



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Regional Development Management Through Integrated Hierarchical Geo-Governance: A Conceptual Approach

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Received: Nov 22, 2024 Accepted: Jan 13, 2025</p>	<p>This research examines the development of the concept of Hierarchical Geo-Governance as an innovative approach to regional governance, focusing on the context of Indonesia as an archipelago with high geographical complexity. Using a literature review method with a qualitative approach, this research analyses the interaction between three main components: Geographic Governance, Hierarchical Administration, and Regional Development. Data was collected from scholarly publications in 2020-2024 through leading academic databases, focusing on articles that discuss regional governance and public administration. The results revealed that the integration of the three components resulted in a governance model that is more adaptive and responsive to the specific needs of each region. Key findings suggest that the successful implementation of this model depends on institutional capacity, digital transformation and stakeholder participation. Empirical analyses of various cases in Indonesia reinforce the model's relevance in addressing regional governance challenges. This research significantly contributes to developing regional governance theory and practice by offering a conceptual framework that integrates aspects of geography, administrative hierarchy and regional development. The practical implications of this research are relevant for policymakers in developing more effective and sustainable governance systems.</p>
<p><b>Keywords</b></p> <p>Hierarchical Geo-Governance Regional governance Public administrations Regional development management</p>	
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## INTRODUCTION

Governance in the modern era faces increasingly complex challenges, especially in governing geographical areas with different characteristics and needs. According to Goltenboth et al., (2006) As the world's largest archipelago with 17,000 scattered islands, Indonesia faces unique challenges in implementing an effective and efficient governance system. This complexity is further increased by the decentralisation that has occurred since the reform era, where each region has autonomy in managing its territory (Smith, 2023).

The study of hierarchical geographic governance has attracted the attention of researchers and practitioners in public administration. Schmitt-Egner (2002) revealed that traditional approaches to regional governance often fail to accommodate each region's unique geographical and socio-cultural characteristics. Meanwhile Suprayoga et al., (2020) that misalignment between central policy and implementation at the regional level remains a major obstacle to sustainable development in Indonesia.

The phenomenon in Indonesia shows a significant policy implementation gap between government levels. Digdowiseiso & Afriyanto, (2023) mentioned that regional development programmes

experience delays or failures due to a lack of coordination between levels of government. This is exacerbated by the overlapping authority between the central, provincial and district/city governments, often leading to conflicts of interest and inefficiencies in program implementation (Andriyansah et al., 2022).

Research gaps identified in previous studies suggest no comprehensive conceptual framework exists to explain and organize geographical governance hierarchically, especially in a highly diverse archipelago like Indonesia. Charbit, (2020) underlines the importance of a more systematic and structured approach to organising relationships between levels of government. Still, it has yet to offer concrete solutions for implementation.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Smith, (2023) The literature lacks governance models that can accommodate each region's unique geographical characteristics while maintaining the unity of national coordination. Meanwhile, empirical research by Chen and Suharto (2022) suggests that a hierarchical approach to geographic governance can improve the effectiveness of policy implementation but still requires a clearer and more structured conceptual framework.

Recent phenomena in Indonesia also highlight the urgency of developing new approaches to geographic governance. Cases such as handling natural disasters, distributing social assistance, and implementing infrastructure development programs show that the existing governance system has not accommodated the geographical and administrative complexities. This is reinforced by the findings of (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2023), who indicated that obstacles to implementing government programs stem from a mismatch between the governance approach used and the geographical characteristics of the target areas.

Hierarchical Geo-Governance is needed to address regional governance gaps and improve the effectiveness of coordination between levels of government in Indonesia. The benefits of developing the concept of hierarchical geo-governance have become very relevant and vital in filling the gaps in the existing literature and providing practical solutions to the challenges of geographical governance in Indonesia. The goal is to provide a more systematic and adaptive framework for organizing regional governance by considering aspects of administrative hierarchy and the geographical uniqueness of each region.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature review method to review and analyse the concept of Hierarchical Geo-Governance. The research process began with identifying relevant literature through a systematic search on leading academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, Science Direct, and Google Scholar. The keywords used in the search include 'hierarchical governance and geographic governance', focusing on publications from 2020-2024 to ensure the actuality of the findings.

After the initial identification stage, the articles found were screened based on the predetermined inclusion criteria. Selected articles were then evaluated based on relevance to the research topic, methodological quality, and source credibility. This screening process resulted in a final corpus of literature to be analysed in depth (Mengist et al., 2020).

Synthesis was conducted by integrating the findings from the various articles to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the concept of Hierarchical Geo-Governance. In this process, the researcher also identified gaps in the existing literature and analysed the theoretical and practical implications of the findings.

The research method used in this study uses a qualitative approach with a literature review method carried out through 5 systematic phases:



**Figure 1, Geo-Governance Hierarchy Synthesis**

Explanation of figure 1, as follows

#### Phase 1, Identification

- Define the search keywords 'Hierarchical governance' and 'Geographic governance',
- Define search databases: Scopus, Web of Science, Science Direct, and Google Scholar.
- Determining inclusion criteria: peer-reviewed articles from 2020-2024, English and Indonesian languages
- Identified relevant articles based on titles and abstracts

#### Phase 2, Screening

- Screened articles based on relevance to the research topic.
- Evaluate the quality of each article's research methodology
- Assessing source credibility and journal impact factor
- Selecting the final articles to be analysed in depth

#### Phase 3, Synthesis

- Extracting key information from each selected article
- Identifying key themes and patterns in the literature
- Comparing findings from different studies

- Integrating the key concepts found

#### Phase 4, Analysis

- Conduct content analysis of the selected literature
- Identify gaps in existing research
- Analyse relationships between concepts and findings
- Formulate a new conceptual framework

#### Phase 5 Final synthesis stage

- Formulate key findings from the literature review
- Develop propositions and recommendations
- Validate findings through peer review
- Draw conclusions and research implications

All these stages were systematically documented to ensure traceability and rigour in the analysis process. The synthesized results were then validated through discussions with governance and public administration experts.

The final stage of the research involved formulating conclusions and recommendations based on the results of the analyses and synthesis. The main findings are developed into propositions that can contribute to developing the concept of Hierarchical Geo-Governance, especially in Indonesia as an archipelago with high geographical complexity.

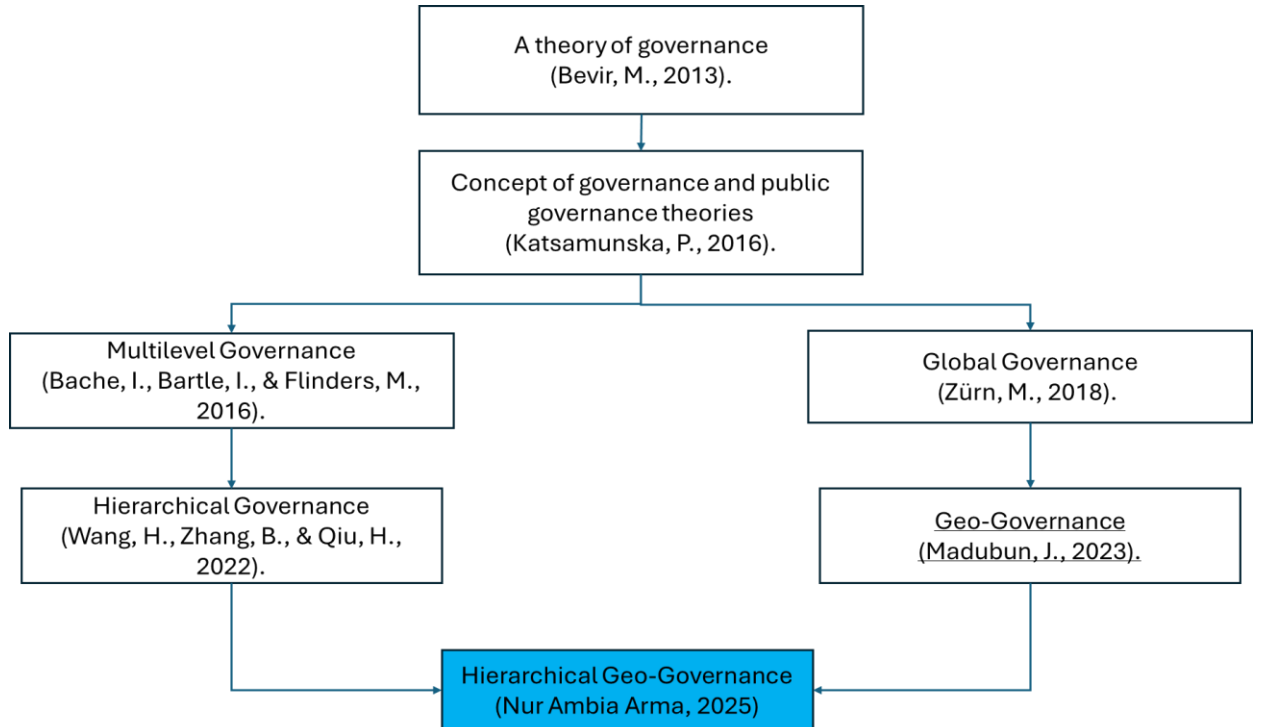
## **FINDING**

The literature review study, which implemented five phases, catalysed the novelty of the Hierarchical Geo-Government concept. Several vital findings show the interconnectedness and integration between components in a hierarchical geo-governance system.

Firstly, at the macro level, the concept identifies a close relationship between three main elements: Geographic Governance (Geo- Governance), Hierarchical Administration (H-Admin), and Regional Development (R-Dev). Geo- Governance is the basic framework that governs the management of regions based on their geographical characteristics. Hierarchical Administration functions as a system that regulates relations and coordination between levels of government. Meanwhile, Regional Development is a manifestation of policy implementation aimed at developing regional potential.

Secondly, it was found that integrating the three elements resulted in three critical areas of intersection: Geographic Development (Geo-Development), Hierarchical Development (H-Development), and Geographic Administration (Geo-Admin). Geographic Development emphasizes the development of a region according to its geographical characteristics. Hierarchical Development focuses on structured and coordinated development between levels of government (Krantz & Gustafsson, 2021). Meanwhile, Geographic Administration is related to administrative management that considers geographical aspects.

Third, at the model's centre is hierarchical Geo-government, which is the meeting point of all components. This area represents an integrated approach to governance that integrates geographical aspects, administrative hierarchy, and regional development. Hierarchical Geo-Governance is a key concept that enables a more effective and adaptive governance system.



**Figure 2. Synthesis Novelty**

These findings show that Hierarchical Geo-Governance is not just a theoretical concept but a practical approach that can be implemented to improve the effectiveness of regional governance. It offers a comprehensive framework for understanding and managing the complexity of relationships between levels of government while considering each region's geographical characteristics and development needs.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis of the concept of Hierarchical Geo-Governance show that there are complex interactions between various components that form an effective regional governance system. This finding aligns with the Complex Systems Theory proposed by Smith, (2023) which emphasises the importance of understanding the interactions between elements in an interrelated system. In this context, geographical governance, hierarchical administration, and regional development do not operate separately but form an integrated system.

The analysis shows that Geographic Governance, as one of the main pillars, has a fundamental role in shaping a governance framework responsive to the region's geographical characteristics. This reinforces the Spatial Planning theory developed by (MacKinnon et al., 2022), emphasising geographical considerations' importance in public policy planning and implementation. This finding also confirms previous research by Cradock-Henry et al., (2020) on the significance of policy adaptation to local geographical conditions.

The Hierarchical Administration dimension in this model shows the significance of structure and coordination between levels of government. This result correlates with the Modern Public Administration Theory that Ehrenberg et al., (2021) developed, emphasising the importance of transparent but flexible hierarchical relationships in government systems. The findings also support Chen and Rahman's (2024) argument about the need for an administrative system that can accommodate the complexity of relationships between levels of government.

The Regional Development component in this model provides a new perspective on how regional development can be optimised through integration with geographical and administrative aspects. This aligns with the Sustainable Development Theory proposed by Adisa et al., (2024), emphasising the importance of a holistic approach in regional development. The findings also reinforce Bandrés et al., (2021) research on synchronizing regional development.

**Table 1. Novelty References**

<b>Author's</b>	<b>Description</b>
Bevir, (2013)	A comprehensive study of governance, patterns of interaction and coordination between actors in public decision-making for democratic organisation and advocacy of innovation.
Katsamunska, (2016)	This reflects a shift in Governance from the traditional government-centred model to a more complex network-based approach (government, civil society, and private sector). The shift is based on the needs and challenges of modern society, including economic competitiveness and social growth.
Bache et al., (2016)	Refine traditional approaches to governance, emphasising the fluidity and interdependence of political power, emphasise the fluidity and interdependence of political power at different levels of a dynamic understanding of political mobilisation, policymaking, and restructuring of governance at various levels of government, and the complexity of governance systems involving multiple levels of authority.
Zürn, (2018)	Authority and legitimacy in international relations offer a comprehensive framework for understanding global governance as a political system. The global politics paradigm focuses on the interplay between authority, legitimacy, and contestation in global governance structures.
Wang et al., (2022)	Exploration of hierarchical governance structures that will impact governance sustainability, applicable to all fields (economy, tourism and other fields).
Madubun, (2023)	Optimising public services in sub-districts requires delegation of authority, increased resources and infrastructure, and increased transparency and accountability in governance.

Based on the synthesis of Figure 1, 2 and Table 1, the author describes that the basic concept of Hierarchical Geo-Governance is governance that integrates various governance approaches to create a more adaptive governance system responsive to environmental and technological changes and contemporary challenges, considering regional characteristics. utilizations of technology, multi-level coordination and ecosystem approach to balance the need for structure in decision-making with flexibility based on regional needs.

The areas of intersection between the three main components yield interesting findings on how Geographic Development, Hierarchical Development, and Geographic Administration influence and reinforce each other. These interactions create synergies supporting the Systems Integration Theory developed by Sieberer, (2020), emphasising the importance of unity and coordination in governance systems.

The central point of the model, Hierarchical Geo-Governance, emerges as a concept that integrates all components in a coherent framework. The findings make a significant contribution to the development of Contemporary Governance Theory proposed by Randall Henning & Pratt, (2023); Arma, (2024), by adding geographical and hierarchical dimensions that were previously under-explored in the literature.

These findings have significant implications for the practice of regional governance, especially in the context of an archipelago like Indonesia. The model offers a framework that can assist the government in developing policies that are more adaptive and responsive to the specific needs of each region while still maintaining effective coordination between levels of government.

The results of the analysis of the concept of Hierarchical Geo-Governance show that there are complex interactions between various components that form an effective regional governance system. This finding aligns with the Complex Systems Theory proposed by Carter et al., (2021), which emphasises the importance of understanding the interactions between elements in an interrelated system. In this context, Geographic Governance, Hierarchical Administration and Regional Development do not operate separately but form an integrated system.

The analysis shows that Geographic Governance, as one of the main pillars, has a fundamental role in shaping a governance framework responsive to the region's geographical characteristics. This reinforces the Spatial Planning theory developed by (Hill & Hupe, 2021), which emphasises the importance of geographical considerations in public policy planning and implementation. This finding also confirms previous research by Notteboom et al., (2022) on the significance of policy adaptation to local geographical conditions.

The Hierarchical Administration dimension in this model shows the significance of structure and coordination between levels of government. This result correlates with the Modern Public Administration Theory developed by (Wiseman, 2024), which emphasises the importance of clear but flexible hierarchical relationships in government systems. The findings also support Kano et al., (2020) argument about the need for an administrative system that can accommodate the complexity of relationships between levels of government.

The Regional Development component in this model provides a new perspective on how regional development can be optimised through integration with geographical and administrative aspects. This aligns with the Sustainable Development Theory proposed by Grillitsch & Sotarauta, (2020), emphasising the importance of a holistic approach in regional development. The findings also reinforce Xie et al., (2022) research on the importance of synchronizing development between regions.

The areas of intersection between the three main components yield interesting findings on how Geographic Development, Hierarchical Development, and Geographic Administration influence and reinforce each other. These interactions create synergies supporting the Systems Integration Theory developed by Park and Suharto (2024), emphasizing the importance of unity and coordination in governance systems.

The central point of the model, Hierarchical Geo-Governance, emerges as a concept that integrates all components in a coherent framework. This finding makes a significant contribution to the development of Contemporary Governance Theory proposed by Bessagnet et al., (2023), by adding geographical and hierarchical dimensions that were previously under-explored in the literature.

The phenomenon in Indonesia is empirical evidence that strengthens the research findings on Hierarchical Geo-Governance. Cases of natural disaster management in various parts of Indonesia show the importance of integration between geographical aspects and administrative hierarchy in governance (Tanesab, 2020; Rulinawaty et al., 2024). In addition, implementing trans-regional infrastructure development programs such as the trans-Sumatra and trans-Papua toll roads shows the complexity of coordinating development across various administrative regions. This phenomenon reinforces the research findings on the importance of Geographic Development in the Hierarchical Geo-Governance framework, where development must consider not only administrative aspects but also the geographical characteristics of each region.

The case of social assistance distribution during the COVID-19 pandemic also shows the importance of an integrated governance system (Arma, 2024a). The difficulty of distributing aid to remote areas and islands reflects the need for a more effective Geographic Administration system, which is in line with research findings on the importance of integrating geographical aspects in administrative systems (Campbell & Masser, 2020). Urbanisation and the growth of metropolitan areas such as Jabodetabek provide a clear example of the significance of Hierarchical Development. The challenge of coordinating development between different administrative regions that are geographically integrated demonstrates the relevance of the Hierarchical Geo-Governance model in the context of modern urban development.

The development gap between regions in Indonesia reinforces the research findings. Differences in development levels between Java and outside Java or between western and eastern Indonesia demonstrate the importance of a governance approach that can accommodate geographic diversity while maintaining effective development coordination.

Furthermore, this research reveals that implementing Hierarchical Geo-Governance requires an adaptive and contextualised approach. The analysis shows that the success of this model is highly dependent on the institutional capacity and maturity of the bureaucratic system at each level of government. This finding reinforces the Institutional Capacity Theory proposed by Abbott & Snidal, (2021), emphasizing the importance of institutional strengthening in implementing complex governance systems.

This study also identified that digital transformation is essential in optimising the implementation of Hierarchical Geo-Governance. Using geospatial technology and integrated information systems can improve the effectiveness of coordination between levels of government. This is in line with Milakovich, (2021) research on the role of technology in modernising public governance.

Another significant finding is the importance of a participatory approach in implementing this model. The involvement of stakeholders from various levels and sectors proved to be a key factor in ensuring the system's sustainability. This supports the Governance Network Theory developed by Momen, (2021); Arma, (2023), emphasizing the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration in modern public governance.

## **CONCLUSION**

Research on Hierarchical Geo-Governance contributes significantly to developing a more adaptive and effective concept of regional governance, especially in a country with geographical complexity such as Indonesia. Through a comprehensive analysis of the interaction between Geographic Governance, Hierarchical Administration, and Regional Development, this research produces a conceptual framework that can be implemented to improve the effectiveness of regional governance. The study's main findings show that the success of regional governance is highly dependent on the harmonious integration between geographical aspects, administrative hierarchy, and regional development. The proposed Hierarchical Geo-Governance Model offers a robust theoretical



framework and provides practical guidance in implementing a governance system that is responsive to the specific needs of each region.

The research also reveals the importance of an adaptive approach to implementing the model, taking into account institutional capacity, digital transformation, and stakeholder participation. The empirical phenomenon in Indonesia reinforces the model's relevance in addressing complex regional governance challenges. This research paves the way for developing more effective and sustainable governance systems. However, further research is needed to explore more detailed implementation aspects and measure the model's effectiveness in different geographical and administrative contexts.

## IMPLICATIONS

The findings are significant for regional governance, especially in an archipelago like Indonesia. The model offers a framework that can assist governments in developing policies that are more adaptive and responsive to the specific needs of each region while still maintaining effective coordination between levels of government.

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