies.<sup>80</sup> Through this policy, the village can establish clear and structured guidelines for implementing various programs and initiatives.

Transparency in this process is crucial for building public trust in the decisions made by the village government.<sup>81</sup> By involving various parties in the assessment and providing equal opportunities to all candidates, the village government ensures that every SK issued is based on objective and fair considerations. Additionally, transparency in the assessment process enables feedback from the community and ensures that their voices are considered in the decision-making process.<sup>82</sup> This strengthens the relationship between the village government and the community, ensuring that every policy adopted truly reflects the needs and aspirations of the residents.<sup>83</sup> With such a process, the Panggungharjo Village Government can ensure that every decision made through the Village Head's decree is not only based on the head's authority but also through a clear and transparent process that involves a comprehensive assessment of the proposed candidates. This helps create a village government that is more accountable and responsive to the community's needs.<sup>84</sup>

By establishing a clear policy hierarchy, the village government can ensure that each policy has a strong foundation and can be effectively implemented.<sup>85</sup> This also helps avoid overlapping authorities and ensures that all actions taken are by applicable regulations and the mandate from the central government and the Sultanate of Pakualaman. Through these regulations, local economic development can

<sup>79</sup> P M Penggalih and others, 'Village Funds in Indonesia: Impacts on Sustainable Agricultural Development', ed. by A. Loch and others, *BIO Web of Conferences*, 69 (2023), 04028 <https://doi.org/10.1051/bioconf/20236904028>

<sup>80</sup> Mohamad Fadhli Rashid and others, 'Differentiation of Tourism Performance in Rural Areas: Case Study of Desa Lestari, Malaysia and Desa Mandiri, Indonesia', *Planning Malaysia*, 23 (2025) <https://doi.org/10.21837/pm.v23i36.1722>

<sup>81</sup> Hafiez Sofyani, Rizal Yaya and Zakiah Saleh, 'Transparency and Community Trust in Village Government: Does Corruption Perception Matter?', *Financial Accountability & Management*, 39.2 (2023), 355–74 <https://doi.org/10.1111/faam.12351>

<sup>82</sup> Susan L. Senecah, 'The Trinity of Voice: A Framework to Improve Trust and Ground Decision Making in Participatory Processes', *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 67.9 (2024), 2091–2115 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09640568.2023.2238126>

<sup>83</sup> Zhen Zhang, Jingjing Yu and Jingyao Tian, 'Community Participation, Social Capital Cultivation and Sustainable Community Renewal: A Case Study from Xi'an's Southern Suburbs, China', *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 15.3 (2023), 11007–40 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-023-01536-x>

<sup>84</sup> Noor Rohman, Pathurrahman and Mahpudin, 'Recruitment of Village Officials in Decentralized Indonesia: National Policy, Local Accommodation and Resistance', *South East Asia Research*, 33.1 (2025), 87–104 <https://doi.org/10.1080/0967828X.2025.2483180>

<sup>85</sup> Jing Chen and others, 'Practical Village Planning Strategy of Different Types of Villages—A Case Study of 38 Villages in Shapingba District, Chongqing', *Land*, 10.11 (2021), 1143 <https://doi.org/10.3390/land10111143>



be carried out effectively and sustainably, with the support of structured and comprehensive policies.<sup>86</sup> In addition to the explanation above, an interesting aspect of the policy formulation process is the network involved in its formulation. In local economic development policy, four key elements are involved in its formulation: the village community, village government, BPD, and village institutions.<sup>87</sup>

### ***Village Governance in India and Germany: Lessons from International Practices***

Village governance plays a crucial role in local development and the provision of basic community services.<sup>88</sup> In the global context, various village governance models have developed in response to the distinct political, cultural, and institutional systems of each country.<sup>89</sup> Two prominent and relevant models for Indonesia to learn from are the Indian model, exemplified by the Panchayati Raj system, and the German model within the framework of administrative federalism. These two countries offer two different approaches to local governance at the village level. India emphasizes the democratization of villages through direct political democratic participation and community involvement in the decision-making process.<sup>90</sup> Meanwhile, Germany emphasizes bureaucratic efficiency, technical capacity, and the integration of public services based on data and information technology. These two approaches are not dichotomous but rather complementary when approached comprehensively.<sup>91</sup> Here is a comparison table of the main dimensions of village governance in India and Germany.

Table 4. Comparison of the Main Dimensions of Village Governance in India and Germany.

Aspect	India	Germany
<b>Politics</b>	Direct election of village heads (Sarpanch), Gram Sabha forum, 33% women quota, three-tier village government structure	Village heads (Bürgermeister) are elected/appointed, with an administrative system that promotes participation through public consultation and performance evaluation.
<b>Public Services</b>	Socio-economic programs (MGNREGA, SHG, village training), limited digitalization	Modern public services, high digitalization, economic service efficiency
<b>Policy</b>	Participatory development plans, but fiscally dependent on state government	Cross-sector planning, local innovation, regional/EU funding support

Source: Processed by the Author

<sup>86</sup> Xiao Yu and Peng Wang, 'Economic Effects Analysis of Environmental Regulation Policy in the Process of Industrial Structure Upgrading: Evidence from Chinese Provincial Panel Data', *Science of The Total Environment*, 753 (2021), 142004 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2020.142004>

<sup>87</sup> Sarkanto Sarkanto and others, 'Optimizing BPD Post-Amendment: Strengthening Village Governance and Community Welfare in Indonesia', *Syiah Kuala Law Journal*, 8.3 (2025) <https://doi.org/10.24815/sklj.v8i3.41207>

<sup>88</sup> Pan Sun and others, 'How Does Spatial Governance Drive Rural Development in China's Farming Areas?', *Habitat International*, 109 (2021), 102320 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.habitatint.2021.102320>

<sup>89</sup> Bing Xue and others, 'Understanding Ecological Civilization in China: From Political Context to Science', *Ambio*, 52.12 (2023), 1895–1909 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13280-023-01897-2>

<sup>90</sup> Rangnath Thakur and Binod Mishra, 'Imagining a New State', *Journal of Global Postcolonial Studies*, 12.1 (2024) <https://doi.org/10.5744/jgps.2024.1215>

<sup>91</sup> Sabine Kuhlmann, 'From Weberian Bureaucracy to Digital Government? Trajectories of Administrative Reform in Germany', in *Handbook of Public Administration Reform* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2023), pp. 207–26 <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800376748.00016>



Based on the table above, first, in the political aspect, India villages position as active units of political democracy through the Panchayati Raj system. Direct elections of village heads (Sarpanch) and village deliberation forums (Gram Sabha) provide ample space for residents to engage in local economic planning. This involvement enables residents to propose projects, such as farm access roads, skills training, or village markets, that are relevant to their needs. Citizen participation strengthens the accountability of local leaders and promotes the equitable distribution of economic benefits. In India, village governments are responsible for managing basic infrastructure, including roads, irrigation, sanitation, and job training. Economic programs, such as Self-Help Groups (SHGs), the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), and entrepreneurship training, are implemented at the village level. However, its implementation is often hindered by capacity disparities between regions. From a policy and funding perspective, village governments in India still rely heavily on fiscal allocations from state and central governments. Although the planning process is participatory, villages often have limited space in determining development priorities due to funding constraints and a weak oversight system.<sup>92</sup>

Second, in the political aspect, Germany emphasizes the efficiency and professionalism of bureaucracy in village governance.<sup>93</sup> The village head (Bürgermeister) in Germany can be elected through elections or appointed through administrative mechanisms, depending on the state governance system.<sup>94</sup> Although citizen involvement is not as intense as the Gram Sabha system in India, public participation is still ensured through public consultation processes, budget transparency, and the evaluation of village government performance. This approach demonstrates how a system based on modern bureaucracy can create governance that is effective, measurable, and results oriented. In terms of public services, villages in Germany have implemented public services integrated with digital technology. The processes of administration, population registration, social services, and project proposals can be conducted online through the e-Government system.<sup>95</sup> With adequate human resources and evenly distributed digital infrastructure, public services become faster, more efficient, and more transparent. From a policy and funding perspective, villages in Germany have greater fiscal autonomy and can access various funding sources, including support from local governments, federal institutions, and the European Union. With this funding flexibility, villages in Germany can implement innovative and sustainable development planning, such as the Smart Village program, green energy transition, and cooperative-based local economic development.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Baogang He, Michael G. Breen and James S. Fishkin, *Deliberative Democracy in Asia* (London: Routledge, 2021) <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003102441>

<sup>93</sup> Jin Ren and others, 'Digital Village Construction: A Multi-Level Governance Approach to Enhance Agroecological Efficiency', *Agriculture*, 14.3 (2024), 478 <https://doi.org/10.3390/agriculture14030478>

<sup>94</sup> Viktor Ladychenko and others, 'Ensuring Sustainable Development of Local Self-Government: Foreign Experience for Ukraine', *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 10.4 (2021), 167 <https://doi.org/10.14207/ejsd.2021.v10n4p167>

<sup>95</sup> Linnea Löfving and others, 'Can Digitalization Be a Tool to Overcome Spatial Injustice in Sparsely Populated Regions? The Cases of Digital Västerbotten (Sweden) and Smart Country Side (Germany)', *European Planning Studies*, 30.5 (2022), 917–34 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2021.1928053>

<sup>96</sup> Löfving and others.





Based on this comparison, it can be concluded that the Indian model excels in terms of direct community involvement, inclusivity, and the democratization of village politics. Meanwhile, Germany excels in bureaucratic efficiency, institutional capacity, and the optimization of technology-based public services. These two approaches are not contradictory; instead, they can complement each other. In the context of Indonesia, which has high social and geographical diversity, a hybrid approach combining grassroots participation, as seen in India, with institutional and technological strengthening, as in Germany, is highly relevant. A key lesson that can be drawn is that citizen participation must be complemented by enhancing village officials' technical capacity, digitizing public services, and granting fiscal autonomy to villages. By adopting the best practices from both countries, Indonesia can strengthen inclusive, adaptive, and sustainable village government governance to promote equitable and just local economic growth.<sup>97</sup>

### ***Village Governance for Local Economic Growth in Indonesia***

Good village government governance must meet the criteria of being transparent.<sup>98</sup> Good governance supports the achievement of the goal of developing a village. Good governance fosters public trust in the village, which in turn enhances the positive perception of the village government, thereby increasing public participation and contributing to active village development.<sup>99</sup> The village community will have a strong sense of concern and become actively involved in the development of their village.<sup>100</sup> The study identifies three key components for creating an ideal and resilient village governance system in the face of modern era disruptions: effective governance, strong leadership, and public trust.<sup>101</sup> Countries with poorly functioning governance systems, divided societies, and weak and incompetent leadership tend to make their citizens and economies vulnerable to various crises. Based on this perspective, several key conditions can be formulated to establish effective village governance.<sup>102</sup>

First, optimizing the role of the Supra-Village government.<sup>103</sup> At the level of government above the village, the effectiveness of governance is reflected in three main aspects: (1) the continuity of good practices from previous programs. Although the Village Law has been in effect for almost a decade, the community's and stakeholders' understanding of the village development planning process shows

<sup>97</sup> Nasrun Annahar, Ida Widianingsih, Caroline Paskarina, and others, 'A Bibliometric Review of Inclusive Governance Concept', *Cogent Social Sciences*, 9.1 (2023) <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2168839>

<sup>98</sup> Sofyani, Pratolo and Saleh.

<sup>99</sup> Naser Shafiei Sabet and Sogand Khaksar, 'The Performance of Local Government, Social Capital and Participation of Villagers in Sustainable Rural Development', *The Social Science Journal*, 61.1 (2024), 1–29 <https://doi.org/10.1080/03623319.2020.1782649>

<sup>100</sup> Erna Handayani and others, 'Increasing the Performance of Village Services with Good Governance and Participation', *World Development Sustainability*, 3 (2023), 100089 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wds.2023.100089>

<sup>101</sup> Annahar, Widianingsih, Muhtar, and others.

<sup>102</sup> B. Guy Peters, 'Governing in a Time of Global Crises: The Good, the Bad, and the Merely Normal', *Global Public Policy and Governance*, 1.1 (2021), 4–19 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43508-021-00006-x>

<sup>103</sup> Dony Martinus Sihotang, Achmad Nizar Hidayanto and Sherah Kurnia, 'The E-Government Adoption Ecosystem from the Perspective of Stakeholder Theory: A Case Study on the Village Information Systems in Indonesia', *Information Development*, 2023 <https://doi.org/10.1177/02666669231192879>



maturity.<sup>104</sup> This is inseparable from the legacy of good practices established by the National Program for Community Empowerment (PNPM) Mandiri, which served as the precursor to the current village planning mechanisms. Although it faced criticism, PNPM successfully fostered community participation, social change, and capacity building in the formulation of village policies.<sup>105</sup>

This indicates that the positive aspects of previous policies must be maintained or adaptively modified; (2) strengthening the institutional capacity of villages and their consultative bodies. Sociologically, a village is a homogeneous community that depends on nature, while politically, it is a formal unit of government. This duality causes village officials to occupy a unique position: they are recruited through a technocratic process, yet they work in a traditional environment. To address this gap, a systematic and sustainable system of mentoring, training, and education is needed, both for village officials and consultative institutions as well as local and central government bodies;<sup>106</sup> (3) facilitation of cross-sector collaboration. Collaboration between villages and external parties has proven capable of triggering innovations in public services. For example, programs for collecting data on people experiencing poverty, access to capital, distribution of products for the poor, and provision of clean water in remote areas. This shows that when villages are supported by networks of information and collaboration, inclusive public services are more easily achieved. Therefore, the supra-village government needs to actively facilitate and encourage cross-actor cooperation, especially for remote villages that are less accessible for development.<sup>107</sup>

Second, strengthen the internal capacity of village governance.<sup>108</sup> The weakness of local government capacity is a significant obstacle to inclusive governance. Therefore, strengthening human resources at the village level becomes a priority. The recruitment of village officials must prioritize the principle of meritocracy, not merely traditional respect.<sup>109</sup> Technical competence and integrity are the primary requirements for village officials to effectively and efficiently implement development programs, which in turn lead to a more equitable distribution of public services and poverty reduction.<sup>110</sup> Third, strengthening the leadership of village heads. Village governance reform cannot happen without strong and visionary leadership. The leadership in

<sup>104</sup> Yang Yu and others, 'Integrating Rural Development, Education, and Management: Challenges and Strategies', *Sustainability*, 16.15 (2024), 6474 <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16156474>

<sup>105</sup> Jati.

<sup>106</sup> Jan Hruška and Jakub Čapek, 'Can Czech Senators Advocate Constituency Interests without the Formal Power to Do So?', *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 2025, 1–20 <https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2025.2495077>

<sup>107</sup> V Kolovou and others, 'Systematic Review of the Barriers and Facilitators to Cross-Sector Partnerships in Promoting Physical Activity', *Perspectives in Public Health*, 144.6 (2024), 369–80 <https://doi.org/10.1177/17579139231170784>

<sup>108</sup> Sofyani, Pratolo and Saleh.

<sup>109</sup> Zain Rafique, Shahid Habib and Yeni Rosilawati, 'Legal, Political and Administrative Barriers to Citizen Participation in Local Governance: An Inquiry of Local Government Institutions', *International Journal of Public Administration*, 46.4 (2023), 256–68 <https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2021.1993908>

<sup>110</sup> I Gusti Ayu Purnamawati, Gede Adi Yuniarta and Ferry Jie, 'Strengthening the Role of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Dimensions of Sustainable Village Economic Development', *Heliyon*, 9.4 (2023), e15115 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e15115>



question is not authoritarian, but rather ethical leadership characterized by integrity, openness to participation, and a long-term vision. The experience of Panggungharjo Village shows how a village head with capacity and legitimacy can accelerate structural changes, such as the reform of village land distribution, the overhaul of the village apparatus recruitment system, and the strengthening of village bureaucratic discipline. The village head becomes a key actor capable of bridging policies and social dynamics at the local level.<sup>111</sup>

Fourth, building trust between the village government and the community. In the context of village governance, social legitimacy is crucial for the success of programs. Village governance can be run in an authoritarian manner in traditional communities, but this approach is not sustainable. The community's trust in the village government becomes the foundation of good governance. The village government needs to demonstrate responsiveness, transparency, and commitment to its promises. Thus, community participation will not merely be a formality, but an engagement rooted in trust and a sense of ownership.<sup>112</sup> By strengthening institutional capacity, leadership quality, and public trust, village governance can evolve into a more adaptive, inclusive, and sustainable system. This approach not only enables villages to effectively respond to the challenges of the modern era but also lays a solid foundation for local development that is rooted in community participation and potential.

## CONCLUSION

Based on discussions and deliberations, the following conclusions can be drawn: first, the structure of village governance in Indonesia remains dominated by a hierarchical and technocratic administrative approach, which limits the space for village initiatives in designing development based on local needs. Through a deconstruction approach like that used by Panggungharjo Village, village government governance can be transformed to be more participatory, contextual, and based on community strengths and local institutional innovation. Second, the village governance models in India and Germany offer lessons learned for Indonesia, with India excelling in citizen political participation and Germany excelling in bureaucratic efficiency and technology-based public services. The combination of strong community involvement and institutional capacity building is crucial for establishing inclusive, adaptive, and sustainable village governance in Indonesia. Third, the ideal model of good village government governance is supported by strong leadership, adequate institutional capacity, and high public trust in the governance process. To achieve this, support from supra-village governments, internal strengthening of village apparatus, and collaborative partnerships that genuinely and sustainably build community participation are needed.

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<sup>111</sup> Berenschot, Capri and Dhian.

<sup>112</sup> Amy E. Lansing and others, 'Building Trust: Leadership Reflections on Community Empowerment and Engagement in a Large Urban Initiative', *BMC Public Health*, 23.1 (2023), 1252 <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-15860-z>



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