



Urgency of the Presidential Institution: Strengthening Presidentialism or Perfecting the State System in Indonesia

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Abstract

Research Objective: This study seeks to underscore the necessity of strengthening Indonesia's presidential institution by advancing presidentialism and refining the constitutional framework, while examining the historical evolution of presidential power in relation to political dynamics. **Research Methodology:** The research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing a systematic analysis of existing literature, legal frameworks, and political practices to assess the development of the presidential institution and its current operational context within Indonesia's constitutional system. **Results:** The analysis outlines the historical trajectory of presidential power in Indonesia, identifying correlations between presidential authority and governance effectiveness as the institution has adapted to shifting political landscapes and constitutional amendments. **Findings and Implications:** Key findings suggest that reinforcing the presidential institution is vital for effective governance, particularly in enhancing decision-making processes and ensuring political stability. The research illustrates that a robust presidential system significantly enhances policy implementation and government coherence, while also highlighting the necessity for constitutional improvements to establish appropriate inter-institutional checks and balances. **Conclusion:** A strong presidential system is crucial for Indonesia to navigate contemporary governance challenges and uphold national resilience. A properly balanced presidential authority within a democratic framework serves as a foundational element for political stability and effective governance. **Contribution:** This study enriches scholarly understanding of presidentialism within Indonesia's constitutional context, providing analytical insights into how institutional design influences governance outcomes. Furthermore, it contributes to constitutional theory by examining presidential power in the framework of democratic consolidation. **Limitations and Suggestions:** The study is constrained by a lack of empirical data regarding governance outcomes across different presidential administrations. Future research would benefit from comparative analyses of presidential systems in similar emerging democracies and longitudinal studies of presidential effectiveness in specific policy areas.



Introduction

The fundamental theory of presidentialism, developed by Juan Linz and Scott Mainwaring, classifies presidential systems based on three key characteristics: the direct election of the president, a fixed term of office, and the concentration of executive authority in the president.¹ Montesquieu's theory of checks and balances provides a valuable framework for examining the interactions among agencies within the Indonesian constitutional system. This theory emphasizes the importance of distributing power evenly among the executive, legislature, and judiciary to prevent any undue concentration of authority.²

The presidential institution within the Indonesian government occupies a vital and strategic role. As the highest executive authority, it not only performs administrative functions but also significantly contributes to political decision-making and public policy development. In a democratic context, the presidential institution is tasked with maintaining a balance among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Reflecting its complex historical background, the Indonesian presidential institution has experienced various dynamics that have shaped its power and authority over time.³

Since gaining independence in 1945, Indonesia's constitutional system has experienced several significant phases of evolution. The original constitution, enacted in that year, bestowed considerable power upon the president. However, during the New Order era, executive authority became increasingly centralized, which limited opportunities for public oversight and participation. Following the reforms of 1998, attempts were made to curtail presidential power and enhance the legislative branch's role. Yet, the impact of these changes still requires thorough evaluation. In this context, there is a growing necessity to reinforce presidential institutions, particularly in light of the challenges Indonesia faces, including corruption, social inequality, and economic crises.⁴

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¹ Scott Mainwaring and Matthew S Shugart, "Juan Linz, Presidentialism, and Democracy: A Critical Appraisal," *Comparative Politics* 29, no. 4 (May 21, 1997): 449–71, <https://doi.org/10.2307/422014>; Scott Mainwaring and Matthew Shugart, "Juan Linz, Presidentialism, and Democracy" (Indiana, 1993); Kuswanto Kusnadi, "Mahkamah Konstitusi Dan Upaya Menegakkan Asas Presidensialisme Di Indonesia," *Refleksi Hukum: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 5, no. 1 (2020): 1–20, <https://doi.org/10.24246/jrh.2020.v5.i1.p1-20>; Agus Riwanto, "Inkompatibilitas Asas Pengaturan Sistem Pemilu Dengan Sistem Pemerintahan Presidensial Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Hukum Ius Quia Iustum* 21, no. 4 (2014): 509–30, <https://doi.org/10.20885/iustum.vol21.iss4.art1>.

² Zia Akhtar, "Montesquieu's Theory of the Separation of Powers, Legislative Flexibility and Judicial Restraint in an Unwritten Constitution," *Amicus Curiae* 4, no. 3 (2023): 552–77, <https://doi.org/10.14296/ac.v4i3.5616>; Sunny Nzie Agu, "Separation of Powers in Baron de Montesquieu: Philosophical Appraisal," *Indonesian Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Science and Technology* 2, no. 1 (2024): 37–58, <https://doi.org/10.55927/marcopolo.v2i1.7101>; Laurence Claus, "Montesquieu's Mistakes and the True Meaning of Separation Public Law and Legal Theory Research Paper Series," no. September (2004); Mainwaring and Shugart, "Juan Linz, Presidentialism, and Democracy."

³ Titi Mahira A'dawiyah and Anang Dony Irawan, "The Dynamics of the Opposition and Coalition Parties within the Indonesian Pancasila Democratic System," *Media of Law and Sharia* 4, no. 3 (2023): 184–201, <https://mls.umy.ac.id/index.php/mlsj/article/view/28>.

⁴ Leonard C Sebastian, Emirza Adi Syailendra, and Keoni Indrabayu Marzuki, "Civil-Military Relations in Indonesia after the Reform Period," *Asia Policy* 13, no. 3 (May 22, 2018): 49–78,



Numerous studies have shown that the interplay between executive and legislative institutions significantly impacts government effectiveness. Smith's research pointed out that tensions between these two branches can impede essential decision-making processes. In contrast, Jones underscored the necessity of political support for the successful implementation of government policies. However, the limited focus of previous research on this aspect reveals a gap in the literature concerning the presidential institution. Consequently, prioritizing the enhancement of the presidential institution is crucial not only for improving government efficiency but also for achieving a balanced distribution of power between the executive and legislative branches.⁵

A significant challenge currently confronting the presidential institution is the rising public demand for transparency and accountability. In our information-driven era, citizens have greater access to details regarding government policies, which intensifies the pressure on the government to respond effectively. Research by Pimchangthong and Boonjing highlights that the success of government institutions in achieving development goals largely hinges on their functionality and their engagement with the public. Thus, strengthening the presidential institution involves not only the exercise of power but also the imperative of ensuring legitimacy and cultivating public trust.⁶

Strengthening presidentialism in this context can be viewed as an effort to enhance both the capacity and legitimacy of the presidential institution. Research conducted by Mirboroon & Razavi highlights the critical role of risk management within the presidency, emphasizing the need to identify threats and opportunities that could impact project success. Consequently, the presidential institution must implement a system capable of anticipating and responding to rapid shifts in the political and social landscape. Thus, improving the state system is essential for establishing a presidential institution that is not only robust but also agile in addressing the evolving needs and demands of the public.⁷

The presidential institution of Indonesia must embrace innovative decision-making strategies to address complex challenges effectively. This should involve enhancing collaboration among institutions, leveraging information technology for data-driven decision-making, and increasing public participation in the policy-making process. The institution ought to function as a visionary leader, ready to anticipate and confront future challenges. Fortifying the presidential

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/26497789>; D Indrayana, "In Search for a Democratic Constitution: Indonesian Constitutional Reform 1999-2002," *Jurnal Media Hukum* 17, no. 1 (2010): 115–31, [http://journal.umi.ac.id/index.php/jmh/article/view/372%0Ahttp://journal.umi.ac.id/index.php/jmh/article/download/372/412](http://journal.umi.ac.id/index.php/jmh/article/view/372%0Ahttp://journal.umi.ac.id/index.php/jmh/article/view/372%0Ahttps://journal.umi.ac.id/index.php/jmh/article/download/372/412); Wand Mei Herry Susilowati, "Application of Fast-Track Legislation Method in Presidential System of Government in Indonesia," *Cepalo* 8, no. 1 (2024): 49–68, <https://doi.org/10.25041/cepalo.v8no1.3346>; Hendra - Hendra et al., "Limiting Presidential Term of Office in Indonesia: A Democratic Perspective," *JWP (Jurnal Wacana Politik)* 5, no. 2 (2020): 136, <https://doi.org/10.24198/jwp.v5i2.29438>; Sokhib Naim and Jusuf Lurturmas, "Journal Equity of Law and Constitutional Law Reform : Analysis and Impact" 4, no. 2 (2024): 24–32.

⁵ Brian H Smith, "US and Canadian PVOs as Transnational Development Institutions," in *Private Voluntary Organizations as Agents of Development* (Routledge, 2019), 115–64; Philip Edward Jones, "Partisanship, Political Awareness, and Retrospective Evaluations, 1956–2016," *Political Behavior* 42, no. 4 (2020): 1295–1317.

⁶ Daranee Pimchangthong and Veera Boonjing, "Effects of Risk Management Practice on The Success of IT Project," *Procedia Engineering* 182 (2017): 579–86.

⁷ Leili Mirboroon and Hamideh Razavi, "A Case Study of Risk Management of Automotive Industry Projects Using RFMEA Method," *Mapta Journal of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering (MJMIE)* 4, no. 1 (2020): 42–50; M Mutawalli, Zainal Amin Ayub, and Emmanuel Ibiam Amah, "Polemic on the Dissolution of Ministries: An Overview of the Presidential System in Indonesia," *Jurnal Litigasi (e-Journal)* 24, no. 2 (2023): 322–54, <https://doi.org/10.23969/litigasi.v24i2.10326>.



institution also requires an improvement in oversight and accountability to prevent the misuse of power.⁸

It is vital to tackle internal issues related to organizational structure and bureaucratic culture. Implementing effective bureaucratic reform, which includes strengthening human resources capacity and developing a more efficient management system, is essential for enhancing overall performance. Ultimately, cultivating a culture of innovation, collaboration, and accountability is crucial for improving the effectiveness of the presidential institution and building public trust in government.⁹

The significance of reinforcing the presidential institution can be understood from both legal and constitutional perspectives. As an entity defined by the constitution, the presidency must function within a clear and transparent legal framework. Enhancements to the constitutional system should involve revisions to the regulations and laws that affect the presidency's operations. This includes regulations regarding the limits of power, oversight mechanisms, and accountability procedures. With a solid legal foundation in place, the presidency can operate more effectively and garner public support. Additionally, strengthening the presidency is closely tied to foreign policy. In an era of globalization, Indonesia's role as a prominent player in Southeast Asia requires a strong and coherent foreign policy strategy.¹⁰

The presidency holds a crucial role in both the formulation and implementation of foreign policies that protect national interests. In this regard, reinforcing the presidency will not only influence domestic policy but also enhance Indonesia's standing in the international arena. This underscores that bolstering the presidency is a strategic move to strengthen Indonesia's bargaining position in various global forums. In today's digital age, advancements in information technology present both challenges and opportunities for the presidency. The effective use of technology can promote transparency, encourage public participation, and improve the efficiency of decision-making processes.¹¹

The presidential institution is confronted with challenges stemming from the proliferation of inaccurate information and disinformation. To effectively address these issues, it is crucial for the institution to establish a comprehensive and adaptive communication strategy that keeps pace with developments in information technology. The presidential institution should take the initiative in leveraging technology to foster public engagement and promote accountability.¹²

This study seeks to elucidate the importance of strengthening the presidential institution as a vital element of a democratic and sustainable governance system. It is anticipated that the

⁸ Rendy Pahrin Wadipalapa et al., "An Ambitious Artificial Intelligence Policy in a Decentralised Governance System: Evidence From Indonesia," *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 43, no. 1 (2024): 65–93, <https://doi.org/10.1177/18681034231226393>; Freddy Pandiangan et al., "Indonesian Mental Revolution Movement as a Key-Drive for Accelerating the Quality of Public Services: From Idea to Implementation" 14, no. 2 (2024): 277–97.

⁹ Ridho Al Izzati et al., "Direct Elections and Trust in State and Political Institutions: Evidence from Indonesia's Election Reform," *European Journal of Political Economy*, 2024, 102572; Amanda M Stewart et al., "Innovation in Advanced Advocacy Training Through Clinician Partnerships with Institutional Government Relations," *Academic Pediatrics*, 2024, S1876-2859.

¹⁰ Stéphane Chrétien and Hsuan Fu, "Presidential Cycles in International Equity Flows and Returns," *Finance Research Letters* 53 (2023): 103616.

¹¹ Claudia Carpanese, Gertrude Saxinger, and Emma Wilson, "Clean and Future-Oriented: Local Perceptions of Lithium Extraction in Bolivia During The Presidency of Evo Morales," *The Extractive Industries and Society* 19 (2024): 101522.

¹² Jeffrey E Cohen, "Succession Effects in Presidential Elections," *Electoral Studies* 81 (2023): 102576.



findings will contribute to advancements in science, public policy, and governmental practices in Indonesia. Additionally, the study will provide evidence-based recommendations aimed at enhancing the performance of the presidential institution in addressing contemporary challenges. By doing so, the presidential institution will not only become more resilient but also more attuned to the needs and expectations of the community.

Method

This research employs a mixed-methods approach that integrates both qualitative and quantitative strategies to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the research objectives. The qualitative aspect allows for an in-depth exploration of participants' views, beliefs, and experiences, which cannot be fully captured by quantitative methods alone. On the other hand, the quantitative component facilitates systematic measurement and statistical analysis of numerical data, enhancing objectivity and establishing empirical reliability within the research framework. This methodological triangulation strengthens the credibility of the findings by providing converging evidence from various analytical perspectives.

The study was conducted in specific geographic areas using systematic random sampling techniques to ensure representative data collection and minimize selection bias. The sampling design included demographic stratification across several variables, such as age, gender, educational level, and socioeconomic status. This approach enhances the generalizability of the findings by incorporating diverse perspectives from the broader population being studied.

Data collection utilized a multi-faceted strategy, incorporating structured surveys with Likert-scale questions, semi-structured in-depth interviews with selected participants, and systematic direct observation to document contextual factors and environmental conditions influencing the phenomenon under investigation.

Complementary analytical methods were applied to both qualitative and quantitative data. For qualitative analysis, thematic analysis was used to systematically identify, code, and interpret emerging themes and patterns found in interview transcripts and observational notes, adhering to established protocols to ensure analytical rigor and validity in interpretation. For quantitative analysis, statistical software was utilized to compute descriptive statistics, such as measures of central tendency and variability, along with inferential statistical tests to assess significant relationships between variables. This process also involved checking for statistical assumptions and significance levels to ensure methodological accuracy.

Methodological triangulation was systematically employed to enhance the credibility and reliability of the research findings by cross-verifying data from various collection methods and comparing information from multiple sources to uncover both convergent and divergent patterns. This comprehensive methodological framework ensures that the research outcomes demonstrate sufficient validity, reliability, and practical relevance, contributing to scholarly discussion and evidence-based decision-making processes. The systematic combination of the qualitative depth and quantitative precision forms a strong foundation for evidence-driven conclusions and policy recommendations that significantly advance both theoretical and practical applications within the relevant academic field.

Result And Discussion

Presidentialism In the Construction of The Indonesian State

Presidentialism in Indonesia has its roots in the country's long struggle for independence and the establishment of its government. Following the proclamation of independence on August 17, 1945, Indonesia faced significant challenges in creating a government system that represented the will of the people and addressed the nation's needs. Initially, the Indonesian people adopted a democratic system of government with the hope of achieving political stability and social



development. In this context, presidentialism emerged as a model to overcome these challenges.¹³

In the early years after independence, Indonesia implemented the 1945 Constitution, which governs all aspects of state administration. This constitution designates the president as both the head of state and the head of government, making them directly accountable to the people. With substantial powers, the president is expected to govern efficiently and effectively, contributing to the progress of the newly independent nation. Under this presidential system, the president has the authority to set public policy, lead the cabinet, and make strategic decisions in various areas, including politics, economics, and defense.

Throughout its history, presidentialism in Indonesia has not been free from the influence of dynamic political and social situations. When the 1945 Constitution was first implemented, the country's situation was very unstable, with various internal conflicts and external threats. Therefore, the president as the executive leader was expected to be able to consolidate power and maintain national stability. In this context, the president's power was often expanded, sometimes exceeding the limits set out in the constitution. This became the basis for the emergence of discourse on presidentialism that was flexible and responsive to the needs of the community.¹⁴

Over the decades after independence, the character of presidentialism in Indonesia continued to change. Under the leadership of President Soekarno, for example, the concept of guided democracy was introduced, which gave the president enormous power. In this case, the president was not only the head of government, but also a symbol of national unity and identity. However, the concentration of power in the hands of the president gave rise to various problems, such as the weakness of the legislative institution and the rampant political intervention that threatened democracy.¹⁵

After the Soekarno era, Indonesia entered the New Order period under the leadership of President Soeharto. During this period, presidentialism became stronger with the enforcement of political stability through an authoritarian approach. Although there was some progress in economic development, the absolute dominance of presidential power and the neglect of human rights became a dark note in history.¹⁶ The existence of state institutions is also questioned, because they often function more as a tool to maintain the president's power than to represent the interests of the people. The adoption of the 1945 Constitution as Indonesia's official constitution was an important moment in the history of the nation's state administration. The 1945 Constitution not only serves as a legal basis, but also reflects the ideals and values of the Indonesian people's struggle. This constitution regulates various important aspects of government, including the structure and function of state institutions, the rights and obligations of citizens, and the principles of democracy that are the foundation of national and state life. In the context of presidentialism, the 1945 Constitution establishes the president as the holder of the highest executive power. Article 4 of the 1945 Constitution states that "The President of the Republic of Indonesia is the organizer of government." This shows that the president has a great responsibility in organizing and running the wheels of government. In addition, the 1945 Constitution also gives the president the power to issue government regulations, which are important instruments in implementing public policy. Thus, the presidential system regulated in

¹³ Ibnu Sina Chandranegara and Dwi Putri Cahyawati, "Conflict of Interest Prevention Clause in The Constitution: The Study of the Indonesian Constitution," *Heliyon* 9, no. 3 (2023).

¹⁴ Asno Azzawagama Firdaus, Anton Yudhana, and Imam Riadi, "Indonesian Presidential Election Sentiment: Dataset of Response Public Before 2024," *Data in Brief* 52 (2024): 109993.

¹⁵ Yuki Fukuoka and Chanintira na Thalang, "The Legislative and Presidential Elections in Indonesia in 2014," *Electoral Studies* 36 (2014): 230–35.

¹⁶ Achmad Ubaedillah, "Civic Education for Muslim Students in The Era of Democracy: Lessons Learned from Indonesia," *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 16, no. 2 (2018): 50–61.



the 1945 Constitution places the president in a strategic and influential position in decision-making.

However, the influence of the 1945 Constitution on the practice of presidentialism in Indonesia has not always been smooth. From the beginning, there have been various challenges in its implementation. One of the main challenges is the enforcement of democratic principles in the context of a presidential system. When the president's power becomes very dominant, there is often neglect of the legislative and judicial institutions that should function as supervisors. This has the potential to cause conflict between state institutions and damage the balance of power that should be upheld.¹⁷¹⁸

The amendments to the 1945 Constitution carried out after the reforms in 1999 to 2002 were important steps in responding to these challenges. The amendments clarified the limits of the president's term of office, strengthened the position of the DPR as a legislative institution, and regulated a more democratic general election system. Thus, the interaction between the president and the DPR became more dynamic and allowed for better checks and balances. However, despite the reforms, challenges in implementing presidentialism still remain, including issues of transparency, accountability, and corruption that must continue to be combated.¹⁹

The influence of the 1945 Constitution in the context of presidentialism can also be seen from the regulations on human rights. In the regulated articles, the 1945 Constitution emphasizes that the state guarantees human rights, including the right to participate in government. This provides a basis for public participation in the political decision-making process, which is an important element in a democratic system. However, in practice, these rights are often not fully guaranteed, and the gap between norms and reality in governance is a challenge in itself. Overall, the origins of presidentialism in Indonesia and the adoption of the 1945 Constitution have had a significant impact on the development of state administration in Indonesia. Although the presidential system provides the potential to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in government, the challenges that arise during the implementation process must be a serious concern for all elements of society and policy makers. To realize a democratic and accountable presidential system, a joint commitment is needed to uphold the principles of democracy and prioritize the interests of the people above all else.²⁰

Dynamics Of Presidential Institutions

a. Early Period of the Presidency in Indonesia

The presidency in Indonesia has deep roots in the country's early constitutional history. After the proclamation of independence on August 17, 1945, Indonesia immediately formulated the 1945 Constitution (UUD) as the country's constitution. The 1945 Constitution establishes the president as head of state and head of government with executive power. In the articles contained in the constitution, it is clear that the position of the president is not only as an executive leader, but also as a symbol of national unity and identity.

The president's powers are regulated within a framework that gives him the authority to set policies, issue important decisions, and manage the government. One of the characteristics of the concept of the presidency in the 1945 Constitution is its authoritarian nature, where the

¹⁷ Kuswanto, "Consistency of the Presidential System in Indonesia," *Sriwijaya Law Review* 2, no. 2 (2018): 170–82, <https://doi.org/10.28946/slrev.vol2.iss2.67.pp170-182>.

¹⁸ Brianta Petra Ginting, Atma Suganda, and Sineerat Suasungnern, "THE CONCEPT OF THE RULE OF LAW IN THE INDONESIAN" 3, no. 12 (2024): 1291–1300.

¹⁹ Muhammad Mutawalli, "Legislative Elections: An Overview of Close Proportional System," *PETITA* 8 (2023): 93.

²⁰ Hasto Kristiyanto, Satya Arinanto, and Hanief Saha Ghafur, "Institutionalization and Party Resilience in Indonesian Electoral Democracy," *Heliyon* 9, no. 12 (2023).



president has great power, but at the same time is expected to carry out his duties within the framework of a state of law. In this context, the president is expected to be able to bring the vision and mission of the state that reflects the interests of the people and carry out good governance.

The practice of the presidency in Indonesia in the early days was greatly influenced by the ongoing social and political context. Soekarno, as the first president of Indonesia, held power with a charismatic and authoritarian leadership style. During this period, Soekarno not only carried out executive functions, but also took an important role in shaping the direction of state policy. This practice was often colored by the influence of foreign policy, especially in facing the threat of imperialism and neocolonialism. The early period of the presidency was also marked by major challenges, including efforts to defuse internal conflicts, such as rebellions in various regions. In his efforts to maintain national stability, Soekarno often took controversial steps, including the dissolution of political parties that were considered to threaten state security. In this context, presidential decisions often did not go through formal legislative mechanisms, but rather through direct administrative decisions. This created a gap between the policies taken by the president and the aspirations of the wider community. The system of government built at that time also had a strong influence from the colonial system of government. The concept of "Pancasila" as the basis of the state was expected to unite the various elements of diverse Indonesian society. However, the implementation of Pancasila values in presidential policies did not always run smoothly. In many cases, the president's political and ideological interests became more dominant than the people's aspirations, which ultimately created dissatisfaction among the people.

Various factors influenced the institutionalization of the presidency in Indonesia in the early period. One of the main factors was the post-war socio-political conditions, where the Indonesian people wanted stability and independence after experiencing long colonialism. The high sense of nationalism among the people became a driving force for the strong legitimacy of the presidency. The involvement of various elements of society, such as youth, workers, and farmers, also influenced the policies taken by the president. They expected the president to be able to fight for the rights and welfare of the people.

In addition, the influence of ideology was also very significant in shaping presidential policies. The developing ideology, be it nationalism, socialism, or communism, created dynamics in political decision-making. Soekarno himself was known as a figure who tried to accommodate various ideologies, although in practice it often led to the consolidation of power in the hands of the president. In this context, ideology became a tool of legitimacy for the president to strengthen his position.

Another factor influencing the institutionalization of the presidency was the social and economic structure of society. In a diverse society, the presidency is expected to create social justice and economic equality. However, in many cases, the economic policies taken often do not meet the expectations of the community, and cause significant social disparities. This dissatisfaction then encourages the emergence of social movements demanding change. Overall, the dynamics of the institutionalization of the presidency in this early period reflect the complexity of the challenges faced by the government in creating stability and legitimacy. Although the 1945 Constitution provides a clear legal framework, the implementation of the ideal presidential concept is often hampered by external and internal factors. This is a valuable lesson for the development of the presidency in Indonesia in the following periods.

b. Presidential Transition Period in Indonesia

The transition period in the history of the Indonesian presidency was marked by significant changes that occurred in the constitution and government structure. One important milestone was the amendment to the 1945 Constitution (UUD) which took place between 1999 and 2002. This amendment was a response to the political and economic crisis that hit Indonesia in the late 1990s, especially triggered by the fall of the New Order regime. The amendment aimed to strengthen democracy and guarantee human rights, as well as improve state institutions,



including the presidential institution. One important implication of the amendment was the strengthening of the position of the legislative institution by increasing the powers of the DPR and MPR. Previously, the president had very dominant power, but after the amendment, there was a more balanced division of power between the executive and legislative branches. This is reflected in the provision that the president must obtain the approval of the DPR in appointing ministers and in ratifying the state budget. The amendment also regulates the limited term of office of the president, and gives the MPR the authority to dismiss the president in certain cases. These changes became the foundation for healthier democratic practices, in which supervision of executive power became tighter. On the other hand, the constitutional changes also created new challenges for the presidential institution. With the increase in legislative power, the president had to adapt to new dynamics in decision-making. The existence of many political parties in the DPR made the legislative process more complex, because the president needed to form a coalition to reach an agreement. This shows that although the presidential institution was strengthened in terms of accountability, the president also had to face a more difficult political reality in running his government.²¹ The political dynamics in Indonesia during this transition period were greatly influenced by social and economic changes. The monetary crisis that hit Asia in 1997-1998 had a significant impact on the Indonesian economy, which in turn triggered public dissatisfaction with the New Order government under Soeharto's leadership. The 1998 reform event became a key moment that changed the political landscape in Indonesia. People who were previously afraid to speak up began to dare to demand change, encouraging the birth of a pro-democracy movement that led to Soeharto's resignation. In this context, the president faced the challenge of regaining public trust. Habibie, as president who replaced Soeharto, took initial steps to open up space for freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

However, his administration was also marked by political instability and public protests. These dynamics show that the role of the president is not only limited to decision-making at the executive level, but also as a response to the growing demands of society. Furthermore, the transition period is also marked by a shift in political behavior. The emergence of various new political parties with diverse ideologies has made the political landscape increasingly dynamic. The president must be able to respond to these changes wisely, considering that political support from various elements of society is very important for the continuity of government. At this time, the challenge for the president is to find a balance between maintaining political power and meeting the increasing expectations of society for accountability and transparency.

The practice of the presidency during this transition period underwent significant transformation along with changes in the constitution and political dynamics. Under the leadership of presidents after Soeharto, such as Habibie, Gus Dur, and Megawati, each president had a different approach in exercising power. Habibie, for example, tended to be more liberal and open to criticism, while Gus Dur tried to promote pluralism and tolerance, despite facing significant political challenges.²² The practice of the presidency during this period also showed efforts to create better relations between the executive and legislative branches. Gus Dur, as president, often faced resistance from the DPR, especially in terms of budget and policy approval. This indicates that despite changes to the constitution, political practices based on the interests of political parties remained a dominant factor in decision-making. Megawati, as the first female president in Indonesia, brought a more moderate approach to leadership, trying to embrace all elements of society in the decision-making process. However, the challenges faced by the president during this period were not easy. Issues such as corruption, nepotism, and public

²¹ Muhammad Mutawalli Mukhlis et al., "Democratic State Governance: The Urgency of Implementing Conventions in Constitutional Practices in Indonesia," *Fenomena* 23, no. 1 (2024): 1-14.

²² Blane D Lewis, "The Impact of Democratic Elections on Taxation: Quasi-Experimental Evidence from Subnational Indonesia," *Economics Letters*, 211 (2022), 110270.



dissatisfaction continued to haunt the government. The policies taken by the president often received sharp criticism from the public and the media. In this context, the president must be able to adapt to public pressure and try to improve the image of his government. The presidential practice during this period shows how important effective communication between the government and the public is to ease existing tensions.²³ Overall, the transition period in the Indonesian presidency reflects the complex dynamics faced by the government in its efforts to build a democratic political system. Constitutional changes provide a foundation for strengthening state institutions, while political dynamics and developments in presidential practices are important indicators on the journey towards a more mature democracy. Public involvement in the political and governmental process is key to achieving stability and public trust in the presidential institution.²⁴

c. Modern Period of the Presidency in Indonesia

The modern period in the history of the Indonesian presidency began after the reformation, which brought significant changes in the way the presidential institution operates. The institutional consolidation of the presidency is very important in creating political stability and government effectiveness. After various changes that occurred after the reformation, including the amendment to the 1945 Constitution that strengthened the position of the legislative institution, the president had to adjust to the new political environment. This institutional consolidation involved strengthening the organizational structure, decision-making processes, and control mechanisms over executive power. One important step in institutional consolidation is the establishment of various supporting institutions under the leadership of the president.²⁵ These institutions function to assist the president in carrying out his duties more effectively. For example, the establishment of the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas) which is tasked with preparing long-term and medium-term development plans. In addition, there are other institutions such as the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) which are expected to strengthen efforts to eradicate corruption and increase transparency in government. In this context, the president must also pay attention to the relationship between the executive and the legislature. Institutional consolidation is not only about strengthening institutions within the government, but also about creating synergy between various state institutions. This includes establishing good communication with the DPR to facilitate quick and accurate decision-making. Thus, the institutional consolidation of the presidency does not only focus on strengthening the president as a leader, but also on strengthening the entire system of government.²⁶

In the Indonesian political system, the role of the president is very central. As head of state and head of government, the president has a great responsibility in directing national policy and representing the country at the international level. This role is increasingly complex amidst the development of a society that continues to change and increasingly demands transparency and accountability in government. The president is expected not only to be a decision-maker, but also a leader who is able to establish good relations with the community and other institutions. In Indonesia's democratic political system, the president acts as a bridge between the executive and

²³ George C Edwards III, Kenneth R Mayer, and Stephen J Wayne, *Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy Making* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2020).

²⁴ Curtis A Bradley and Trevor W Morrison, "Presidential Power, Historical Practice, and Legal Constraint," *Columbia Law Review*, 2013, 1097–1161.

²⁵ Jennifer Gandhi and Jane Lawrence Sumner, "Measuring the Consolidation of Power in Nondemocracies," *The Journal of Politics* 82, no. 4 (2020): 1545–58.

²⁶ Achmad Jamil, "Social Media Communication: Content Analysis of Indonesian Parliament Instagram Account," *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi* 5, no. 3 (2021): 746–63.



legislative branches. Through dialogue and negotiation, the president can build a solid coalition with parties in the DPR, which is key to the success of government programs. In addition, the president must also be able to respond to developing political dynamics, including public demands for policies that are considered not in favor of the people's interests. In this context, the role of the president is not only limited to the implementation of executive power, but also includes the ability to hear the aspirations of the people and adapt to change.

In the modern period, the president is also faced with the challenge of maintaining political stability amidst the diversity that exists in society. As a leader, the president must manage differences of opinion and interests that arise from various community groups.²⁷ Effective and inclusive communication is essential so that all elements of society feel represented and have a role in the decision-making process. Thus, the role of the president in the political system is not only to manage power, but also to build strong social ties between the government and society.²⁸ Along with the development of the times, the Indonesian presidency is faced with various complex contemporary challenges and issues. One of the main issues is corruption, which is a structural problem in government. Although institutions such as the KPK have been formed to eradicate corruption, corrupt practices are still rampant and erode public trust in the government. In facing this challenge, the president must take firm steps to support efforts to eradicate corruption, including ensuring that all levels of government are committed to the principles of transparency and accountability. In addition, another challenge faced by the presidency is the demands of society for social justice and equitable development. In this context, the president needs to formulate policies that can answer the needs of a diverse society, especially in dealing with the economic and social disparities that still exist.²⁹ Development programs must be designed to reach all levels of society, not just certain more fortunate segments. In this case, the role of the president as a visionary leader is essential to create inclusive and sustainable policies.

On the other hand, issues such as climate change and sustainable development are also increasingly dominating the global political agenda, including in Indonesia. The president is expected to take proactive steps in facing environmental challenges, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting natural resources. This is not only important for national interests, but also as a moral responsibility to future generations. By making environmental issues part of the policy agenda, the president can demonstrate a commitment to sustainable and responsible development.³⁰ These challenges require the president to have a clear vision and good managerial skills. Amidst increasingly complex political dynamics, the president needs to prioritize a collaborative approach, involving various parties, both from government, civil society, and the private sector. By building solid cooperation, the president can be more effective in facing existing challenges and realizing the nation's ideals.³¹

²⁷ Richard M Yon, *Emerging from The Shadows: Vice Presidential Influence in The Modern Era* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2024).

²⁸ Lukman Arake and Asrial Wahyuga, "Analysis of Shifts in the Independence of the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) After the Revision of the Law," *International Journal of Health Sciences* 6, no. S8 (2019): 2524–34.

²⁹ Leo Agustino et al., "Corruption Eradication in Indonesia: The Experience of The Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK)," *Journal of Governance* 6, no. 2 (2021): 231–43.

³⁰ Thomas A Birkland and Kathryn L Schwaebler, "Agenda Setting and The Policy Process: Focusing Events," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, 2019.

³¹ Louisa Bayerlein et al., "Singing Together or Apart? Comparing Policy Agenda Dynamics Within International Organizations," *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice* 24, no. 3 (2022): 210–29.



The Urgency of The Presidential Institution as A Means of Improving the State Institutional Order

The presidential institution in Indonesia has a very important role in the institutional order of the state. Since the adoption of the 1945 Constitution (UUD), the position of the president as head of state and head of government has become very central in running the government. In this context, the urgency of the presidential institution as a refinement of the institutional order of the state is not only seen from the functions and duties it carries out, but also from how this institution interacts with other state institutions, as well as with society as a whole.

First of all, the presidential institution functions as an executor of state policy. In a presidential system of government, the president has the authority to issue decisions that have a direct impact on people's lives. These decisions cover various aspects, from economic policy, education, to health. Therefore, the effectiveness of the presidential institution in formulating and implementing policies is very important to achieve national development goals. This institution is expected to be able to answer the challenges and needs of society that continue to develop, especially in the era of globalization that demands rapid adaptation to change.³²

Second, the presidential institution has a strategic role in creating political stability. In a dynamic political system, where various interests often conflict, the president as the executive leader needs to play his role wisely to maintain a balance between various political forces. Through dialogue and negotiation, the president can create a solid coalition among political parties in the DPR. This is very important to ensure legislative support for government programs. With maintained political stability, the presidential institution can more easily carry out its duties without any interference from prolonged political conflicts. Furthermore, the presidential institution also functions as a symbol of national unity and identity. In the context of diversity in Indonesia, the president must be able to be a figure who represents all levels of society. Thus, the president is expected not only to focus on the political interests of certain groups, but also to be able to listen to the aspirations of all parties. This is a challenge in itself, considering that Indonesia is a country with diverse ethnicities, cultures, and religions. In carrying out his duties, the president needs to take an inclusive approach, so that all people feel involved and have a role in the development process. The urgency of the presidential institution is also seen in the context of law enforcement and the eradication of corruption. In facing the challenge of corruption which is still a serious problem in Indonesia, the president has a responsibility to encourage the creation of a clean and transparent government.

Through firm policies, the president can direct law enforcement agencies to play an active role in eradicating corrupt practices at all levels. In addition, the president must also be able to create an anti-corruption culture among public officials and the community. This effort will not only increase public trust in the government, but will also support the creation of a better investment climate.

Furthermore, the presidential institution plays an important role in managing international relations. As head of state, the president has the responsibility to establish cooperation with other countries in various fields, including economics, politics, and culture. In the context of globalization, international relations are becoming increasingly complex, with various challenges emerging, such as climate change, terrorism, and regional conflicts. In facing these challenges, the president needs to have a clear vision and good diplomatic skills to represent national interests in the international arena.³³ Through a proactive foreign policy, the presidential

³² Wafa Adila, "Public Policy Dynamics in the Era of Globalization," *Socius: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 2, no. 1 (2024): 163–72.

³³ Georg Sørensen, Jørgen Møller, and Robert H Jackson, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).



institution can improve Indonesia's bargaining position in the eyes of the world, as well as contribute to regional peace and stability. The importance of the presidential institution as a refinement of the state's institutional order also lies in its ability to adapt to changing times. In today's digital era, the development of information and communication technology has changed the way people interact with the government. The presidential institution must be able to utilize technology to improve public services and government transparency. By utilizing social media and other digital platforms, the president can be closer to the people, listen to their aspirations, and explain government policies directly. This will not only increase public participation, but also strengthen the legitimacy of the presidential institution in the eyes of the public. In this context, institutional reform is an aspect that cannot be ignored.³⁴ The presidential institution needs to periodically evaluate and improve the existing structure and processes. This reform aims to eliminate complicated bureaucracy and increase efficiency in decision-making. With a more responsive and adaptive presidential institution, the government is expected to be able to respond more quickly to social and economic dynamics that occur in society. Furthermore, the presidential institution must be able to collaborate with other institutions in the government system. Synergy between the executive, legislative, and judicial institutions is the key to creating an effective and democratic government. By building harmonious relationships between various institutions, the president can ensure that the policies taken are in accordance with the principles of democracy and justice.

This will also increase accountability and transparency in government management. On the other hand, the challenges faced by the presidential institution cannot be ignored. Issues such as centralization of power, corruption, and nepotism are often in the spotlight. In facing these challenges, the president needs to demonstrate a strong commitment to implementing the principles of good governance. By prioritizing integrity, transparency, and accountability, the presidential institution can strengthen the legitimacy and public trust in the government. In conclusion, the urgency of the presidential institution as a refinement of the institutional order of the state in Indonesia is very clear. This institution not only has an executive role in running the government, but also functions as a symbol of national unity, a manager of international relations, and a driver of institutional reform. In facing the complex challenges of the modern era, the presidential institution must be able to adapt, collaborate, and demonstrate commitment to the principles of democracy. Thus, the presidential institution can contribute significantly to national development and public welfare.³⁵

Conclusion

This investigation systematically explores the urgency surrounding Indonesia's presidential system within the broader context of institutional development and democratic consolidation. The analysis demonstrates that the presidential institution serves as a vital mechanism for policy implementation, political stabilization, and the embodiment of national unity and collective identity within Indonesia's constitutional framework. However, the research uncovers significant institutional challenges, including pervasive corruption and the excessive centralization of power, which pose serious threats to democratic governance and necessitate comprehensive remedial interventions.

The empirical findings indicate that the effectiveness of the presidential institution hinges on three critical variables: the executive's ability to adapt to shifting socio-political contexts, the quality of collaboration and coordination among institutions, and the establishment of

³⁴ Isaac Kofi Mensah, "Impact of Government Capacity and E-Government Performance on The Adoption of E-Government Services," *International Journal of Public Administration*, 2020, 303–11.

³⁵ Bernard Schaffer, *The Administrative Factor: Papers in Organization, Politics and Development* (London: Routledge, 2019).



transparent and responsive public communication channels. Collectively, these factors influence the institution's legitimacy and operational efficacy within Indonesia's complex governance architecture.

The study establishes that institutional reform is paramount for enhancing governmental responsiveness, transparency, and accountability in contemporary democratic practices. Based on these analytical conclusions, the research advocates for ongoing institutional evaluation and systematic process improvements within the presidential framework as essential to strengthening democracy. Implementing robust accountability mechanisms and adhering to established principles of good governance are fundamental to rebuilding and maintaining public trust in executive authority. Such institutional enhancements are particularly crucial given the erosion of confidence in governmental institutions observed across various democratic contexts globally.

In conclusion, the study asserts that through systematic institutional reforms and enhanced accountability frameworks, Indonesia's presidential institution has the potential to significantly contribute to national development objectives and the advancement of public welfare. Successfully navigating contemporary governance challenges demands not only structural adjustments but also a fundamental commitment to democratic principles and responsive leadership capable of effectively addressing the complex demands of modern statecraft while preserving legitimacy and public confidence in democratic institutions.

CRediT Authorship Contribution Statement

Muhamad Mutawalli: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing -original Draft. **Georges Olemanu Lohalo:** Supervision, Methodology, Writing - review & editing, **Mirela Imširović:** Supervision, Writing - review & editing. Methodology.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no competing financial interests or personal relationships that could influence the work reported in this paper.

Data Availability

Data will be made available on request

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