

Relevance of Presidential Neutrality to achieve of Good governance in Indonesia: A comparative study of Joko Widodo's first and Second Regimes

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ABSTRACT

The President of the Republic of Indonesia, who has been directly elected in the general election represents a better relationship to the people compared to the previous concept of presidential elections by Consultative Assembly. Indonesian President, who wields significant and central influence, must maintain independence to uphold the integrity and sanctity of the elections. As long this research, the general election event is overshadowed by concerns regarding presidential neutrality in the electoral contest. This is further compounded by the term 'cawe-cawe', which has recently emerged, and indications of power misuse within intelligence agencies by President Joko Widodo, leading to increased suspicions about his neutrality and its impact on the electoral process. This study examines the correlation between elections and good governance, particularly how the perceived non-neutrality of the President may affect the achievement of good governance in Indonesia. The research aims to analyze the relationship between the implementation of general elections and the dimensions of good governance, both economic and social. This systematic reviews employs a conceptual and comparative approach, presenting data on the quality of Indonesian governance and economic growth during the election years of 2014 and 2019. The comparison aspect included good governance and economic growth in the years before, during, and after the elections.

Keyword: Good Governance, Neutrality, Presidential Election



INTRODUCTION

The construction of government built by the power of law and political power simultaneously has an impact on the difficulty of these two aspects elaborating with each other ideally. This situation is further exacerbated absence of well-established legal principles, leading a government that is predominantly influenced by political factors and incorporates legal frameworks after coming into power. (Abramowitz, 1988) For instance, before the inauguration as President, Joko Widodo was mainly perceived as a representative of his political party, competing

alongside other party representatives in the Presidential General Election. (Sigelman, 1983) Once inaugurated, he cloaked his actions in legal aspects, utilizing his authority, rights, policies, and public statements. The adage in the introduction to this paper that states politics must be subject to the law becomes biased after it is identified that lawmakers are representatives of political parties (Michelitch & Utych, 2016).

Politics and laws that elaborate in government provide public services and fulfillment of citizens' rights, fulfillment in the form of sustainable and equitable development, provision of quality infrastructure, provision of quality education services, readiness of employment, and so on become the treatment of the government as a result of political and legal elaboration on the community. (Murary, 2024) The catalog of citizens' rights is the basis for the public to elect government officials through the means of elections. The alignment between citizens' rights and democratic processes is frequently compromised by political actors striving to preserve their party organizations' dominance.

This issue is highlighted in the 2024 Election Vulnerability Index published by the Election Supervisory Agency of the Republic of Indonesia, which identifies the lack of neutrality among State Organizing Authorities as a major vulnerability in the socio-political dimension impacting the election process and outcomes. (Rauta, 2016) Presidential neutrality in General Elections aims to separate pure political affairs from government affairs without politics or can be called pure legal government affairs, this is related to the caliber of public services provided both in the form of development and visionary policies and involving the people. This research focuses on the correlation between elections and good governance and the influence of the President is increasingly seen as not neutral on the quality of governance, economic growth, visionary policies, and public involvement in government (Boudreau & Mackenzie, 2016).

In this research, the theory used as a fundamental basis is the concept of good governance from Neo and Chen, in their research Neo and Chen have a comprehensive and in-depth view of good governance or good governance. They emphasized that good governance is a principle that involves transparency, accountability, public participation, and compliance with the law (Rotberg, 2014). Neo and Chen argue that transparency in government allows people to know and understand the decision-making process, thereby minimizing corruption and abuse of power. Accountability, they argue, means that public officials must be held accountable for their actions and decisions, and there are mechanisms in place to ensure they can be monitored and sanctioned for violations.

Public participation is another important aspect they highlighted, where communities must be involved in the policy processes and decisions that affect their lives, through open consultation and dialogue. Neo and Chen also emphasize the importance of legal compliance, as it ensures that all governmental actions adhere to existing laws and regulations, thereby fostering justice and stability within society. Overall, Neo and Chen's views emphasize that the consistent application of these principles is key to creating an effective, efficient, and public-interest-oriented government (Neo & Chen, 2007).

In supporting this systematic review, the author collects several studies that tend to have similarities with the substance of this research, the first is a study entitled "Demokrasi Indonesia Masa Kepemimpinan Presiden Jokowi-Amin Periode 2019-2024" by Saiman, this research focuses on the evaluation of Indonesian leadership for the 2019-2024 period, the object of the research is also limited to democracy, the level of public trust, and government's openness to public opinion,

while The research I conducted focused on the level of dependency on good governance and all aspects of democracy to the implementation of general elections (Saiman, 2023).

The second research is entitled "Presidential Neutrality And Position In The 2024 Presidential Election: A Constitutional Law And Comparative Law Perspective" which was researched by Weron Murary. This research examines the president's neutrality and position during the 2024 presidential election in Indonesia, comparing it with similar practices in Malaysia, the Philippines, and South Korea. The conclusion of this research that president must prioritize neutrality to ensure a fair and transparent election process (Murary, 2024). The latest research is entitled "Indonesia's Media Oligarchy and the "Jokowi Phenomenon" This study seeks to prove the existence of oligarchs in the Indonesian political system. This article also explores the framework of oligarchy in the context of the 2014 general election through the main issue, namely the role of Indonesia's mainstream media, which has not been explored in depth (Tapsell, 2016). This research will objectively focus on the comparison of the quality of Indonesia's good governance as measured through its aspects of good governance, which is focused on the momentum of pre during, and after the general election in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a systematic review, where the author collects data from the internet and previous studies. The study uses the Head of State of Indonesia as the subject, while the object of the research is the fluctuations in influence and the quality of good governance in Indonesia. In gathering data, the author focuses on analyzing and reviewing relevant literature to understand how the leadership quality of the Head of State impacts the governance of the country in various measurable aspects. The study also examines several important aspects related to good governance, such as public participation, the level of democracy, and Indonesia's economic growth.

The researcher explores how public involvement in the democratic process contributes to the quality of governance implemented in the country. Additionally, the study assesses how Indonesia's level of democracy affects political and social stability, which in turn influences economic growth. This research specifically focuses on three critical periods in Indonesia's election cycle: one year before the election (pre-election), during the election year, and the year after the election. In each of these periods, the researcher analyzes how political dynamics and leadership affect governance and economic development. This review provides an in-depth overview of the relationship between elections, the quality of democracy, and economic fluctuations in Indonesia, as well as their impact on the overall quality of good governance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Dependencies on Citizens' Rights and Democratic Feasts

In many theories of state formation, the origin of the state is always rooted in the people. The significant role of the people is also emphasized in the Indonesian constitution, as mandated in Article 1, Paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution, which states, "Kedaulatan berada di tangan rakyat yang dilaksanakan berdasarkan Undang-Undang Dasar." This establishes the people's position as superior to that of state officials due to their sovereignty. The people as one of the fundamental aspects of a state have a central role because the administration of the state is certainly directed to the welfare of the people (Yusuf & Sumner, 2015).

Concerning equitable and sustainable development, good quality of education, adequate employment, public participation in the running of the government, good and complete health facilities, and other things that are essentially the rights of citizens these aspects should not be 'commodities' that are agreed in this contestation every 5 years (Akbar et al., 2022).

The position that should be an obligation of the state, but as if it were a 'policy' that represents the positive side of government officials personally is a wrong paradigm that often becomes the basis of the people in choosing state officials (Rauta, 2016). This paradigm was shown implicitly in the 2019 general election, where the minister of Communication and Information at that time, Rudiantara, stated in internal socialization the statement "Whose salary are you?" to one of the civil servants who felt more suitable with the vision and mission of the incumbent competitor ahead of 2019 (Dewi & Galih, 2023).

Presidential election The problem that had gone viral with the hashtag #yanggajikamusiapa represented a misinterpretation from the minister that the civil servants he asked worked for the state and the president institutionally, not President Joko Widodo as a person, and it was also the state's obligation to provide civil servants with salaries for their performance to the government and the provision of public services to the community. Quite a lot of things that represent this paradigm fallacy are displayed to the public and disseminated to them (Akbar, 2022).

The relationship between citizens' rights determined in this general election does not lead to the fulfillment of the rights outlined by the constitution, but rather to the packaging of strategic programs, communicative levels, and the vision and mission of a state official, especially the President (Lestari et al., 2022) Things that are more directed to the professionalism and quality of an official should be taken into consideration in choosing the President.

2. Indonesia's Good Governance Achievements

Good governance is the promise of transparency, the commitment to accountability, and the assurance of equal participation (Rahayu & Juwono, 2018). Historically, the concept of good governance began to be promoted globally by the Agency for International Development (AID) in the 1980s. Subsequently, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) adopted and further propagated this concept, integrating it into their development assistance activities. This concept is believed to be able to increase social and economic development if it is used as a guideline for every government in the world, especially third-world countries that are currently experiencing degradation in the economic and political fields (Souris et al., 2023). The hypothesis of the World Bank and IMF at the time was that poverty arises from poor governance, so it needs political and governance reform (Rahayu & Juwono, 2018).

Mark Bevir, director of the Center for British Studies, University of California, Berkeley, gave a fairly comprehensive definition of the concept of good governance, explaining that this concept is the management of the country by taking into account democratic, open, and professional values. Bevir also emphasized that this concept encourages a country to act democratically, and have efficient and open management (Rahayu & Juwono, 2018). Good governance began to emerge in Indonesia after the reform era (Aguilera & Cuervo-Cazurra, 2009). This outcome stems from comprehensive multi-sector reforms, particularly within the governance sector, which had previously been afflicted by corruption, collusion, and nepotism (Abramowitz, 1988). Although there is no explicit

legislation mandating the implementation of good governance principles as the foundation for government administration, the General Principles of Good Governance (AAUPB) outlined in Law Number 30 of 2014 concerning Government Administration are interpreted as a critique of governance practices.

Deng Zhenglai and Sujian Guo, in their book "China's Search for Good Governance," outline five fundamental reasons why good governance is pursued in various countries.

- a. The concept of good governance refines the political system. Political idealism, when coupled with the implementation of good governance and appropriate regulations, is further strengthened by the presence of good governance, which promotes the involvement of civil society in government activities;
- b. Good governance perfects the concept of democracy, elements of the rule of law, participation, transparency, accountability, and others that exist in democracy, enhanced by elements of efficiency, stability, justice, and integrity that are often not included in the concept of democracy;
- c. The concept of good governance accelerates the realization of community welfare through economic growth and improving the quality of life as long-term benefits of stability, efficiency, and fairness in governance;
- d. Good governance is the effective concept of distributing authority implemented in government, elements of efficiency and integrity in public services, and encouraging public services towards ideal quality;
- e. The concept of good governance is a progressive form of the concept of good government by providing flexibility for public participation to reduce government costs in carrying out its state functions (Zhenglai & Guo, 2011).

To address the multifaceted interpretations of good governance indicators, a government must tailor its approach to the societal context. These aspects serve as indicators to measure a government's level of good governance. Deng Zhenglai and Sujian Guo propose these five indicators as essential components for achieving an ideal state of governance. This research describes the level of achievement based on the five indicators (Zhenglai & Sujian Guo, 2011), the author will compare the achievements of good governance indicators in the two previous election periods, namely the 2014 general election and the 2019 general election to be able to compare and find conclusions about how big the implications of election implementation are on the quality of Indonesian good governance. Legitimacy and voice

The first indicator of good governance, legitimacy, and voice, is crucial as it measures public participation and consensus. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), good governance is characterized by being consensus-oriented. The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) has developed spectrums to facilitate and guide public engagement.

Table 1 Public Participation Spectrum

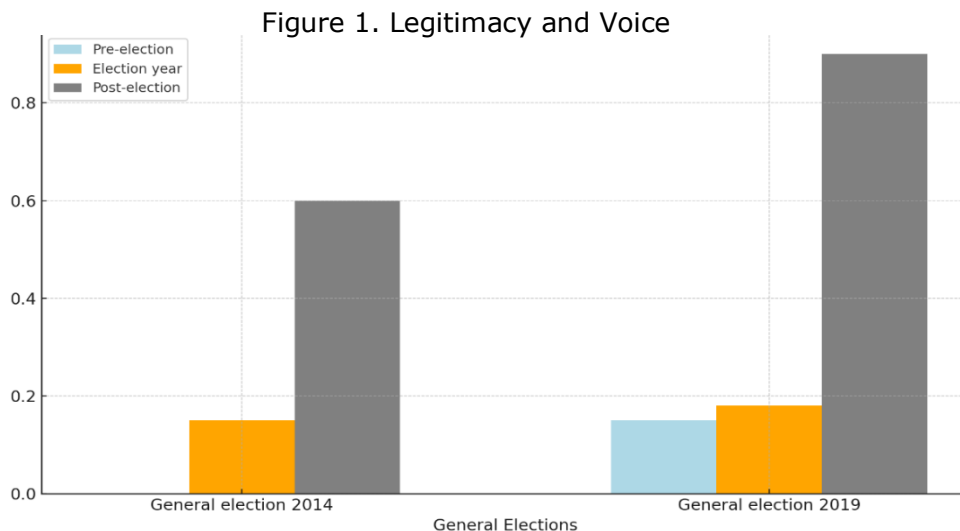
| Subjek | Public Participation Goal | Promises to The Public |
|---------|--|--|
| Inform | To provide balanced and objective information to assist the public in understanding problems, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions. | The government will continue to keep the public informed. |
| Consult | To get feedback on analyses, alternatives, and/or decisions. | The government will continue to keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback |

| Subjek | Public Participation Goal | Promises to The Public |
|---------------|---|--|
| | | on how its input influences the decision. |
| Involve | To work directly with the public throughout the process, to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. | The government will continue to keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influences the decision. |
| Collaborative | To partner with the public in every aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solutions. | The government will ask for public advice and innovation in formulating solutions, incorporating public suggestions and recommendations into decisions to the maximum extent possible. |
| Empower | To put final decision-making in the hands of the public. | The government will implement what the public decides. |

Source: International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), 2006

These spectrums are considered ideal, with a focus on public participation, goal setting, and gathering public feedback, which are essential elements of the spectrum's design and application. In various contexts, the spectrum ensures that public involvement is incorporated at different stages of decision-making, allowing for more inclusive and transparent processes. This approach has become increasingly significant in shaping democratic practices and enhancing citizen engagement, particularly in the context of elections and governance.

In Indonesia, this principle has seen a fluctuating status on the international stage, reflecting the nation's evolving approach to public participation. Since 2014, when the country held its national elections, the practice of incorporating public input into the electoral process has faced ups and downs. For instance, 2015, which marked the post-2014 election period, saw various challenges and adjustments in ensuring meaningful public involvement. Similarly, in 2018, ahead of the 2019 elections, efforts to engage the public were further tested, leading to diverse levels of participation across different regions and political landscapes.



Source: Author, 2024

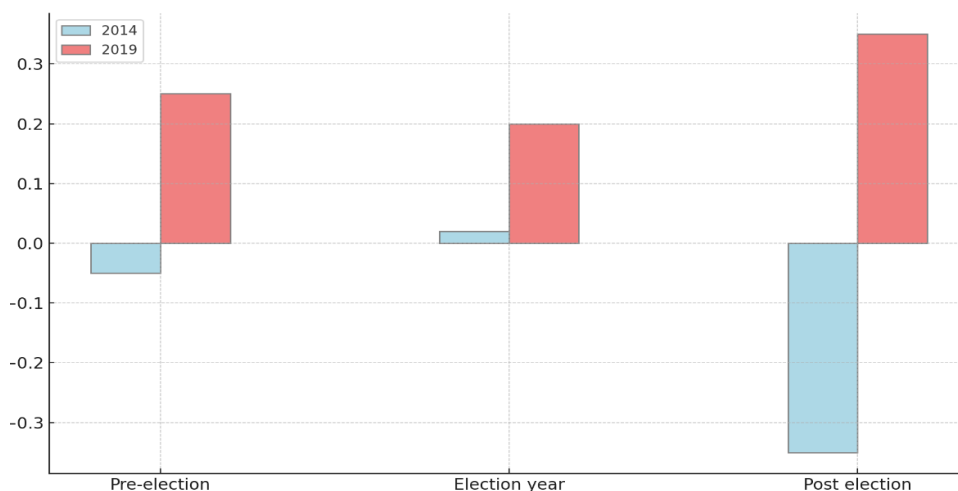
The data released by The Global Economy is based on several aspects that form the basis of the assessment, including:

- a. Participate in selecting government; This aspect represents the democracy that works, how the people can conduct elections to the government from the central level to the lowest level closest to the community. The general election became a major milestone in this aspect (Erman & Moller, 2016).
- b. Freedom of Expression; This aspect describes freedom of expression, freedom which is often a polemic in Indonesia is the main indicator in measuring the importance and value of public voice in the running of government, Freedom of expression represents an open government and accepts public opinions and unrest packaged in such a way, as mandated and protected by article 28E paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution.
- c. Freedom of Association; This aspect is still correlated with the previous aspect, Freedom of Expression, freedom of organization shows the freedom to assemble and disagree with the government which is then criticized through certain forms. This freedom is understood as the right to assemble and associate, as protected by the Indonesian Constitution, especially Article 28E, paragraph (3).
- d. Freedom of Media; This aspect exemplifies an open government that does not exert control over the media, allowing for the reporting of news, including that which is critical of the government. This aspect is mandated form by the Indonesian Constitution, especially Article 28F. Although it does not include media freedom explicitly, the meaning and essence contained in the constitution navigate the direction of the protection of media freedom (Sari, 2018).

1) Accountability

The second principle that becomes an indicator is accountability, high accountability is one of the important components of good governance. Effective good governance requires a system in which governments and public institutions are monitored and accountable for their actions and policies to society and the law.(Iqbal Jatmiko, 2019) Asha George Research Chair in Health Systems, University of the Western Cape, provides a simple introspection catalogue to assess levels of government accountability and responsibility: To whom am I accountable; Why should I be held accountable; For what am I accountable; How am I held accountable? (Rahayu & Juwono, 2018).

Figure 2. Achievements Accountability Indonesian



Source: The world bank, 2022

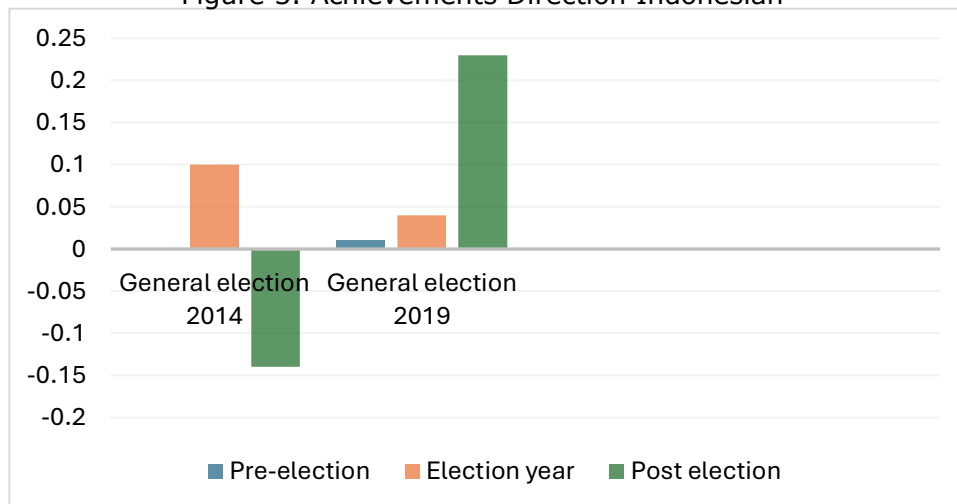
The global economy conducts a study on government accountability and responsibility which is called the index of government effectiveness (The Index of Government Effectiveness) Research is conducted every year, but the author only took research in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2018, 2019 and 2020 which was adjusted to the needs of this research. This research has five indicators included quality of public services, the quality of civil services, and the level of independence from political pressure, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of government commitment to the policy.

The results of the study showed that there was a drastic degradation during the election period (2014) and after the election (2015), the degradation of 0.23 points is a representation of governance problems in the post-2014 election moment. The dark results were then evaluated and corrected in the 2019 election, although the momentum of the political year resulted in a decrease in government accountability, a fairly rapid increase occurred after the 2019 election (2020) with an increase of 0.18 points.

2) Direction

This aspect is related to the vision mission and strategic plan launched by the government, especially the president as the head of government. This framework is criticized in the form of public policies that are generally codified in the form of regulations. The strategic plan, vision, and mission of the Indonesian government which transitions every 5 years, is formulated in the products of the Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJM) and Long-Term Development Plan (RPJP), RPJM and RPJP are two types of development planning as a form of actualization of the strategic plan, vision, and mission of each leadership period used in Indonesia to regulate national, regional, and local.

Figure 3. Achievements Direction Indonesian



Source: The world bank, 2022

Both have different roles in determining the direction and priorities of development at various levels of government. Both types of planning are important tools in directing development in Indonesia. RPJM focuses more on implementing programs in a short time, while RPJP provides a broader view of the long-term development direction of a particular country or region. These two types of planning must be interrelated and consistent so that development can take place well and follow Indonesia's long-term vision. The global economy conducts a study of the government's vision and strategic plan which is termed the index of

regulatory quality (The Index of Regulatory Quality) with indicators on the government's capacity to formulate and implement effective policies and regulations aimed at fostering private sector development.

From the study, there was a very significant degradation when the momentum after the 2014 elections (2015), the leadership transition became the justification for legalizing the 0.15 point decline. Subsequently, during its second term, the Joko Widodo administration enhanced this approach, leading to a progressive increase throughout the election cycle spanning three years (pre-election, election year, post-election). Notably, there was a significant uptick in 2020, marked by a 0.19-point increase. The increase in 2019 and 2020 is quite contradictory, considering that in both years there are regulations that are considered very incompatible and of poor quality, namely Law Number 19 of 2019 Second Amendment to Law Number 30 of 2002 concerning the Corruption Eradication Commission, and Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2020 concerning Job Creation.

The two regulations are considered poor quality for governance because in addition to not accommodating the ideal public participation, the two policies are also inaugurated by not heeding the turmoil of public demonstrations, although not as a condition that needs to be heeded, but ignoring the turmoil of public demonstrations represents the arbitrariness of the government by not considering critical opinions conveyed through public demonstrations (Oktaviani, 2022).

3) Fairness

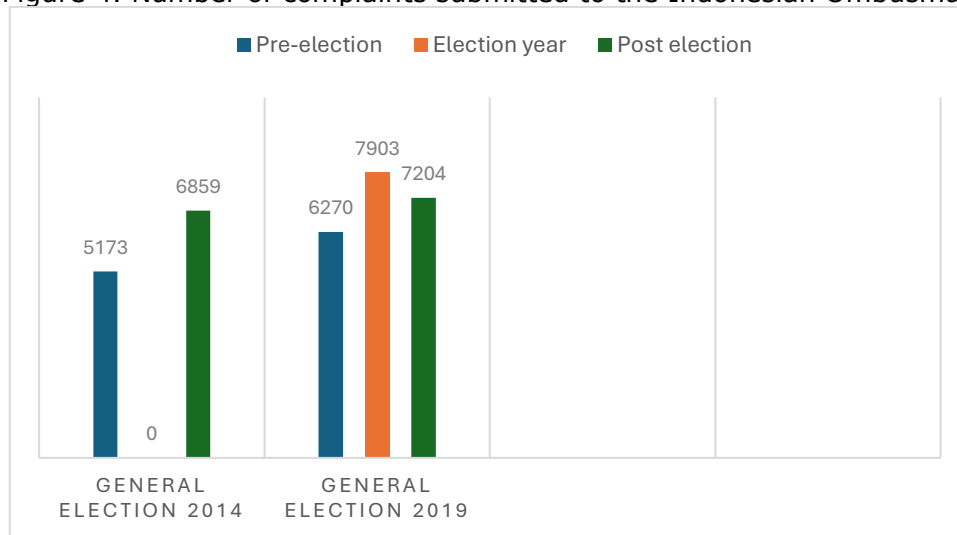
This aspect relates to equal rights for the public to express opinions and criticisms, including opinions in the form of participation in policy or regulation formation. In general, this aspect has been explained in the first aspect, namely Legitimacy and voice, this is related to the correlation between equal rights and freedom to use it with the level of public participation in the running of government (Sari, 2018).

4) Performance

This aspect is an aspect that measures the performance of a responsive, effective, and efficient government. Responsiveness is the capability of an organization (government) to identify community needs, prioritize them, and translate them into diverse service programs (responsive legal frameworks) is crucial. The effectiveness and efficiency of a government are evaluated based on its ability to formulate policies and public services that address community needs while ensuring prudent resource management and environmental stewardship (Tahir et al., 2020). This aspect has been represented in the second aspect regarding government effectiveness, but in this case, the author will include evaluation points through government performance data measured from public dissatisfaction with government services through reports to the Indonesian Ombudsman.

In 2014, which was a pivotal year, it was noted that the Ombudsman did not publish a report. Nonetheless, it was projected that the 2014 election led to an increase in reports filed with the Indonesian Ombudsman, with a difference of 1,686 public reports between 2015 and 2013. Conversely, the 2019 election, for which comprehensive data is available, saw a rise in complaints regarding public dissatisfaction with public service performance, totaling an increase of 1,633 reports (26%). Applying similar conditions to the 2014 election would suggest an approximate increase of 1,344 public reports, resulting in a total of 6,517 public complaints in 2014 during the 2014 election year it election Indonesia to performance.

Figure 4. Number of complaints submitted to the Indonesian Ombudsman



Source: Ombudsman, 2014-2019

All of these data represent the measure of 'good governance' in Indonesia, from the data it is concluded that election contestation does not affect the degradation of good governance in the aspect of Accountability, aspects of directors, and aspects of Direction, to Legitimacy and Voice and Fairness Only experienced a degradation of 0.02 points in the election era, and 0.9 in the post-election era, but on the other hand in terms of performance during the series of election implementation both from pre-election, election year, to post-election, public service performance always increased complaints from the public in the society.

Tabel 2. Accumulation of Good Governance Indicators in Indonesia

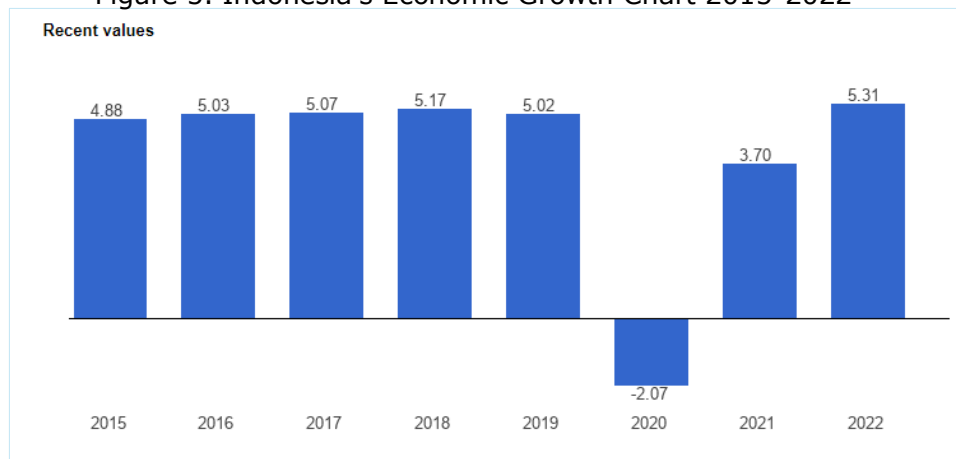
| Aspect | Pre-Election | | Election Year | | Post-election | |
|----------------------|---|------|---------------|------|---------------|------|
| | 2013 | 2018 | 2014 | 2013 | 2018 | 2014 |
| Legitimacy and Voice | 0 | 0,15 | 0,15 | 0,13 | 0,18 | 0,9 |
| Accountability | 0 | 0,19 | -0,06 | 0,17 | -0,29 | 0,35 |
| Direction | 0 | 0,01 | 0,01 | 0,04 | -0,14 | 0,23 |
| Fairness | The indicator used is the same as indicator 1 | | | | | |
| Performance | 5173 | 6230 | 6517 | 7903 | 6859 | 7204 |

Source: Author, 2024

Another aspect that the author wants to underline, which is related to economic growth in the last 7 years shows a graphic over the past 7 years, Indonesia has generally experienced stable economic conditions with relatively minor fluctuations, except notably in 2020. Despite being classified as a post-election year, the economic figures for 2020 were also heavily impacted by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia, leading to a decline in economic growth.

Based on the data, it can be concluded that the implementation of elections does not have a negative influence on the achievement of good governance and economic growth in Indonesia, except in the field of public service performance. However, the author notes that there is a risk if the President is not neutral, this is in connection with the 2024 general election similar to the 2014 general election, namely the change of leadership of the head of government.

Figure 5. Indonesia's Economic Growth Chart 2015-2022



Source: World Bank, 2022

In 2014 and 2015 the existing figures do not show a positive trend, this is also at risk in 2024 and 2025 especially if the President as the owner of authority is not neutral in the 2024 general election.

3. Jokowi's Influence in the Transition Era

In every general election, the influence of certain figures respected by the public has major implications for the results of the general election, one of which is the President (Tapsell, 2016). The President's vote and 'blessing' are often 'sold' in the campaign method of the 'fighters' of the election later, due to the dogma of influence from certain figures, this becomes more compatible to discuss because Joko Widodo as a citizen who also has the right to vote, like other citizens a Joko Widodo also only has one voting right, both for legislative candidates and candidates for the 8th President of the Republic of Indonesia, actualize the principle of Direct, Public, Free, Secret, Honest, and Fair (Luberjudil) as mandated in article 22E paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution, making the choice of Mr. Joko Widodo his will and secret.

Neutrality does not mean not voting or often connoted as a white group (golput), neutrality focused in this study is not providing support openly and utilizing certain roles and positions, the President as a state official, in this case, is urged to be neutral to prevent election injustice as mandated in the Luberjudil principle (Nili, 2016). This is also in line with the 2024 Election Vulnerability Index formulated by the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), compiled with four main dimensions, namely socio-political context, voter administration, contestation, and participation (Badan Pengawas Pemilu Republik Indonesia, 2016). One of the sub-dimensions within the socio-political context pertains to the Election Organizing Authority, identified as a phenomenon or event indicating how regional state administrators (such as regional heads and other regional leaders) respond to matters related to their authority. This sub-dimension is assessed through the following indicators:

- a. Recommendations from Bawaslu regarding the non-neutrality of ASN/TNI/POLRI;
- b. Misuse of the election budget/regional elections and instances of intimidation of election organizers by the Regional Head;
- c. Appeals and/or actions by the local government to support certain candidates;
- d. Appeals and/or actions by local governments or community leaders to reject certain candidates (Badan Pengawas Pemilu Republik Indonesia, 2016).

Although referring to the data presented in the previous section there is no direct influence, the author has highlighted the possible risks that will arise if the President is not neutral, and the implications are likely to continue until 2025 as a post-election year. In May 2023, President Joko Widodo seems to have started maneuvering by introducing the term 'cawe-cawe' he even added that this he did with the next President of Indonesia for the good of Indonesia, especially related to the middle-income trap that he underlined, 'cawe-cawe' (Muliawati, 2023). This is actually a positive thing because it is related to the debriefing and collaboration between the previous President and the future President, but this is ideally done after the inauguration of a new President or at least after the winner of the 2024 Presidential election is announced. Regarding the middle-income trap that has been going on for more than 20 years, it subjects to a bias the main basis for the President to do 'cawe-cawe'.

In September 2023, President Joko Widodo again controversy by stating that he had intelligence data related to political party mapping, especially related to the contestation of the 2024 general election, this drew a lot of criticism because it was considered that the President had used intelligence for personal political interests rather than state political interests. (Nur, 2023) Criticism of the President's attitude is also aligned with articles 1 number 1 and 2 of Law Number 17 of 2011 concerning State Intelligence relating to intelligence authority.

These two controversial actions of the President are a warning regarding the President's next maneuver, contestation which will be carried out within 4 months from now becomes a focus of each party. In the era of leadership transition, as will occur in 2024, there will be a momentum that is likely to cause economic and social instability, referring to the experience in 2014 where the leadership transition resulted in instability in the two sectors, in contrast to 2019 which may be biased by the pandemic, so that fluctuations that occur are difficult to identify as the impact of general elections, especially the election of the President.

CONCLUSION

General elections play a crucial role in shaping democratic governance, and this study emphasizes their significance in the broader context of citizen rights and effective state administration. Although the research indicates that the electoral process in Indonesia has not shown a substantial impact on enhancing good governance thus far, there looms a critical concern regarding the potential for disruption in this balance. The upcoming 2024 general election represents a pivotal moment, particularly as it coincides with the end of President Joko Widodo's term. The historical context of leadership transitions, particularly the fluctuations experienced during the 2014 elections, serves as a cautionary reminder of the dynamics at play. The potential for bias or partisanship from the incumbent in the electoral process could undermine the integrity of democratic practices, provoking a need for heightened vigilance among stakeholders to preserve the equilibrium essential for a functioning democracy.

In light of recent developments concerning President Widodo's actions and statements regarding neutrality in the 2024 elections, the imperative for safeguarding democratic principles has never been more pronounced. The risk of perceived favoritism or interference could not only influence electoral outcomes but also have far-reaching implications for public trust in governance institutions. The historical precedent established during past electoral cycles indicates that leadership changes can create ripples across multiple sectors, affecting public sentiment and institutional stability. Therefore, it is essential for both political

actors and civil society to engage proactively in monitoring the electoral environment. This vigilance is vital to ensuring that the democratic tenets of impartiality and fairness are upheld, ultimately reinforcing the state's responsibility to enhance citizen rights through effective and transparent governance.

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