

Military in Leadership Succession

Muhtar Haboddin

Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik Universitas Brawijaya

Author's email : muhtar_haboddin@ub.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This article aims to explain the presence of the military in the succession of national leadership. The military's presence in the succession of leadership shows that power is a contested item between civilian leaders and military leaders. Through direct elections, both the military and civilians have the opportunity to become national leaders. However, only one will be the winner. This is aimed at Prabowo's victory in leadership succession. The 2024 leadership succession equals the superiority of the military over civilian politicians. Prabowo's victory sparked the return of military political power. In fact, this victory further emphasizes the military's toughness in competing peacefully. This is because democracy requires all succession of national leadership to be carried out periodically, regularly, and constitutionally. Thus, the elected leader is the people's choice. This is because the people are the owners of sovereignty as well as the source of political legitimacy.

Keywords: military, power, and leadership succession

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan kehadiran militer dalam suksesi kepemimpinan nasional. Kehadiran militer dalam suksesi kepemimpinan menunjukkan bahwa kekuasaan adalah barang yang diperebutkan antara pemimpin sipil dan pemimpin militer. Melalui pemilihan langsung, baik militer maupun warga sipil memiliki kesempatan untuk menjadi pemimpin nasional. Namun, hanya satu yang akan menjadi pemenang. Hal ini ditujukan untuk kemenangan Prabowo dalam suksesi kepemimpinan. Suksesi kepemimpinan tahun 2024 sama dengan keunggulan militer atas politisi sipil. Kemenangan Prabowo memicu kembalinya kekuatan politik militer. Bahkan, kemenangan ini semakin menekankan ketangguhan militer dalam bersaing secara damai. Hal ini karena demokrasi mengharuskan semua suksesi kepemimpinan nasional dilakukan secara berkala, teratur, dan konstitusional. Dengan demikian, pemimpin terpilih adalah pilihan rakyat. Hal ini dikarenakan rakyat adalah pemilik kedaulatan sekaligus sumber legitimasi politik.

Kata kunci: suksesi militer, kekuasaan, dan kepemimpinan

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INTRODUCTION

The succession of national leadership or the 2024 presidential election is noteworthy because of two fundamental considerations. *First*, in the last decade the military has

returned to power at the top of the national leadership. Prabowo's election is proof of the military's superiority over civilian politicians in the presidential election. This phenomenon is important in the political map in Indonesia that the presidency can be won by the military through competition in direct elections (Yeon, 2014). The military's ability to gain power proves that the military is not a tool of power, but an actor of power (Crouch, 2002). In other words, the military is a political subject that is actively involved in the struggle for national power.

Second, direct presidential elections provide equal space and opportunity for political actors from various backgrounds to win political positions. The principle of equality and equality in gaining power reminds us of the expression of a well-known political scientist, Dahl (2001) who said that humans love power more and more. How to love power through competition in the electoral arena. Remembering, the military is part of the old elite in the political power structure in Indonesia (Aspinall, 1999). In fact, the military has been in power for so long (Crouch, 2000) that it has taken control of democratic institutions (Przeworski, 1993).

The two explanations above are enough to understand the presence of Prabowo on the political stage. Prabowo's victory in the presidential election emphasizes the superiority of the military over civilian politicians. The implication is that in the next five years political responsibility and control of power will be in the hands of the military (Desch, 2002). That means, the military will play a central role, if not dominate power (Vatikiotis, 1999). Furthermore, Singh (2002) said the role of the military in politics and government will play more. Military involvement in almost all social and political life as well as aspects of people's lives (Sodikin, 2011). If this is the explanation, then civilian leaders will be weakened and may be marginalized in power.

This perspective can actually be traced in a number of academic works that discuss civilian and military relations in the struggle for power. For example, Crouch (2002) explained that after the collapse of Suharto, the military would dominate the government. Considering that the military has long dominated Indonesian politics (Sukma, 2001) Meanwhile, Singh (2002) and Habib (2002) said that there was a shift in civilian and military relations in power governance.

The shift is manifested by the increasing military control over civilian politicians. This is characterized by the ability of military leaders (Desch, 2002) to manage the government, rather than civilian leaders. Look, Suharto was able to maintain power for three decades. Suharto's political skills are evident in his ability to suppress civil society and his political opponents through a number of authoritarian rules (Walsh, 2000). Meanwhile, Tobing (2013) said that Suharto's leadership had been recognized and proven as a political actor who had sophistication in power management. Furthermore, a scientist from Australia, Elson (2000) called Suharto a veteran politician and leader of the nation.

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

In the literature of political science, military studies have been carried out by many parties. For example, Vatikiotis (1999) tried to explain at length the involvement of the military in supporting the Suharto government. In addition to being a supporter of power, the military also has the desire to come to power after Suharto's leadership. The military's hopes of becoming president turned out to be a complete failure with Habibie's ascension as the third president. The election of Habibie as a national leader is a new chapter in the building of power relations between civilians and the military in Indonesia.

As written by military observers, Crouch (2002) and Singh (2002) explain the shift in civil-military relations in Indonesia. Crouch stressed that the military is still needed in government because political parties have not provided a strong foundation for civilian rule. Furthermore, the military is needed in government to prevent national conflict and disintegration. This argument can only be accepted when a nation is in political transition. When the nation-state has gone through a political transition, the military must 'return to the barracks' (Sukma, 2001), the military must become a professional group, become a servant of the nation, neutral in politics (Siregar, 2004), and the military as *the tool of the state* (Cipto, 2000).

All of the above arguments have not touched on the role of the military in the succession of national leadership. The military's footprint in politics and government is ingrained. Therefore, breaking the military in the circle of power becomes something that is difficult to separate from the national political system (Rudini, 1999). Siregar (2004) said that Gusdur succeeded in stopping the military in power. However, it should be noted

that the military's suspension of power was temporary. The year 2004 was a new chapter of military involvement in power. This was marked by the election of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) as the national leader in the direct election. SBY's election in the 2004-2014 and Prabowo 2024 elections is proof of military superiority over civilians in Indonesia (Cipto, 2000).

RESEARCH METHODS

This paper uses a description method to describe the role of the military in the succession of national leadership in the 2024 elections. According to Koentjaraningrat (1986), the description method is a way of working to describe the object that is the object of research. The object of the research is the military and leadership succession. Meanwhile, Faisal (1995) said that the description method is just to describe the problem written in this case the military in the succession of leadership. The supporting data needed during writing are journals and books. In other words, this writing uses a literature review.

In the literature review, Strauss and Corbin (2003) cited the opinion that what is indispensable is the possession of insight, the ability to give meaning to data, the ability to understand, and the ability to describe the role of the military in the succession of national leadership. In line with that, Nazir (2008) added that the purpose of the description method is to describe or describe systematically and accurately the data and relationships between the phenomena being investigated

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Military in Power

The presence of the military in power politics is not a phenomenon in developing countries, but it is also found in developed countries. Military leadership in power has a long history. A critical note by Fatah (1998) states that military involvement in power in the Third World is very common and a common symptom. There are also two ways for the military to rule. *First*, through a bloody coup. In Asian and Latin American countries have a track record of how the military came to power through bloody coups (Desch, 2002). As Roskin, et al. (2016) wrote:

Most coups involve political violence, such as the 1964 coup in Brazil and the 2013 Egyptian coup. Usually, the army forces the president resign or ask for exile, after which the military takes role as president. When the military confirmed the presence of the opposition, then legally it can kill. 30,000 Argentines 'disappeared' due to military leadership. As many as 3,000 lives were lost in Chile through a coup in 1973. In Latin America, terror and military coups shedding so much blood.

The above data shows that the military took over power and took the lives of both the public and the opposition. In the other section, Roskin, et al. (2016) write:

In some countries there are still coups. In Egypt a coup has occurred since 1999, 1952, 2011, and 2013. Thailand, 12 successful coups and 19 failures. The most recent coup in Thailand, occurred in 2014. Furthermore, in Pakistan has had four coups.

Roskin's analysis provides information that the military's presence in power prioritizes violence. The coup method carried out is an undemocratic act in gaining power. The takeover of power through the kude route shows the poor relationship between civilian politicians and the military. In Desch's (2002) term, if there is a coup, then civil-military relations are bad. For example, efforts to reduce the military's share of political power (Fatah, 1998), corrupt civilian political leaders (Aquino, 2002), mutual conflicts, lack of expertise in defense (Sukma, 2001), and political chaos (Roskin, 2016) in the country that endanger the existence of the state.

Second, power is obtained through general elections. As Aquino (2002) said, the succession of power must be carried out in a peaceful and orderly manner. To ensure this, the transfer of power must be through elections involving all adults. In the election of political leaders, both civilian and military politicians can face each other and fight for presidential power. Competition between the military and civilian politicians is a common problem in democracy. Whoever wins the election means that they have a political mandate, trust, and political legitimacy from the community (Lay, 1999).

This perspective gives the military the ability to engage in power through democratic mechanisms. Therefore, the guarantee for all citizens to access open power. As Fatah (1998) wrote, one of the important points of democracy is the guarantee of the right of citizens to vote and be elected in elections that are periodic, free and effectively provide opportunities for the change of the ruling elite. In other words, the military and civilian

politicians have the same right to access political power at all levels of government. Although they both have opportunities, the people determine the president's election. It is the people who rule in the succession of national leadership (Riff, 2001)

Military and Power in Indonesia

Political freedom, characterized by the guarantee of competition for power, requires the military and civilians to fight, both in coalitions and face-to-face with each other. In Indonesian politics, the military has a long history of managing power. During the New Order's rule, the military became an important part and was involved in the management of the government. More or less the same thing has also been practiced by Marcos in the Philippines. Note, Aquino (2002) mentions how Marcos indulged the military in power and then controlled the economy.

Although there are similarities between the two countries. However, there is a difference. For example, in politics in Indonesia, the military's involvement in politics is still strong, when compared to the Philippines. We can find this explanation from the military's ability to gain power through direct elections. In the record of Indonesian political history, there are three presidents who came from the military from 1966 to 2024. For more details, see table 1.

Table 1. President of Indonesia from the Military

It	Name	Duration of reign
1	Suharto	1966-1998
2	Susil B. Yudiono	2004-2014
3	Provo Subianto	2024-2029

The table above provides two important explanations for looking at military involvement in power. *First*, Suharto's election as a national leader was preceded by a crisis. That means, the military emerged as a national leader because of political chaos and the inability of civilian politicians to overcome ideological conflicts and very sharp divisions of political parties. Vermonten (2001) wrote:

There is a military justification for its involvement in power. Experience parliamentary democracy period in 1950 which was marked by The sharp political rivalry instilled in the military confidence that Civilian politicians and political parties are incompetent in managing the country.

Vermonten's explanation is slightly different from the analysis of LIPI researcher, Bhakti (1999) who said that:

Soekarno's accountability was rejected by the MPRS. Through his speech, Soekarno said that he was not the only person responsible for economic and political crises. Because there are also government elites who must also be responsible, including military generals. After the reign Soekarno was overthrown, so the MPRS appointed Suharto as his replacement president.

At its core, it is a political and economic crisis that requires the military to engage in power. This crisis is also the justification for the military to rule for a very long time with its network scattered from the central to the regions throughout Indonesia (Robinson, 1999). Meanwhile, Crouch's analysis, (2002) said that the military became one of the important pillars in Suharto's power or rather became a tool of Soeharto's power. Because it became a pillar and instrument of power, when Suharto was overthrown, the military was automatically forced to leave the arena of power. The call for the military to 'return to the barracks' and not to spread politics everywhere. The military is expected to focus its attention on defense and uphold a non-partisan attitude in the political process (Sukma, 2001).

This dispatch was successfully implemented. Military power was completely amputated with the loss of seats in parliament. The political transition period changed the political map in Indonesia. The military returned to the barracks and was forced to become a professional institution. Civilian politicians' control of the military is going well (Vermonten, 2001). The military is no longer in power and is not involved in day-to-day politics (Vatikiotis, 1999). Even if you want to be involved in politics, not institutionally, but personally. Therefore, to get political office, they must be democratically elected by involving community participation.

Second, if you pay attention to the duration of the military *vacuum* in power, it is not too long, which is only 5 years. When the presidential election was held directly in 2004. The military returned to power due to the success of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) in winning the presidential election. As written, a political observer from CSIS, Vermonten (2001) one of the prerequisites for democratic government is the existence of

a regular succession of leadership and supported by an accepted electoral system and a government that has a strong enough legitimacy of the electorate.

SBY's victory in the direct presidential election can be interpreted in two ways. *First*, the establishment of a coalition between civilian and military leaders. SBY represents the military and Kalla represents civilian leaders. The military-civilian coalition in the presidential election has ushered in SBY-Kalla as national leader. As national leaders, all components expect radical change (Hargens, 2008). That means, the figure of SBY-Kalla gets political support and legitimacy from the community to rule. Support and legitimacy are needed for the government to survive (Przeworski, 1993).

Second, SBY's victory shows that the Indonesian people want leaders from the military rather than civilian politicians. The argument is that from 1998 to 2004 the civilian government changed three times. Leadership of Habibie (1998-1999), Gusdur (1999-2001) and Megawati (2001-2004). The succession of presidential leaders hints at an abnormality in the succession of leadership. In addition, this phenomenon proves the failure of civil politicians in managing the government. Przeworski, (1993) called it the loss of political legitimacy to rule. On that basis, in the direct presidential election, the people chose SBY-Kalla as president and vice president. In Ambardi's analysis (2009), it is stated that SBY-Kalla is a combination of political party leaders who represent the ideological spectrum, namely nationalist-Islamist.

SBY's presence as a national leader marks a new chapter in managing power. SBY is a president who is able to seize and maintain power for two terms as stipulated in the 1945 Constitution. Article 7 states that *the president and vice president hold their offices for a period of five years, after which they can be re-elected to the same office, for only one term*. This article was successfully practiced by SBY as a national leader. In addition, SBY was the first leader to be able to hold office for two terms after Suharto's resignation.

Third, after SBY came to power, the military was not far from the political arena. The figure of Prabowo is always present in the succession of national leadership. Prabowo's involvement in every succession of national leadership can be seen in table 2.

Table 2. Prabowo in the Succession of National Leadership

Election	Position	Information
2009	Vice President	Lose
2014	President	Lose
2019	President	Lose
2024	President	Win

Prabowo's political footprint in leadership succession is very long. Her political career was gradual, namely as a vice president who accompanied Megawati. However, since 2014 his position has risen as president against Jokowi-Kalla. In the election, Prabowo was defeated again. In fact, Prabowo was unable to defeat Jokowi in the election. Public sentiment is always in favor of Jokowi (Ambardi, 2009). More sympathizers and pro-democracy activists are closer to Jokowi's side.

Although Prabowo has never won a power struggle against Jokowi. However, his enthusiasm and patience to always fight for presidential power never went out. The year 2024 is proof of Prabowo's ability to win the leadership succession. By pairing with Gibran, Prabowo won the presidential election directly. Apart from the rejection of the election results and a number of accompanying fraud allegations. As a result, Prabowo-Gibran was appointed and became the president of Indonesia.

The election of Prabowo as a national leader further confirms that the military elite is still in power (Aspinall, 1999; Vatikiotis, 1999), the military will control power (Fatah, 1998), and Prabowo leads a military regime that has key positions in the government (Crouch, 2002). This explanation has begun to appear with the presence of the military in the Advanced Indonesia Cabinet (KIM). For example, Agus Yudhoyono, Sjafrie Sjamsoedin, M Iftitah Sulaiman, AM Putranto, and M Herindra. Apart from the military, Probowo also embraced the National Police into KIM, namely Budi Gunawan, Tito Karnavian, and Agus Andrianto.

The presence of the military and the National Police in Prabowo's cabinet promotes the same rights and positions in the government. Probowo is trying to accommodate civilian, military, and police leaders to sit together in managing the government in the next five years. The ability to accommodate all of the above forces to borrow the term Desch (2002) means that Prabowo is building a plural political system.

CONCLUSION

Indonesian politics has not changed much, if it is photographed from the presence of the military in the succession of national leadership. The military is an institution that has succeeded in producing a cadre of national leaders. Military cadres are not only in power when the country is in chaos and prolonged political crises, but also able to rule when the country is in a state of peace. Through direct elections, SBY and Prabowo were able to show their superiority by winning the most votes. This victory and advantage is a form of weakness of civil politicians (Desch, 2002).

If this is the explanation, then the national leadership in the future may be held by the military. If the military is in power, it will try to consolidate its power and instill confidence in its legitimacy (Przeworski, 1993). This explanation is reinforced by Crouch (2002) who said that the military is very well established in government institutions. Indonesia's political history is enough evidence for that. Therefore, Prabowo's victory in the succession of leadership means restoring military political power. It is said that this is because for the last ten years the military has not been in power and has been defeated by civilian politicians. Therefore, the 2024 national leadership succession will be a milestone in returning power to the military. Interestingly, power is obtained through constitutional mechanisms and procedures (Fatah, 1998).

Because power is obtained constitutionally, the political legitimacy of a leader is very strong. With this strong political support, it is hoped that elected leaders can work well through the use of resources and authority they have for the people. After all, it is the people who have put you in the presidency. Their support with the votes given, their courage to win, and the election of you as president (Aquino, 2002). Therefore, political leaders and the Advanced Indonesia Cabinet must serve the people. It is necessary for elected leaders to maintain the trust of the people. This is because the purpose of the government is to ensure the interests of all the people (Riff, 2001). *Hopefully!*

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