

The Dynamics of Good Governance During A Transition Period: An Analysis of the Performance and Authority of the Acting Head of the Jakarta Capital Region

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ABSTRACT

The end of the definitive regional head's term of office in the Special Capital Region (DKI) of Jakarta has triggered a vacuum of power in the provincial government's leadership. To fill this power vacuum, an Acting Regional Head (Pj. Gubernur) was appointed to ensure the continuity of public services and the implementation of ongoing policies in the Province of DKI Jakarta. The difference in the selection mechanisms between the definitive regional head (direct election) and the acting regional head (appointment by the Minister of Home Affairs) has raised concerns among various stakeholders regarding whether the implemented policies under the acting leadership have had positive impacts and adhered to the principles of good governance during the acting period. Therefore, a further analysis is required to assess the performance of the Acting Regional Head of DKI Jakarta in exercising the authority granted throughout his tenure. Using a descriptive-qualitative approach with literature study and document analysis, this research evaluates performance through the lens of good governance principles: properness, transparency, effectiveness, and accountability. Based on the analysis, there are notable performance differences between the acting and definitive regional heads, influenced by variations in the scope of authority, as well as internal and external factors within the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta. The findings indicate that while the Acting Regional Head successfully maintained bureaucratic stability and policy continuity, significant gaps remain in transparency and public participation due to the absence of direct electoral legitimacy and limited strategic authority.

INTRODUCTION

Inauguration of the Acting Regional Head of DKI Jakarta Province occurred in tandem with the end of the term of office of the Definitive Regional Head of DKI Jakarta Province for the 2017–2022 term (Fazri & Prasajo, 2024; Makiin et al., 2024; Riadhussyah et al., 2022; Urwasi, 2024). The procedure for appointing the Acting Regional Head, based on Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 4 of 2023, was conducted by the Minister of Home Affairs through a proposal process with review inputs from the ministry, other institutions, and the DPRD via the Chairman of the DPRD. Appointment of Acting Regional Heads often raises polemics, as from a democratic perspective, these officials are not directly chosen by the people, which may cause negative public sentiment, specifically regarding the performance of the Acting District Head during their tenure (Suyatno, 2016).

The urgency of this research is underscored by several converging factors. DKI Jakarta, with a population of over 11 million people and serving as the national capital until 2024, requires continuity of quality public services regardless of leadership transition mechanisms. The Acting Regional Head appointed to fill the post-election vacuum exercised significant authority over a budget exceeding Rp 80 trillion (DJP, 2024). Key policy challenges during the acting period included persistent air pollution (ranking among the worst in Southeast Asia), recurrent flooding, and the ongoing integration of the Jabodebek LRT and MRT systems (Braga, 2025; Dalkmann, 2019; Regmi, 2021; Syafruddin, 2025). The Ministry of Home Affairs' internal evaluation mechanisms have been criticized as biased toward appointees (given that many acting officials are internal ministry ASN), necessitating independent academic assessment (Daud et al., 2023; Eskandar, 2023; Kusuma et al., 2023; Nirwana & Prasjo, 2021; Susilo, 2023). As noted by Labolo (2016), without independent evaluation, acting regional head performance assessments risk becoming self-referential validations of central government policy rather than genuine accountability mechanisms.

The novelty of this research lies in several key contributions. First, this study provides an empirical evaluation of Acting Regional Head performance using Addink's (2019) good governance framework across three policy sectors: transportation (Jabodebek LRT, TransJakarta), environment (air pollution, flood management), and bureaucratic management. Second, the research systematically compares the scope of authority between definitive and acting regional heads, identifying specific authority limitations that affect policy outcomes. Third, the study develops an evaluation matrix integrating four good governance principles (properness, transparency, effectiveness, accountability) with three performance perspectives (government, development, society). Fourth, the research identifies the tension between bureaucratic continuity (the official's ability to maintain administrative operations) and democratic legitimacy (public skepticism due to appointment rather than election). Fifth, the study provides evidence-based policy recommendations for strengthening oversight mechanisms including enhanced DPRD supervision and structured public dialogue to address legitimacy deficits during transition periods (Datta et al., 2011; Ghofiqi et al., 2026; Jeddawi et al., 2025; Manurung et al., 2025; Simbolon et al., 2026).

Negative sentiment toward the Acting Regional Head is not without reason; it arises because the inauguration process does not involve the public and has potential impacts on various policies and public service lines in the areas they lead. Additionally, the appointment scheme of official area heads, involving ASN who are generally unknown to the public, potentially creates conflicts of interest. There is no clear supervision mechanism, which is not in line with good governance practices commonly applied by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia. In practice, the inauguration of the Acting Regional Head still does not fully apply the principle of transparency.

Measurement of the Acting Regional Head's performance through evaluation after their leadership period is a real method to assess whether the Acting Regional Head has carried out duties and functions in accordance with their authority, without undue intervention from internal or external parties. This evaluation attempts to break down performance from three perspectives: government, society, and development. However, the evaluation of the Acting Regional Head still requires further review, as internal evaluations conducted by the Ministry

of Home Affairs tend to be biased and normative, given that the majority of ASNs appointed as Acting Regional Heads are internal ASN personnel of the Ministry of Home Affairs itself.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the dynamics of good governance during the transition period of leadership in DKI Jakarta Province, with a focus on evaluating the performance and authority of the Acting Regional Head. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) describe the mechanism of appointment and the scope of authority granted to the Acting Regional Head of DKI Jakarta; (2) evaluate the performance of the Acting Regional Head across transportation, environmental, and bureaucratic management policy sectors; (3) assess the extent to which good governance principles (properness, transparency, effectiveness, accountability) were fulfilled during the acting period; (4) identify the gaps between authority and performance and the factors that influence these gaps; and (5) formulate recommendations for improving governance quality during future transition periods.

The contribution of this research is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, this study extends good governance literature by applying Addink's (2019) framework to a specific governance context acting regional head leadership in a major metropolitan area. The research contributes to understanding how authority limitations affect governance outcomes and how bureaucratic continuity can be maintained even when democratic legitimacy is partial. The study also contributes to the literature on transitional governance and the dynamics of appointed versus elected leadership. Practically, this research offers actionable insights for the Ministry of Home Affairs, DPRD DKI Jakarta, and future Acting Regional Heads regarding: (a) clarifying authority boundaries to prevent ambiguity; (b) strengthening oversight mechanisms beyond normative internal evaluations; (c) enhancing public participation despite the absence of direct elections; and (d) building policy legitimacy through structured dialogue and stakeholder engagement.

METHOD

This study used a descriptive/narrative approach, which aims to describe the details of events, phenomena, or social settings and to explore the reasons why and how these events, phenomena, or social settings occur (Neuman, 2014). The descriptive nature of this study is intended to explain various existing variables and examine the relationships between them. This research uses literature studies as secondary data, and for descriptive qualitative data analysis, the researchers will perform tests to determine whether the performance of officials heading the DKI Jakarta area aligns with the indicators presented in the review library.

Measurement of the performance of the Acting Regional Head of DKI Jakarta Province can be seen through three aspects: governance, development, and community. Addink (2019) describes normative principles of good governance in six aspects. In this study, the focus is on four aspects relevant to evaluating the performance of the Acting Head of DKI Jakarta Region: properness, transparency, effectiveness, and accountability. In assessing good governance, it is necessary to review the application of authority, using indicators of authority held by officials in the area, resulting from decentralization, to differentiate between central and regional government authority. Therefore, the indicators used are threefold: (1) public participation, (2) policy outputs, and (3) supporting mechanisms and policy structures from compilation to implementation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the performance of the Acting (Pj) Head of DKI Jakarta Region shows a complex dynamic in balancing the fulfillment of formal legal aspects and the real needs of the community in the field. Based on good governance parameters (Addink, 2019), performance can be analyzed across several sectoral policies. In the transportation sector, the Acting Regional Head focused on the sustainability of national strategic projects and intermodal integration, as previously compiled by officials. Measurement of effectiveness was based on the bureaucracy's ability to implement policies without political obstacles. The Acting Head successfully maintained the operational rhythm of TransJakarta and accelerated the Jabodebek LRT, demonstrating the function of acting as an extension of central authority in allocating regional resources. However, limitations existed in undertaking major structural overhauls or expansions in highly sensitive routes due to restricted strategic authority compared to the definitive officials.

In the environmental policy sector, air pollution and flood issues served as key indicators of accountability for the Acting Regional Head in development and societal aspects. Efforts to improve air quality through emission testing and industrial supervision indicated attempts to meet government standards of properness, although these policies were often reactive due to weak public participation during the early planning stages. Accountability performance in environmental matters was also measured through internal evaluations by the Ministry of Home Affairs, which were often normative in nature, making long-term supervision less effective compared to direct public oversight.

Regarding transparency and participation in decision-making, the absence of direct election mechanisms created gaps in transparency and policy legitimacy. For example, in transportation policies, changes in routes or regional arrangements were frequently carried out through a technocratic-bureaucratic approach rather than a dialogical one, which triggered negative public sentiment. Although regional structures and hierarchies strongly supported policy processes from compilation to implementation, without strong public involvement, policy outputs were at risk of experiencing deficits in socio-political legitimacy.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the Acting Regional Head of DKI Jakarta Province during the transition period, three main conclusions emerge alongside directions for future research. In terms of performance, the Acting Regional Head formally succeeded in filling the leadership vacuum and maintaining public service stability, particularly in the transportation sector sustaining TransJakarta operations and accelerating the Jabodebek LRT while ensuring continuity in bureaucratic management and ongoing policy implementation. Performance was adequate across the good governance dimensions of properness and effectiveness; however, significant gaps remain in transparency and public participation, as policies in the transportation and environmental sectors were largely shaped through a technocratic-bureaucratic rather than dialogical approach, and the primary accountability mechanism internal evaluation by the Ministry of Home Affairs lacks credibility for independent assessment. This pattern is structural rather than personal, reflecting the inherent authority limitations of acting heads relative to definitive heads and the absence of electoral pressure that would incentivize proactive transparency. Furthermore, the appointment mechanism through

bureaucratic selection rather than public election tends to orient policy performance toward administrative-normative compliance while leaving it vulnerable to conflicts of interest, with the resulting democratic legitimacy deficit affecting public acceptance particularly for policies with significant distributional consequences. To address these gaps, future research should pursue several directions: comparative studies across multiple provinces to determine whether Jakarta's pattern is generalizable; longitudinal research tracking acting head performance across full tenures; mixed-methods studies combining document analysis with in-depth interviews of acting officials, legislators, and citizens; comparisons between acting heads appointed from within versus outside the Ministry of Home Affairs to test whether institutional origin affects performance; examinations of the DPRD's oversight role and the barriers limiting its effectiveness; development and testing of specific transparency mechanisms such as mandated public consultations, online policy dashboards, or citizen report cards; cross-national comparisons with countries using appointed interim leaders such as India and the Philippines to identify best practices; and studies on citizen perceptions of acting head legitimacy across policy domains to clarify which decisions require greater public consultation versus administrative discretion.

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