

## **Yudhoyono and Jokowi's Political Leadership in Indonesia: A Comparison of Vision, Communication, Longevity, and Election's Success**

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### **Abstract**

The study aims to assess the political leadership skills of President Yudhoyono and Jokowi in Indonesia from 2004 to 2023, utilising the leadership capital approach. The 'skills' of Yudhoyono and Jokowi's political leadership are examined in terms of their political/policy vision, communication performance, longevity, and re-election triumph. The research utilised primary data obtained through interviews with a select group of predetermined informants and secondary data sourced from news websites, books, and journals. This study reveals that President Yudhoyono's political/policy vision is more robust and steadfast than President Jokowi's. Yudhoyono's political vision remained consistent and continuous during his first and second terms. However, Jokowi's political vision differed between his first and second terms. Additionally, it was discovered that the two Presidents' performances catered to distinct demographics. Yudhoyono's use of formal and structured language makes him more understandable to the upper-middle class. In contrast, Jokowi's colloquial and less structured vocabulary makes him more approachable to the general population from the lower-middle class. Both presidents were re-elected for two consecutive terms and significantly influenced their respective political parties in garnering the most votes. The Democratic Party's representation in the DPR RI grew by 13 per cent in the 2009 elections, compared to their representation in the parliamentary seats in the 2004 election. Similarly, the PDIP party achieved success in both the 2014 and 2019 Elections. The PDIP had a marginal 3 per cent increase in the number of seats obtained in the 2014 elections.

### **Keywords:**

political leadership; political vision; communication performance; longevity; election

### **Introduction**

The role of political leadership is crucial in a country's governance, where disseminating information about political leaders is consistently a significant concern. Nevertheless, scholarly attention towards political leadership remains relatively limited, particularly within political science. The American Political Science Association comprises 46 sections, none dedicated to studying political leadership. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the

International Political Science Association includes 52 research committees, and the European Consortium for Political Research consists of 44 study groups (Elgie, 2015). However, it is essential to highlight that neither of these organisations explicitly includes political leadership research as a distinct or specialised area within its research framework.

The literature on leadership generally provides a broader analysis of political leadership, emphasising the managerial

dimensions of leadership. Leaders are primarily responsible for meeting the needs and expectations of the business or firm. However, it is essential to recognise that leaders also play a crucial role in bringing together the efforts and aspirations of individuals toward common societal values, beliefs, and interests (Hartley & Benington, 2011). Furthermore, examining regime accomplishments and their interactions with other regimes necessitates the consideration of political leadership as a fundamental component (Helms, 2012). The correlation between political leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the advancement or deterioration of a nation.

Indonesia is a nation that follows the Presidential System. Since achieving independence, Indonesia has had seven Presidents and 12 Vice Presidents, most of whom were elected through 12 General Elections (Pemilu). The president's role, duties, and powers bear immense significance in the Presidential System in Indonesia, as the president wields supreme authority in the executive branch and serves as the Head of State. Several scholarly publications have extensively analysed and examined the biographies of the seven Presidents of Indonesia (Al-Brebesy, 1999; Barton & Lie, 2002; Fahman, 2002; Makka, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2012; Oktaviani et al., 2019; Roeder, 1969; Soeharto, 1980; Soekarnoputri, 2021).

Journalists and investigators generally present President Yudhoyono in a more nuanced light. A decade under his leadership, Indonesia experienced a period of socio-political stability (Aspinall et al., 2015). In a prior study, Liddle (2005) examined the election of Yudhoyono and Jusuf Kalla (JK), a duumvirate pair of notable figures intending to advance Indonesia in multiple sectors and increase its competitiveness. Fealy (2013) expressed optimism that during the final year of President Yudhoyono's administration, the administration would be able to address the

growing intolerance in society, particularly towards minority groups.

In addition, the incumbent president, specifically the seventh president, Joko Widodo or Jokowi, commenced his political leadership journey as the Mayor of Solo. Subsequently, he was elected as the Governor of DKI Jakarta for a term, from 2012 to 2017. Following a two-year tenure as Governor of DKI Jakarta, Jokowi was elected President of the Republic of Indonesia for his first term from 2014 to 2019, then re-elected for a second term from 2019 to 2024. Initially, Jokowi was hailed as a promising figure for Indonesian democracy (Beech, 2014a; Warburton, 2016b; Widodo, 2014). Nevertheless, Indonesia has faced severe censure from various international authors regarding its deteriorating democracy index (Fealy, 2020; Power, 2018). Additionally, Jokowi's biography was also examined by other authors who emphasised the various aspects of his leadership (Miranda, 2019; Supriyadi, 2018).

Based on the review above, writers and academics commonly depict the characteristics and profiles of the two Indonesian presidents. The focus is solely confined to each president's character and leadership style within the leadership dimension. Applying the leadership capital approach to analyse the political leadership of President Yudhoyono and Jokowi expands the understanding of political leadership beyond just the leader's personal background and leadership style. The leadership capital approach offers a more comprehensive view of the various factors that contribute to political leadership skills (Bennister, 't Hart, et al., 2014; Helms & Femke, 2017; Parker, 2007).

It is used within the framework of the political leadership of the president (presidential system) in Indonesia, to concurrently reinforce the qualitative aspects of the leadership capital that has been developed. The leadership capital approach is commonly employed in the political leadership of the Prime Minister

in European countries. The authors incorporate qualitative variables from the leadership capital method without disregarding the quantitative elements. Relying solely on quantitative factors for political leadership might result in the emergence of populist or popular leaders who lack sufficient political leadership abilities. It is detrimental and unhealthy for the overall quality of democracy.

Three significant points highlight the importance of analysing the political leadership of Presidents Yudhoyono and Jokowi. Yudhoyono and Jokowi were presidents elected directly by the people through a general election procedure. These individuals were presidents who can be regarded as triumphant in fulfilling their two terms of governance, with Jokowi assuming leadership for his second (the latest) term in October 2024. Furthermore, Yudhoyono and Jokowi have distinct upbringings and backgrounds. As such, this article aims to assess the political leadership skills of President Yudhoyono and Jokowi, utilising the leadership capital approach.

## **Literature Review**

### **Political Leadership Studies in Methodology**

Over the past decade, there has been a notable surge in scholarly discourse surrounding leadership within political science, particularly emphasising various facets of political leadership (Ammeter et al., 2002; Elcock, 2001). Diverse academicians are attempting to advance political leadership research by applying novel approaches and points of view. According to Bennister (2016), utilising various scientific methodologies in examining political leadership holds promise for offering resolutions to the intricate nature of political leadership.

Certain concepts and analyses in this field necessitate examination and discussion. Political leadership is characterised by both a hierarchical structure and a wide range of

diversity in its reach. Furthermore, individuals can gain expertise regarding novel and cutting-edge research methodologies to tackle leadership-related obstacles effectively. Furthermore, political leadership encompasses both charisma and the art of manipulation. This statement can be understood as a cautionary message directed at influential leaders inside democratic nations and present-day leaders who fail to heed the concerns and opinions of the general population (Bennister, 2016).

A political leadership framework is applicable across several political leadership tiers. Three observation domains have been offered as a foundation for studying political leadership. The three domains under consideration are 'The Place,' 'Authorising Environment' (also called the organising environment), and 'Organisational Environment' (Morrell & Hartley, 2006). 'The Place' denotes the official residence, administrative headquarters, or seat of administration of the nation. Additionally, governmental institutions and ad-hoc groups from foreign nations are encompassed within the classifications of the 'Authorising' and 'Organisational Environments.' Morrell and Hartley's classification of political leadership refers to those who assume formal leadership roles inside official government organisations across different levels of authority.

The benefits of employing a comparative methodological approach in comprehending political leadership phenomena (Helms, 2012). Many scholars have embraced and implemented Helms' comparative political leadership methodology. As an illustration, the following studies have been compared: Boin et al., (2012) examined political leadership in crises; Charteris-Black (2012) contrasted political leadership within the domain of communication; Stevens, (2012) investigated comparisons between gender and political leadership; Steyvers et al. (2012) compared military and local political leadership; Schechter (2012) conducted a comparative analysis

of political leadership and international organisations; and Elgie (2012) compared the political leadership of traditional and contemporary democracies. Renshon (2012) employed a political psychology framework to examine comparative political leadership thoroughly and identified and read vital components, such as a leader's character, aspirations, identity, and attitude toward public responsibility, as precious subjects of research.

Bennister et al., (2014) developed the Leadership Capital Index (LCI) as a methodological framework and set of instruments for comprehensively examining political leadership dynamics. LCI methodically charts three key areas that serve as the foundation and components for evaluating and appraising political leadership: skills, relationships, and reputation (Bennister, et al., 2014; Bennister & Worthy, 2017).

### Political Leadership Skills in Studies

In his qualitative research, Theakston (2011) examined Gordon Brown's leadership qualities and style, drawing on themes outlined by Fred Greenstein in his book 'The Presidential Difference.' The analysis of Brown's leadership qualities and style encompassed six key elements: proficiency in public communication, ability to organise effectively, adeptness in political manoeuvring, alignment with specific political ideologies, cognitive approach, and emotional intelligence (Theakston, 2011). Brown's proficiency as a public communicator is often seen as inadequate, exacerbated by his communication style that fails to put the media at ease. Brown can transmit responsibility due to their limited organisational capacity. Brown implemented various organisational changes, including a shift towards more extensive telephone communication instead of face-to-face interactions. Brown's emotional behaviour was deemed unsuitable and hindered effective collaboration with partner nations due to

Brown's deficiency in the requisite political acumen for international cooperation. For instance, Brown frequently abstains from participating and articulating viewpoints at forums held by European Union countries. However, Brown received recognition for his speech at the World Leaders (G20) forum in 2009, which focused on the global financial crisis (Theakston, 2011).

Based on this study, it was generally concluded that Gordon Brown was not considered appropriate for the President or Prime Minister. This evaluation focuses on the leadership qualities, attributes, and skills defined and described by Greenstein (Theakston, 2011). This assessment does not imply that Brown was unsuccessful or unfit to be President or Prime Minister, the highest position in the state's organisational structure. It is because there were instances where Brown effectively collaborated with labour organisations to address labour issues successfully (Theakston, 2011).

In two separate quantitative studies, Brouer et al. (2012, 2016) investigated political leadership qualities, explicitly focusing on the variables of successful leadership and effective followership in 2012. In 2016, Brouer et al. conducted a study investigating the correlation between political leadership and transformative leadership style. This study builds upon their previous research from 2012. Brouer et al. (2012) proposed two hypotheses: firstly, that political leader skills are associated with effective leadership, and secondly, that political leader skills are also associated with effective followership, mediated by the quality of the leader-follower interaction. Brouer et al. (2012) described the study's findings, which align with or have statistical significance concerning the two stated hypotheses. Political leadership abilities are intricately linked to leading and following effectively in a high-quality connection between leaders and subordinates.

In a subsequent study, Brouer et al. (2016) investigated the correlation between certain aspects of political abilities and transformational leadership. Within the Chinese sample, social intelligence, networking prowess, and interpersonal influence exerted a more pronounced influence than public sincerity. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that transformational leadership plays a role in mediating the connection between leaders' political skills and subordinates' performance (Brouer et al., 2016). This study employed a dyadic and cross-sectional design, wherein all data were gathered simultaneously. The findings confirm that transformative leadership mediates the connection between a leader's political skills and their followers' performance.

Furthermore, a positive correlation exists between social intelligence and a leader's charisma, individualised consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Additionally, interpersonal impact is associated with a leader's charisma and intellectual stimulation. However, research indicates that the sense of apparent sincerity does not correlate with how transformational leadership is seen (Brouer et al., 2016).

The research conducted by Brouer et al. (2012, 2016) demonstrates that the primary aspects of political leadership skills exert a solid and meaningful impact on the surrounding context of leadership. Political leadership abilities are needed to guarantee the stability and longevity of a leadership. Equally or even more significant is the satisfaction of the public's entitlements linked to the institutional power of political leaders. A political leader's skills and competency can guarantee the effective maintenance and fulfilment of citizens' rights.

The research conducted by Ewen et al. (2013) has significant overlap or resemblances with the research conducted by Brouer et al. in 2012 and 2016. Ewen et al. (2013) undertook an additional inquiry by examining the correlation between the political abilities of leaders, their

efficacy as leaders, and the contentment of their followers. The study specifically examined the association between these three variables and the role of transformational and transactional leader conduct as mediators. A total of 408 principals and 1,429 teachers from public schools in Germany actively participated as respondents in a research study conducted by Ewen and colleagues. The mediation analysis results, utilising bias-corrected bootstrapping confidence intervals, confirm that political competence is a stronger predictor of transformational and transactional leader conduct than other predictors. Additionally, the analysis shows that transformational and transactional leadership behaviour mediates between a leader's political skill and leadership effectiveness (Ewen et al., 2013). Nevertheless, this study expands the understanding of political leadership by examining its use in a non-political context among professional school teachers. This point is a significant contribution derived from the studies conducted by Ewen et al.

Gentry et al., (2013) stated that while individual differences in characteristics play a crucial role in predicting leadership effectiveness, there is a lack of empirical study on the specific traits, both distant and close, that aid managers in leading effectively within businesses. The current study builds upon prior research by investigating the correlation between distal, specific personality qualities and proximal political skill attributes with assertiveness, a particular leadership ability, as evaluated by direct reports and co-workers. The study by Gentry et al. (2013) utilised self-report data from 225 managers in the United States to investigate the relationship between political skills and personality traits, such as responsiveness and agreeableness. The study also included assessments of leadership effectiveness from peers and subordinates, explicitly focusing on assertiveness. The study's main objective was to examine the role of mediation ability in influencing political skills.

The study's findings indicate that

political skill is a mediator in connecting restricted personality traits to evaluations of leadership effectiveness, as assessed by several individuals. However, according to alternative evaluation sources, this relationship does not hold. More precisely, the social intelligence aspect of political skill mediates perceptual evaluations and assertiveness as reported by subordinates but does not apply to evaluations from colleagues (Gentry et al., 2013). In addition, the comprehensive composite measure of political skill played a crucial role in establishing a connection between evaluations of agreeableness and assertiveness by peers. However, it was not extended to direct evaluations by subordinates. An inherent constraint of this study is the utilisation of only two restricted personality variables, therefore restricting the feasibility of doing statistical mediation tests on all facets of individual political talents.

Gentry et al. (2013) showed that political skills are a more dependable indicator of leadership success than personality traits. Hence, it is crucial to prioritise political acumen over personality traits when assessing new leaders. The highlighted findings in this study underscore the sociological significance of political leadership qualities in selecting future political leaders. Political leadership abilities are typically quantifiable and objective, whereas the personality traits associated with political leadership are often based on personal opinions and subjective judgments. The assessment of political leadership qualities is typically more objective as it relies on examining the track record of political leaders. The figure's accumulated hands-on political leadership experience exemplifies his leadership skills during his tenure. The outcomes of political leadership exhibited during a pre-established tenure should document the leader's accomplishments and shortcomings. However, assessing political leadership personalities is subjective and requires significant time to

determine whether one leader's personality is superior to others.

Shaughnessy et al. (2017) examined the leadership abilities exhibited by informal political leaders, a subject that has recently gained significant attention and is being approached from multiple angles. Shaughnessy et al. (2017) researched an integrated socio-political theory of informal political leadership. They conducted a quantitative research study using self-report survey questions, a network-based consensus informal leadership measure, and individual performance data provided by the organisation (Shaughnessy et al., 2017). The findings indicate that employees with a strong desire for power, as measured by their motivation, are more likely to be acknowledged as informal leaders within a group than those with a weaker desire for power. Furthermore, the effectiveness of these informal leaders is influenced by their performance and political skills (Shaughnessy et al., 2017).

Finally, Pohan et al. (2024) studied political leadership based on a thorough literature review of 75 papers. They found that leadership theories and ideas were used in 15 different situations or focus areas. Transformational and transactional leadership types receive much attention in the study of leadership in the field of political science. Both types of leadership are often used in different research paradigms. On the whole, the fact that transformative and transactional leadership theories are so common in political science shows how hard it is for political scientists to use science to understand what leadership is like in a political setting.

### Discourse on Political Leadership in Indonesia

Numerous scholars have researched political leadership in Indonesia, including Al-Brebesy, (1999), Barton and Lie (2002), Fahman (2002), Makka (1994, 1995, 1996, 2012), Oktaviani et al. (2019), Roeder (1969), Soeharto (1980);, and Soekarno (1965, 1970).

The prevailing comprehension of political leaders in Indonesia centres around the president as a pivotal figure; consequently, the majority of scholarly literature presents biographies that expound upon the attributes of the President of Indonesia. Extensive research and evaluations were conducted primarily concerning the works of Oktaviani et al. (2019), Soekarno (1965, 1970), Suhelmi, (2012), Supriyadi (2018), and Wibisono, (2018). Numerous other academics and scientists, including Abdulgani-Knapp and Retnowati, (2007) Dwipayana and Ramadhan (2007). Latif (2009), Roeder (1969), and Soeharto (1976) have written about the president's biography. Scholars, domestic and international, were particularly intrigued by the circumstances preceding President Soeharto's 1998 ousting; for instance, Nadjib (1998), Anderson (1998), Diro (1999), Ecip and Muarif (1998), and Muluk (2000). Others, such as Makka (1994a, 1994b, 1995, 1996, 2012), Novi (2013), and Situmorang (2017), conducted critiques of the background and ideology of President Baharuddin Jusuf Habibie. Additionally, an examination of President Abdurrahman Wahid (Gusdur) was the subject of research conducted jointly by Al-Brebesy (1999) and Wahid (2016).

Dhani (2004) and Han (2003) have also authored biographies detailing the life of President Megawati Soekarno Putri. The lengthy opposition that Megawati faced from the New Order until her ascension to the presidency has been examined in works by Fahman (2002) and Hamidi (2004). During his ten-year presidency, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) implemented policies that promoted socio-political stability in Indonesia. Numerous academicians and scientists have researched this topic (Aspinall et al., 2015; Fealy, 2013; Kim et al., 2006; Liddle, 2005b). Joko Widodo, also known as Jokowi, is widely regarded as the emerging beacon of democracy in Indonesia, according to Beech (2014b), McRae (2013), Miranda (2019), Supriyadi (2018),

and Warburton (2016a). Nevertheless, the deterioration of Indonesia's democracy index was harshly criticised by external analysts following his two terms of administration (Fealy, 2020; Power, 2018).

The literature discussed above provides a biographical account of the president's leadership and traits and an analysis of the social and political circumstances throughout his tenure. The existing literature on the political leadership of all past Indonesian Presidents remains limited, with few studies particularly comparing the political leadership of Presidents Yudhoyono and Jokowi. This study addresses the need for comparative studies on political leadership between Yudhoyono and Jokowi. Adopting the leadership capital approach adds strength and significance to studying political leadership in Indonesia.

## Methods

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, specifically chosen to delve deeply into the phenomenon of political leadership during the administrations of President Yudhoyono and Jokowi. The focus is on examining the 'skills' factor, as defined in the leadership capital approach, to gain a comprehensive understanding and explanation. Qualitative research, as described by Silver and Upenieks (2019), enables a more thorough analysis of events and instances by examining interactions, narratives, and personal experiences.

Moreover, qualitative research encompasses various methodologies, such as in-depth interviews, document analysis, case studies, and focus groups. Ragin and Howard (1992) and Babbie (2011) assert that case study research in the social sciences is centred around examining one or more social phenomena. A semi-structured interview has been applied to this research. Ragin and Howard (1992) also contended that the research focuses on a specific period rather than a specific population

or community. Furthermore, in the context of case study research, it is crucial to establish the investigation area. Hence, the research focuses on the political leadership of Presidents Yudhoyono and Jokowi, explicitly emphasising the role of 'skills' within the leadership capital framework. This framework encompasses four crucial aspects: political vision, communication performance, and above-average longevity or length of service. Another president has emerged victorious in the election. This time frame encompasses the ten-year tenure of Yudhoyono's presidency from 2004 to 2014, the initial four years of Jokowi's presidency from 2014 to 2019, and the subsequent term from 2020 to 2023.

## Results

### **Yudhoyono and Jokowi's Political Vision and Communication Skills**

In this inquiry, the leadership capital of Yudhoyono and Jokowi in Indonesia was examined using the 'skills' aspect of leadership capital described by Bennister et al. (2014). The aspect of 'skill' or proficiency comprises four highlighted points. The political leadership qualities of Yudhoyono and Jokowi seem to differ. Firstly, a political vision is established, encompassing a written statement of goals and objectives demonstrating a strong commitment to progress and enhancing the nation's growth following the constitution and Pancasila (Alfian, 2023). Despite their comprehensive visions and missions, Jokowi, during his initial tenure, employed the phrase "Nawacita" as a catchy and easily memorable jargon. This term encompassed nine key national priority agendas. In contrast, Yudhoyono's two terms of leadership lacked a vocabulary or vision-mission phrase with the same level of strength as "Nawacita." The vision articulated by Yudhoyono, aiming for an affluent, democratic, and just Indonesia, lacked the strength and clarity of "Nawacita," making it more challenging for the public to retain and

articulate. Asrinaldi and Noor have argued that President Yudhoyono's national goals are more comprehensive than those of President Jokowi in terms of substance. Yudhoyono's exceptional proficiency in comprehending and constructing the nation is superb. Indonesia's potential could be maximised further if Jokowi expands his focus beyond infrastructure development. Nevertheless, due to Jokowi's lack of a clear and focused vision, Indonesia has not witnessed substantial advancements (Asrinaldi, 2023; Noor, 2023).

The communication efficacy between Yudhoyono and Jokowi is targeted towards distinct groups of the audience or society. Yudhoyono has a selection of professional and well-organised sentences or words. The coherent and well-organised communication between President Yudhoyono and his cabinet ministers (Mallarangeng, 2023) facilitates the comprehension of the transmitted message by individuals from different societal strata, particularly those with moderate to high levels of education and comprehension. Conversely, Jokowi employs a more casual, non-conventional, and less organised language. The presentation by the president and his ministers to the public was marked by significant disharmony, leading to controversy over issues such as mining and cooking oil exports. It suggests that Jokowi may lack a comprehensive understanding of the core aspects of the subject he is communicating. Jokowi's communication style primarily targets audiences with a lesser level of comprehension, as indicated by studies conducted in Armenia (2015), Rimadi (2015), Sulistiyan and Mukaromah (2018), and Tinov and Wicaksono (2016).

### **Longevity and Re-Electability in Elections**

Longevity, as defined in this study, refers to the duration of leadership and the successful completion of the presidential term by Yudhoyono and Jokowi. It is a crucial factor in evaluating their leadership

abilities. President Yudhoyono was the first Indonesian president to transition out of his presidency gracefully without any significant difficulties. The achievements, namely in maintaining and promoting democratic values in Indonesia, have received substantial acknowledgement. Jokowi concluded his second/final leadership term on October 20, 2024. Nevertheless, there has been a growing chorus of those advocating for the impeachment of President Jokowi. In addition, it is essential to mention that during Jokowi's tenure, he stepped down from his position on three occasions in order to pursue more prominent or strategically important roles at Asmindo, as the Mayor of Solo, and as the Governor of DKI Jakarta.

Lastly, Jokowi possesses the ability to enhance or bolster the election outcomes or achieve a substantial triumph for their party in the election. The initial election margin of the party leader pertains to the concept of the coattail effect. The coattail effect refers to the phenomenon where the popularity and influence of a presidential candidate lead to an increase in voter turnout during an election (Dewa et al., 2020; Noor, 2023). Both presidents made significant contributions to the success of their respective political parties. Yudhoyono achieved the feat of securing 55 seats for the Democratic Party in Parliament at the 2004 Election. His formidable personality enabled the Democratic Party to secure the highest number of members in Parliament, amounting to 148 MPs, during the 2009 Election. Similarly, President Jokowi successfully secured the support of the PDIP, enabling the party to garner the highest number of votes in both the 2014 and 2019 elections. However, it is worth noting that in the 2019 election, the PDIP's vote share was not as substantial as the Democratic Party's increase in the second election in 2009, during President Yudhoyono's tenure. The PDIP's parliamentary representation climbed by a

mere 3%, from 109 seats in the 2014 Election to 128 seats in the 2019 Election.

## Discussion

The findings above demonstrate that within the leadership capital framework, which encompasses four parts of the 'skills' factor, there are significant observations to be made regarding each discovery. During the initial stages of President Yudhoyono's tenure, the primary emphasis was on establishing an Indonesia that was secure, tranquil, democratic, and affluent. The vision and mission of President Yudhoyono's second term mainly remained unchanged as they continued to uphold the previously advocated beliefs and values. However, President Jokowi demonstrates variations in his vision and objectives from one term to the next. During each term, modifications are made to multiple facets of his agenda. In the second term, the emphasis shifted away from democracy/democratisation, territorial sovereignty, and marine nations. Furthermore, other missions can be observed in several domains, including endeavours to attain a sustainable environment, fortify an incorruptible legal framework, and enhance collaboration with local authorities.

The divergent aspects of communication efficacy between Yudhoyono and Jokowi do not imply that the intended recipients from the upper middle class are superior to those from the lower middle class. Nevertheless, the optimal level of a leader's communication proficiency can effectively transmit messages to every group without exclusions. Thus, the president's intended message regarding policies and initiatives that exemplify his political vision can be comprehended and grasped by the public with great clarity. It is worth noting that President Jokowi frequently delegates the task of addressing public concerns to his ministers, significantly impacting his communication effectiveness. In addition, Noor (2023) argued that Jokowi's recurrent lack of engagement

in international forums was perceived as a deficiency in effectively engaging with the global audience. The presence of influencers and buzzers within Jokowi's administration is perceived as an effort to conceal his deficiencies in communication (Darmastuti, 2023).

The longevity aspect, defined as the leadership experience and the ability to serve the full presidential term, objectively indicates that Jokowi remained the president of the Republic of Indonesia until October 20, 2024. However, this research does not claim his success in the legitimate leadership succession process. The significance lies in President Yudhoyono's achievement of being the first president to serve two consecutive terms and his successful transition of power to President Jokowi through a legitimate process of leadership succession. President Jokowi, in turn, became the second president to be elected directly by the Indonesian people.

Meanwhile, President Jokowi, in his last year of administration, faced significant widespread opposition to the dynastic political practices he forcefully adopted by amending the constitution, particularly the clauses about presidential and vice-presidential nominations. According to judgment number 90 of 2023 by the Constitutional Court, elected regional heads can now contest for President and Vice President positions, even under 40. This choice sparked intense controversy since it resulted in President Jokowi's son, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, being selected as the vice-presidential candidate for President Prabowo Subianto's 2024 election campaign. The constitutional defect in this ruling was demonstrated by the dishonourable removal of Chief Justice Anwar Usman from his position, rendering him ineligible to preside over constitutional cases about election disputes brought before the Constitutional Court. It was mandated by the decision rendered by the Honorary Council of the Constitutional Court, as stated in MKMK (*Mahkamah Kehormatan Mahkamah Konstitusi*)

Decision Number 02/MKMK/L/11/2023. Anwar Usman is Gibran Rakabuming Raka's uncle or President Jokowi's brother-in-law. Like opening Pandora's box, this action ignited a contentious debate. There is a growing chorus of voices from different groups pushing for the impeachment of President Jokowi.

President Yudhoyono has accumulated 51 years of leadership capital and expertise from 1973 until 2024, from graduating as an Indonesian Service Academy (AKABRI) cadet in 1973 to seeking early retirement from the service in 2000. Subsequently, Yudhoyono once served as the spokesman for the ABRI faction and chairman of the ABRI MPR faction in the 1998 MPR Special Session. In the year 2000, he embarked on a political trajectory, assuming several ministerial positions within the administrations of President Abdurrahman Wahid, also known as Gus Dur, and President Megawati Soekarno Putri. Subsequently, Yudhoyono accepted the position of president for a decade, from 2004 to 2014. In addition, he ascended to a prominent position within the Democratic Party in 2013, assuming the role of general chairman. In 2024, Yudhoyono accepted the position of chairman of the Upper House of the Democratic Party. Yudhoyono's extensive selection procedure notwithstanding, it is undeniable that he became the first Indonesian president to relinquish his presidency gracefully, achieving a smooth transition. Much acclaim has been showered upon the achievements, especially for their contributions to preserving and advancing democratic values in Indonesia.

President Yudhoyono's foreign language skills were enhanced by schooling and training in other nations, including the United States, Belgium, and Germany. Yudhoyono demonstrated the ability to converse directly with international leaders without relying on a translator, which enhanced his reputation as an intelligent leader (Farisa, 2022). In addition, Indonesia had an aggressive and

remarkable foreign policy during its reign. It is evident in Yudhoyono's worldwide political campaign, which aims to enhance Indonesia's favourable reputation globally. The campaign is centred around the phrase, "One enemy is too many, and a thousand friends are too few." Yudhoyono aimed to enhance Indonesia's worldwide influence by emphasising the notion of 'soft power' (Effendy, 2017).

During his tenure as Coordinating Minister for Political, Social, and Security Affairs (Menko Polhukam) in Abdurrahman Wahid's administration, Yudhoyono was entrusted with the responsibility of implementing urgent measures to address crises, maintain law and order, and ensure security. These actions were taken in response to the prevailing emergency circumstances faced by the nation at that time (Farisa, 2022). During that period, Yudhoyono's positions and tasks benefited from his crisis management and mitigation proficiency. In 2004, under Yudhoyono's initial leadership of Indonesia, an earthquake and tsunami occurred in Aceh. Yudhoyono, aided by domestic resources and foreign assistance, implemented measures in disaster management, as well as the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Aceh. The 2004 Aceh earthquake and tsunami were a significant impetus to enhance disaster management endeavours in Indonesia. In this situation, the government, led by President Yudhoyono and the People's Representative Council (DPR), took the proactive step of enacting Law Number 24 of 2007. This legislation serves as the official framework for implementing disaster management in Indonesia. President Yudhoyono created the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) by issuing Presidential Regulation Number 8 of 2008 (BNPB, 2014; Chaniago, 2022).

President Yudhoyono designated environmental issues and disaster management as the ninth priority among the eleven National Priority Government Programs from 2010 to 2014. President Yudhoyono successfully

obtained support from the APBN budget, which was consistently growing, with the assistance of the DPR (BNPB, 2014). In March 2014, President Yudhoyono took charge of the initiatives to manage and contain forest and land fires in Riau as his office tenure was ending. Within this framework, the BNPB, in collaboration with the TNI/Polri and relevant Ministries, executed the task of extinguishing as directed within three weeks (Chaniago, 2022).

Jokowi assumed leadership when establishing the Solo Small Industry Development Cooperative in 1990. He subsequently extended his involvement by leading the Indonesian Furniture and Crafts Industry Association (Asmindo) for Solo from 2002 to 2005. He commenced his political tenure as the Mayor of Solo from 2005 until 2012. Subsequently, he assumed the position of Governor of DKI Jakarta from 2012 to 2014, a tenure lasting barely two years, as he was elected president for his first term from 2014 to 2024 while concurrently serving as Governor. Jokowi has held a leadership position for 34 years. Although this is a considerable duration, it is still shorter than President Yudhoyono's ongoing tenure of 51 years, which will continue until 2024. It is essential to highlight that during Jokowi's tenure, he voluntarily stepped down from his position on three occasions to pursue more influential or advantageous roles at Asmindo, as the Mayor of Solo, and as the Governor of DKI Jakarta.

Moreover, electorally, in this context, refers to being re-elected in subsequent elections, often known as the 'coattail effect.' Both presidents made significant contributions to the political party's success. Yudhoyono, with the Democratic Party, secured 55 seats in Parliament during the 2004 Election. His formidable personality enabled the Democratic Party to ensure the highest number of members in Parliament, amounting to 148 MPs, during the 2009 Election. Similarly, President Jokowi successfully secured the support of the PDIP,

enabling the party to achieve the highest number of votes in both the 2014 and 2019 elections. However, it is worth noting that in the 2019 election, the PDIP's vote share was not as substantial as the Democratic Party's increase during the second election in 2009, when President Yudhoyono held office. The PDIP party's parliamentary representation climbed by a mere 3%, from 109 seats in the 2014 Election to 128 seats in the 2019 Election.

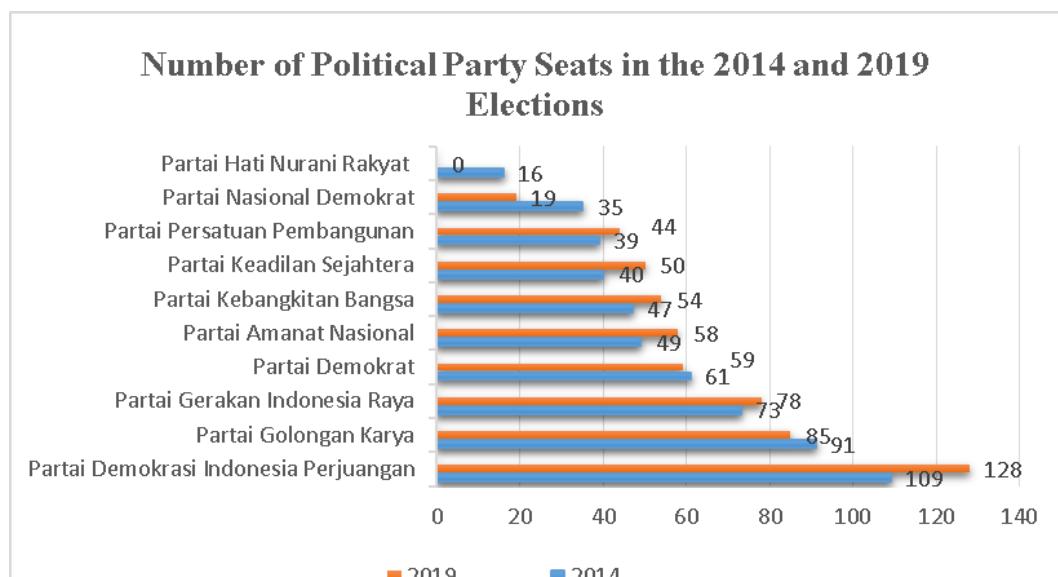
The statistics below indicate that the Democratic Party, affiliated with President Yudhoyono, holds the fourth position regarding the highest number of votes among all parties. The Democratic Party was established on September 9, 2001, making it less than three years old. Nevertheless, owing to Yudhoyono's widespread appeal, the Democratic Party successfully secured 8,458,825 votes (resulting in 55 seats in the DPR). Yudhoyono's achievements further escalated as he ran for re-election in the 2009 presidential election. Yunus (2018) performed research that found that individuals opted for the Democratic Party due to its association with Yudhoyono, who served as president then and enjoyed a strong level of electability and public approval. Chart

1 shows the nine political parties that secured the most seats in Parliament during the 2004 and 2009 elections.

The data above provides additional evidence of the growing impact of President Yudhoyono's 'coattail effect' on the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party's vote share surged substantially to 13 per cent. The number of votes surged from 8,437,868 in the 2004 Election to 21,655,295 in the 2009 Election. In addition, the Democratic Party secured significantly more seats, surging from 55 to 148. According to Purnama (2023), this resulted from the strong association between the Democratic Party and Yudhoyono, who is both the party's founder and a direct connection. In 2014, there was a similar occurrence involving the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP). The party witnessed a phenomenon known as the 'tailor effect' due to the influence of President Jokowi. It was evident in the significant increase in the party's vote share, represented by the 'Banteng' (bull) logo, during Jokowi's presidential campaign.

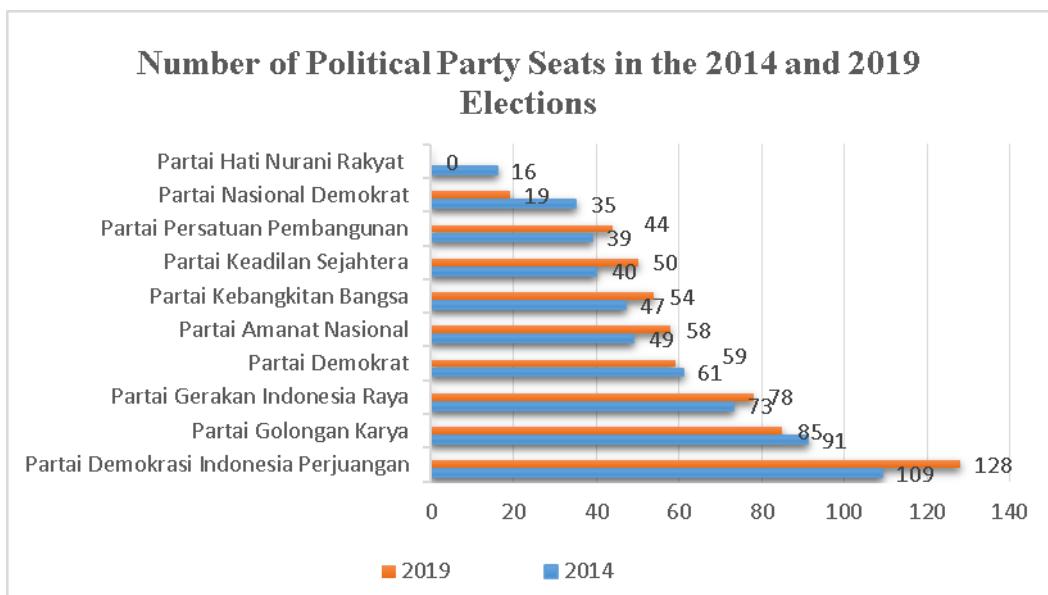
The KPU declared Joko Widodo and Jusuf Kalla as the victors with the highest number of votes in the 2014 Presidential Election.

**Chart. 1**  
**Political Parties and Number of Parliamentary Seats in 2004 and 2009**



Source: Obtained and processed by the author from [kpu.go.id](http://kpu.go.id).

**Chart. 2**  
**Political Parties in Parliament in 2014 and 2019**



Source: Obtained and processed by the author from [kpu.go.id](http://kpu.go.id).

The pair secured a total of 70,997,850 votes, which accounted for 53.15 per cent of the total votes. The Prabowo Subianto-Hatta Rajasa pair received 62,576,444 votes, making up 46.85 per cent of the votes. (KPU, 2015). In the 2019 presidential election, Jokowi emerged victorious again, securing 85,607,362 votes, accounting for 55.50 per cent of the total. On the other hand, the Prabowo-Sandiaga pair received 68,650,239 votes, representing 44.50 per cent of the total. Jokowi's consecutive re-elections were accompanied by the PDIP's triumph, securing the most votes and seats in the DPR RI during the 2014 and 2019 elections, as shown in Chart 2.

Despite the PDIP's increase in votes not matching the Democratic Party's performance in the 2009 elections, Jokowi's appeal was crucial in boosting the PDIP's vote share. The number of votes in the 2019 Election rose by 3,380,943 compared to the 2014 Election, reaching 27,053,961. Furthermore, there was a rise in the parliamentary seats, with the PDIP's representation in the DPR RI increasing by 3%, from 109 seats to 128 seats.

## Conclusion

The political leadership exhibited by Presidents Yudhoyono and Jokowi in Indonesia holds significant value as a research domain for scholars interested in political leadership. Yudhoyono and Jokowi were elected through a direct electoral procedure in Indonesia initiated in 2004. President Yudhoyono served as president for two consecutive terms, followed by Jokowi, who also served for two consecutive terms until October 20, 2024.

In this study, the political leadership of Yudhoyono and Jokowi is analysed via the lens of the "skills" element within the framework of the leadership capital approach. The 'skills' aspect includes political/policy vision, effective communication, a track record of leadership with notable accomplishments or abilities beyond those of former presidents, and successful election outcomes or re-election. Yudhoyono is regarded as a president with a more distinct and focused leadership vision than Jokowi. Yudhoyono had a consistent political and policy vision throughout his two periods of leadership, but Jokowi had a different perspective that evolved between his

first and second tenures.

The communication performance of the two presidents does not necessarily indicate that Yudhoyono's performance is superior simply because his messages appeal more to the upper middle class, while Jokowi's communication is more comprehensible to the lower middle class. The meticulous arrangement and systematic construction of phrases and the formal language employed by Yudhoyono indicate his high intellectual capacity. Conversely, while less organised, Jokowi's casual and simpler language could be more palatable to many individuals.

The continuity of a leader's tenure, particularly when re-elected for a second consecutive term as president, can indicate the public's appreciation for the leadership qualities and services provided by that leader. Due to their longevity, both presidents can be re-elected for a second term. Yudhoyono was the inaugural president to be democratically elected by the populace for two consecutive terms, from 2004 until 2014. President Yudhoyono effectively served two terms in office and voluntarily resigned his position following the constitution, ensuring a seamless transition of power. President Jokowi's political leadership will conclude on October 20, 2024.

Finally, there is the matter of re-election in the general election. The elucidation of this element can also be expounded upon by what is referred to as the coattail effect. Yudhoyono decisively outperformed Jokowi in winning the election and securing a substantial number of votes for the Democratic Party in the 2009 Election. The party, which had the fourth highest number of seats in the 2004 Election, became the party with the highest number of seats in the 2009 Election. The Democratic Party's seat acquisition in the DPR RI increased by 13 per cent in the 2009 elections, compared to their acquisition of legislative seats in the 2004 election. Undoubtedly, Yudhoyono's character significantly influenced the securing of victory

for the Democratic Party in the 2009 elections.

Similarly, PDIP benefited from President Jokowi's persona, which enabled them to secure victory in both the 2014 and 2019 Elections. Nevertheless, despite renominating Jokowi in the 2019 Election, the PDIP still needed to guarantee a substantial number of seats in the DPR. There was hardly a 3 per cent increment in the seats received by the PDIP compared to the seats acquired in the 2014 elections.

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