

IMPACT OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM ON DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES: CASE STUDY OF INDONESIA

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Abstract

An electoral system plays a crucial role in promoting democratic practices in a country. Its structure and functionality can contribute to advanced democratic practices. A well-organized electoral system fosters democratic practices, including inclusive political representation, the separation of powers and decentralization, citizen participation, freedom of expression and the press, and the peaceful transfer of power. This paper explores the impact of the electoral system on democratic practices in Indonesia. It also aims to provide a brief understanding of the PR system by focusing on the electoral system of Indonesia. Additionally, it seeks to help policymakers in multi-ethnic societies like Myanmar design and implement a more effective and appropriate electoral system to address political needs and promote democratic practices. To achieve these objectives, this paper seeks to answer the research question: “How does the electoral system impact democratic practices in Indonesia?” The study found that Indonesia's electoral system, which blends elements of proportional representation (PR) with direct presidential elections, promotes democratic practices by (1) fostering inclusive political representation, (2) empowering the separation of powers and decentralization, and (3) legitimizing government authority and ensuring the peaceful transfer of power. It employs qualitative and descriptive research methods, relying primarily on secondary sources.

Keywords: Electoral System, PR system, Democratic Practices.

Introduction

An electoral system is a fundamental part of any democratic governance and is crucial for strengthening democratic practices. A well-organized electoral system fosters democratic practices such as inclusive political representation, separation of powers and decentralization, citizen participation, freedom of expression and press, and peaceful transfer of power. Therefore, most of the democratic countries choose and upgrade electoral systems according to their constitutions, state structure, historical conditions, political situations, and political awareness of their citizens to strengthen their democratic practices.

There are different types of electoral systems, such as First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) or Plurality System, Proportional Representation (PR), Majority System, Mixed-Member Proportional (MMP), Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV), and Parallel Voting (Mixed-Member Majoritarian). From these systems, PR and FPTP systems are commonly used in the world. Among the 193 countries of the United Nations (UN), 111 countries use the PR system, 74 countries use FPTP or the Majoritarian system, and 8 countries use other electoral systems (Maung Kaung Su, 2022). Therefore, the PR system is the most commonly used, and there is a general argument that the countries that use PR systems are more inclusive, as they represent a wider range of political opinions and give smaller parties a better chance of gaining seats compared to FPTP systems. Moreover, the PR system fosters democratic practices by ensuring inclusive political representation and participation, encouraging multi-party competition, and promoting coalition building and consensus.

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This paper seeks to explore the impact of the electoral system (which blends elements of PR with direct presidential elections) on democratic practices in Indonesia. It also aims to provide a brief understanding of the PR system by focusing on the electoral system of Indonesia. This paper is significant because (1) it examines the impact of the electoral system on democratic practices in a multi-ethnic country like Indonesia, (2) it enhances understanding of how the electoral system influences democratic development, and (3) it offers insights to help policymakers in multi-ethnic societies like Myanmar design and implement more effective and appropriate electoral systems to strengthen democratic practices. In doing so, this paper first explains the theoretical concepts of electoral systems, with a focus on the PR system. It then presents a historical overview of Indonesia's electoral system and examines its impact on democratic practices. Finally, the paper concludes with key findings and implications.

Literature Review

In studying the relations between electoral systems and democratic practices, scholars argued that competitive, free, and fair electoral systems lead to inclusive political representation, separation of power and decentralization, legitimizing government power, and peaceful transfer of power (Przeworski et al. 2000; Levitsky and Way 2010; Ridge 2024). Benjamin Reilly (2004) argues that designing appropriate electoral rules is crucial in divided societies because elections influence democratic practices and can encourage multi-ethnic parties and moderate politics. He also argues that “competitive elections are one of the instruments used not only to promote democracy but also to attempt to consolidate a fragile peace in post-conflict society, and they are central parts of state building”.

Many scholars have studied Indonesia's electoral system and highlighted its challenges. Syafei (2020) found that the 2019 simultaneous elections were too complex, making the process less efficient. Mietzner (2019) pointed to problems such as weak political funding, vote buying, high party thresholds, and low female representation. Pahlevi, Al-Hamdi, Sakir, and Lailam (2021) noted issues in the open-list PR system, including electoral fraud, money politics, and unqualified candidates influenced by wealthy backers. Nasution (2016) observed that while decentralization did not cause major problems, it was poorly planned and implemented. Most studies focus on the weaknesses of the system. Few discuss its positive role in promoting democratic practices. This paper aims to fill that gap.

Research Question and Argument

To study the impact of the electoral system on democratic practices in Indonesia, this paper intends to answer research questions as follows,

- (1) How does the electoral system impact democratic practices in Indonesia?

To solve this question, this paper argues that Indonesia's electoral system, which blends elements of proportional representation (PR) with direct presidential elections, promotes democratic practices by (1) fostering inclusive political representation, (2) empowering the separation of powers and decentralization, and (3) legitimizing government authority and peaceful transfer of power.

Methodology

This paper relies on a qualitative research methodology and employs a descriptive method to collect data from reports, websites (including government sources), and scholarly articles or journals, using both primary and secondary sources.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

An electoral system is “a set of rules that determine how elections are conducted and how the results are determined and interpreted to produce the winner(s)” (Heywood, 2013). Although there are many electoral systems, this paper focuses only on the PR system.

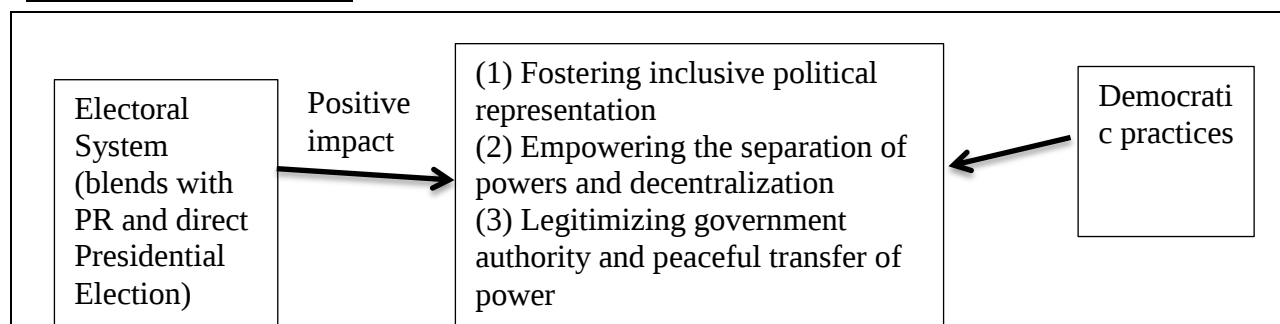
Proportional Representation (PR) is an electoral system where parties gain seats in parliament proportional to their share of votes (Heywood, 2013). It ensures all voters, including supporters of minor parties, receive fair representation. PR promotes genuine competition and is often preferred in multi-ethnic countries. Various PR models—such as party-list voting, mixed-member proportional, and single transferable vote—all aim to align parliamentary seats closely with voter support.

Democratic practices are essential actions and institutions that ensure the proper functioning of democracy. Three key practices include:

- (1) *Inclusive Political Representation*: According to Robert Dahl (2000), effective democracy requires equal participation and representation to ensure government decisions reflect the will of the people.
- (2) *Separation of Powers and Decentralization*: Democracy is strengthened when power is distributed among different branches of government and levels of administration.
- (3) *Legitimizing Government Authority and Peaceful Transfer of Power*: Free and fair elections legitimize government authority and allow citizens to choose their leaders. A peaceful transfer of power is a fundamental democratic practice that ensures political stability and the legitimacy of government.

From the above literature, theory, and concepts, this paper constructs the following conceptual framework to study the impact of the electoral system on democratic practices in Indonesia.

Conceptual Framework



Source: From Literature Review, Conceptual Framework (Modified by author)

Historical Overview

Indonesia gained its independence on August 17, 1945, and established a liberal representative democracy with a parliamentary system. In September 1955, the first general election was held with a proportional representation system in multi-member constituencies (MMCs). Although the election process was fair and democratic, the outcome was disappointing to those who had hoped it would increase political stability, and it did not solve the chronic political crisis (Sulistyo, 2002). The country had numerous political parties, and none of them was able to secure a stable majority. This led to frequent changes in government and deep political fragmentation. The conflicts between different ideological groups, between parliament and cabinet, and between communal groups created a high political instability (Sulistyo, 2002). As a result, President Soekarno declared martial law on March 14, 1957.

These situations came in response to increasing political instability, regional rebellions, and the failure of Indonesia's parliamentary democracy. President Soekarno later strengthened his control by forming an authoritarian regime also known as "Guided Democracy". In the following years, President Soekarno's authoritarian and leftist nature led to confrontation with the military. On March 12, 1967, Major General Suharto took all power from President Soekarno and formed the "New Order" regime. Under the New Order regime, five general elections (1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, and 1997) were successfully held, and these elections became the government's legitimacy tools. However, none of the elections were competitive and free and fair (Sulistyo, 2002). The potential of opposition was managed with a stick and carrot strategy, and overt opposition was controlled by repressive measures. Therefore, elections served as political machinery for the regime, and did not allow for any meaningful political competition between different parties under Suharto's 32 years (1966-1998) in power.

Suharto's regime stability, however, was ended by the effects of the so-called Asian Crisis, which started to hit Indonesia in the second half of 1997, and by a dramatic financial and economic crisis in 1998. In May 1998, the largest student demonstrations and large-scale riots in six major cities forced Suharto to give up Suharto's one-man rule.

On May 21, 1998, Suharto was replaced by Vice-President B.J. Habibie's transitional government, also known as the Reformation Era. The public also put pressure on the government for the liberalization of the political process. Finally, the process of political transition advanced from the stage of liberalization in late 1998 into a full-blown democratization of the political regime in Indonesia. Since 1999, the free and fair general elections have been held and returned to a multi-party democracy in Indonesia.

Electoral System in Indonesia

The electoral system in Indonesia relies on either a majority vote or a proportional representation (PR) system.

Majority Vote: in which people cast their votes for their preferred candidate, and the candidate who secures more than half of the valid votes will be elected to office. If no candidates secure more than half of the valid votes, a second vote will be held between the two candidates who obtained the highest number of votes.

Proportional Representation: In which people vote for their favored party, and the seats are distributed to each party, depending on their proportion of total votes in each constituency.

(a) Presidential Election in Indonesia

The President and Vice-President are elected together through a direct *majority vote* since 2004. The winning pair must secure more than half of all valid votes (50 percent plus one vote) and achieve at least 20 percent of all valid votes in more than half of Indonesia's provinces (at least 20 provinces). If no pair meets these criteria, a run-off election is held between the two pairs with the highest vote counts (Asia-Pacific, 2024). The President and Vice-President are nominated by a political party or a coalition of parties. They serve a five-year term and can be re-elected for one additional term.

However, on July 3, 2014, the Constitutional Court decided that the rule requiring a candidate pair to win at least 20 percent of valid votes in more than half of Indonesia's provinces does not apply when only two pairs are running (Asia-Pacific, 2024). The Court ruled that the political party coalition supporting the two candidate pairs is representative of all regions of Indonesia. This decision allowed winners to secure an absolute majority in a single-round election in 2014 and 2019.

(b) Legislative Elections in Indonesia

Legislative elections for the National House of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, DPR or DPRD) and regional legislatures (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah, DPD) at the provincial and regency/municipal levels use a *proportional representation system*. Citizens vote for political parties, and seats at each level are distributed according to the proportion of total votes each party receives (Asia-Pacific, 2024). For the DPR, only parties that surpass the four percent parliamentary threshold of all valid votes are considered for seat allocation, while this threshold does not apply to regional legislatures.

Regional Representative Councils (DPD) elections use a *single non-transferable vote (SNTV) system*. Voters receive one DPD ballot listing all candidates from their province and mark their choice by punching one hole. The four candidates with the highest vote totals in each province are elected. Although a political party must also nominate DPR or DPRD candidates, DPD candidates may run as independents.

Elected legislative members serve a five-year term. If a member resigns before their term ends, a replacement is chosen from candidates who participated in the legislative elections through a mid-term replacement election.

After the fall of Suharto's one-man rule, Indonesia used two different kinds of proportional representation systems: the Closed-list PR system (1999-2004) and the Open-list PR system (2009-present). A lot of countries apply an Open-list PR system because they assume that it is consistent with the values of democracy and civic engagement.

Findings and Discussion

After the fall of Suharto's one-man rule, Indonesia made many social reforms (Nasution, 2016). First, the authoritarian nature of the regime was replaced by a democratic multi-party system. Second, the dominant role of government was replaced with a market-based economic system and a globalized open economy. Third, centralization of power was changed into decentralization by giving both greater political power and budgets to local governments. Therefore, the fall of Suharto's one-man rule led to the democratic transition in Indonesia, and multi-party elections have been held periodically at certain times.

Nowadays, Indonesia has become the second-highest democracy index score (6.3 to 6.7) among Southeast Asian countries according to the data of the democracy index from Our World in Data. The data combines information on the extent to which citizens can choose their political leaders in free and fair elections, enjoy civil liberties, prefer democracy over other political systems, can and do participate in politics, and have a functioning government that acts on their behalf. It ranges from 0 to 10 (most democratic). This can be seen in *Figure 1*. From the data of the World Bank Group (2022), the political stability and absence of violence/ terrorism index in Indonesia is 43.40 (the indicator rank is 0-100), while China is 42.92, and India is 39.15 (World Bank Group, 2022). Therefore, Indonesia is more stable than China and India. Now, Indonesia enjoys significant political and media pluralism and undergoes multiple, peaceful transfers of power. According to the data of Freedom House (2023), the freedom index of Indonesia is 58 (partly free). It ranges from 0 to 100 (most free). Therefore, Indonesia has become a stable and democratic country.

General elections are the basic principle of democracy and guarantee the implementation of the principle of individual rights, freedom, and equality (Zuhro, 2019). In a democratic country, the people's participation in elections also legitimates the government's power.

This paper first explains how Indonesia's electoral system promotes inclusive political representation by allocating seats based on vote share and reflecting public diversity, including women and minority participation in Parliament.

Secondly, it discusses the separation of powers and decentralization. Finally, it describes the legitimization of government power and peaceful transfer of power as a positive impact of the electoral system on democratic practices.

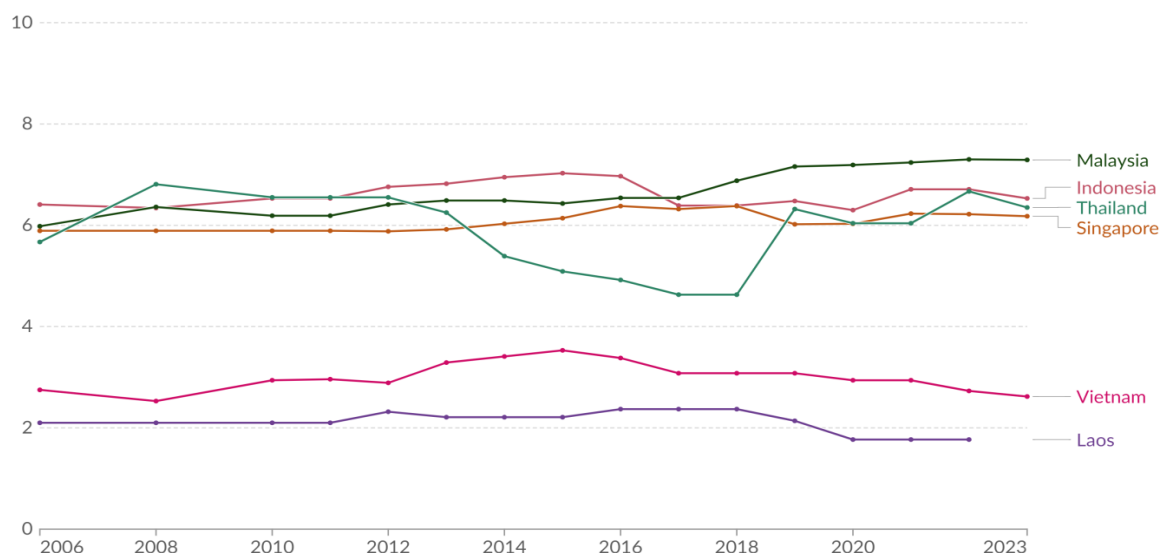


Figure 1: Democracy Index of Some ASEAN Countries

Source: Our World in Data (2023). *Democracy Index*.

<https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/democracy-index-eiu>.

Inclusive Political Representation

Indonesia is a country with a wide range of ethnic groups, religions, and regional identities. However, the political system and electoral system of Indonesia accommodate its multicultural society, balancing the need for national unity with the representation of various groups in parliament.

The Parliament of Indonesia is the People's Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, MPR). It is a bicameral system and consists of two Houses (Russell, 2020). The more important house is the House of Representatives or the People's Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat, DPR or DPRD), and the upper house is the Council of Representatives of the Regions or Regional Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah, DPD).

The House of Representatives (DPR or DPRD) is responsible for making legislation and conducting inquiries. It also oversees the government's performance and ratifies international agreements. It has 575 seats and members are directly elected by a province-based proportional system (PR). This PR system ensures that a wide range of political, ethnic, and regional groups can gain political representation and helps to avoid exclusion and political marginalization. This paper uses the 2019 and 2024 election data to find out the inclusive political representation in Indonesia.

Indonesia, which has a total population of nearly 278 million, conducts the second-largest single-day elections in the world (Kathleen Magramo, 2024). The 2019 General Election of Indonesia was a simultaneous general election in which the presidential, national, and regional elections were held on a single day. In the 2019 General Election, there were 192.8 million registered voters, and they were made up of 18,000 islands (Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), 2024). The following *Table 1* shows the legislative election results in 2019.

Table 1: Parties or Coalitions Winning Seats in the 2019 Elections

Political Group	Total
Indonesian Democratic Party - Struggle (PDI-P)	128
Party of Functional Groups (Golkar)	85
Great Indonesia Movement (Gerindra)	78
National Democratic Party (NasDem)	59
National Awakening Party (PKB)	58
Democratic Party (PD)	54
Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)	50
National Mandate Party (PAN)	44
United Development Party (PPP)	19

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), 2024. *Indonesia: House of Representatives*.

<https://data.ipu.org/parliament/ID/ID-LC01/election/ID-LC01-E20190417/>.

The 2024 General Election was also the second simultaneous election since 2019. According to the General Election Commission (KPU) data, there are 204.8 million registered voters in the 2024 elections. *Table 2* shows the numbers and seats of political groups in the 2024 General Election.

Table 2: Parties or Coalitions Winning Seats in the 2024 Elections

Political Group	Total
Indonesian Democratic Party - Struggle (PDI-P)	110
Party of Functional Groups (Golkar)	102
Great Indonesia Movement (Gerindra)	86
National Democratic Party (NasDem)	69
National Awakening Party (PKB)	68
Democratic Party (PD)	44
Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)	53
National Mandate Party (PAN)	48

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), 2024. *Indonesia: House of Representatives*.

<https://data.ipu.org/parliament/ID/ID-LC01/election/ID-LC01-E20190417/>.

According to these tables, no party wins the majority of seats, which cannot lead to majority control in parliament. The PR system allows for minority, ethnic, and religious parties to gain seats in parliament. Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), an Islamic party that advocates for Muslims' rights and broader social issues, gained 50 seats in 2019 and 53 seats in the 2024 elections. United Development Party (PPP), focused on the Islamic minority, gained 19 seats in the 2019 elections.

The women's involvement in parliament also shows inclusive political representation. Women and minority groups play a key role in the 2014 and 2024 elections. In Indonesia, there is a quota of 30 percent female representation for the nomination of candidates for the DPR, DPD, and provincial and regency/municipal DPRD. The women's involvement in Parliament can be seen in *Tables 3 and 4*. The minority groups also play an active role in campaigning activities and election socialization, and they help raise public awareness of the importance of elections. The youth also play a crucial role in the 2024 elections. According to the General Election Commission (KPU) of Indonesia, the number of first-time voters in Indonesia in the 2024 elections is estimated at over 106.3 million, about 56 percent of the total number of voters in Indonesia. Therefore, Indonesia's electoral system supports the involvement of minorities and young people and encourages inclusiveness in the political process. These situations lead to a positive impact on democratic practices among the diverse community of Indonesia.

Table 3: Members Elected, by Sex in 2019 Elections

Number of men elected	455
Number of women elected	120
Percentage of women elected	20.9%

Source: Edward Aspinall, Sally White, and Amalinda Savirani (2021).

Table 4: Members Elected, by Sex in 2024 Elections

Number of men elected	458
Number of women elected	122
Percentage of women elected	21.0%

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), 2024. *Indonesia: House of Representatives*.

<https://data.ipu.org/parliament/ID/ID-LC01/election/ID-LC01-E20190417/>.

(i) Empowering the Separation of Powers and Decentralization

The electoral system of Indonesia also leads to the formation of a coalition government, which encourages compromise and collaboration among parties, as well as empowers the separation of powers among parties. The formation of a coalition presidential government in Indonesia began to take root after the resignation of Suharto in 1998. Suharto's successor, B.J. Habibie's government (1998-1999) included both existing opposition parties and formed the first coalitional cabinet. Although the first democratically elected president, Abdurrahman Wahid (1999-2001), initially signaled that he wanted to head a coalition government, he then proceeded to dismantle this very alliance by constantly firing ministers of coalition parties and practicing a highly erratic and self-centered decision-making process. Consequently, he was impeached in 2001 and replaced by Megawati Sukarnoputri (2001-2004). President Megawati then formed a classic coalitional cabinet which contained most of Indonesia's post-authoritarian parties, delivering stability for much of her term.

Under the rule of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004-2014), an institutionalized coalition presidential government was established and celebrated as a virtue of stable

governance. Joko Widodo's government (2014-2024) also relies on a coalition of political parties. Due to the broad coalition of political parties, known as the Indonesia Forward Coalition, Jokowi continues to back his administration. The key parties in Jokowi's coalition government include the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), Golkar Party, National Awakening Party (PKB), Nas Dem Party, United Development Party (PPP), Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI), and Hanura Party. Therefore, the electoral system of Indonesia forms a coalition government and advances the separation of powers between parties. It also reduces the likelihood of major confrontations between parties.

Indonesia's electoral system also leads to a power balance between the executive and parliament because they are separately elected by popular vote. The President and Vice-President are directly elected by the people, not from the parliament, and thus they are accountable to the people, and there is a check and balance between the executive and parliament. The parliament has the power to make laws, but these laws must also have the preliminary approval of the president. Although the President has the power to make government regulations instead of laws, to remain in force, these regulations must be approved by the DPR at its next session. Therefore, the direct presidential election system and power sharing between the executive and parliament create a checks and balances system that empowers the separation of political power in Indonesia.

In Indonesia, the Regional Representative Council (DPD) represents the regions and is a consultative body on issues related to regional autonomy, legislation, and government policies. Members of DPD are elected directly from a nationwide pool of nonpartisan candidates. This regional autonomy reduces the likelihood of separatist movements and conflicts. Indonesia has 34 provinces, subdivided into 416 regencies and 98 cities (Russell, 2020). Each province has a directly elected governor and provincial assembly; regents and city mayors are also directly elected. In 2000, Indonesia shifted from a highly centralized system to one that gave more power to subnational authorities (Russell, 2020). In Indonesia, regencies and cities, rather than provinces, have significant autonomy and budgets for healthcare, education, and environmental issues. Moreover, the local communities now have more say in matters that concern them, are more in touch with the situation on the ground, and they can take more appropriate decisions (Russell, 2020). Therefore, the direct election of DPD members strengthened decentralization and promoted democratic practices such as the separation of powers and local governance.

(ii) Legitimizing Government Authority and Peaceful Transfer of Power

Although the prospects for a stable and efficient democratic government are not determined by the electoral system alone, the results of an electoral system can contribute to democratic practices in a number of aspects. According to Andrew Heywood, one important reason why regimes bother to hold elections is that elections help to foster legitimacy by justifying a system of rule. In Indonesia, the electoral system also promotes the legitimacy of the government. The direct presidential elections of Indonesia allow the citizens to choose their president and vice-president directly. This system promotes the legitimacy of the elected leaders because it reflects the will of the people. The direct relation between voters and elected officials also fosters a sense of ownership and trust in the government's policies. Moreover, the members

of DPR and DPD are also elected by direct elections. This system also enhances a representative democracy where citizens feel that their interests are reflected in the national and regional policy-making process.

Since 2009, Indonesia has used the open-list proportional representation (PR) system. In this system, the voters can choose both a party and a specific candidate from that party. This system ensures that a broad range of political parties and minor parties can gain representation in the legislature. It prevents the domination by one or two parties and promotes political inclusiveness and pluralism. Therefore, Indonesia's electoral system enhances the legitimacy of the government by giving a voice to various segments within society.

Moreover, the democratic legitimacy of the Indonesian government stems from free and fair elections. According to data from the Our World in Data website, Indonesia's free and fair elections index is 0.66 (Our World in Data, 2023). It ranges from 0 to 1 (highest). The popular participation rate in elections also enhances the legitimacy of the government. In Indonesia, the popular participation in elections is above 80 percent. In the 2019 elections, 81.9 percent of the 192.8 million registered voters cast their ballots, and 81.78 percent of the 204.8 million registered voters cast their ballots in the 2024 elections (The Jakarta Post, 2024). A high voter turnout means that a large population participates in electing their leaders, and a stronger mandate is given to the governor. It also shows a higher public trust in the government.

Indonesia's electoral system has played a key role in enabling peaceful transfers of political power since the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998. The introduction of free, fair, and competitive elections—first through indirect mechanisms (1999) and later through direct presidential elections (from 2004 onward)—created an institutional framework for legitimate leadership change (Davidson, Jamie S., 2009). The 2004 constitutional amendments, which allowed citizens to directly elect the president and vice president, marked a turning point. This shift strengthened political legitimacy, reduced elite bargaining behind closed doors, and enhanced public trust in the democratic process. The two-round system (majority-runoff) further ensures that the elected president has broad support, reducing post-election disputes and contributing to political stability.

Over the past two decades, peaceful transitions—such as from Megawati Sukarnoputri to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004), and from Yudhoyono to Joko Widodo (2014)—have demonstrated how a credible electoral system can promote orderly handovers of power (Lee, Dong- Yoon & Chung, Sang Hwa, 2008). These processes have been largely accepted by competing political actors and the public, minimizing the risk of violence or unrest.

Moreover, the role of independent institutions, such as the General Elections Commission (KPU) and the Constitutional Court, has further strengthened the electoral process by managing disputes and reinforcing transparency. As a result, Indonesia's electoral system has become a cornerstone of its democratic consolidation and peaceful political transitions.

Conclusion

In the post-Suharto era, Indonesia held free and fair multi-party democratic elections. In recent years, Indonesia has become a stable and vibrant democratic country in Southeast Asia.

Although the prospects for a stable and efficient democratic government are not determined by the electoral system alone, the electoral system also promotes democratic practices in Indonesia. The legislative elections through the PR system ensure that a wide range of political, ethnic, and regional groups can gain political representation and help to avoid exclusion and political marginalization. This system also supports the minority and young people's involvement and encourages inclusiveness in the political process.

Indonesia's electoral system also leads to the formation of a coalition government, which encourages compromise and separation of power among parties, potentially leading to more balanced and moderate policies. It also supports checks and balances between the executive and legislature and encourages the decentralization of power. The direct presidential elections also promote the legitimacy of the elected leaders because they reflect the will of the people. The direct relations between voters and elected officials also foster a sense of ownership and trust in the government's policies. Moreover, Indonesia's electoral system has become a cornerstone of its democratic consolidation and peaceful political transitions.

Therefore, Indonesia's electoral system, which blends elements of proportional representation (PR) with direct presidential elections, promotes democratic practices in three ways: (1) fostering inclusive political representation, (2) empowering the separation of powers and decentralization, and (3) legitimizing government authority and peaceful transfer of power. However, every system has its strengths and weaknesses. According to Moch Edward Trias Pahlevi, Ridho Al-Hamdi, Sakir Sakir, and Tanto Lailam (2021), the electoral system of Indonesia also has negative trends such as electoral malpractices, money politics, the absence of the candidate's competence, integrity, ideology, and the influential role of financial owners.

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