

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Coalition politics and governability in post-reform Indonesia: A comparative analysis of legislative-executive relations

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between coalition politics and governability through a comparative analysis of legislative-executive relationship dynamics in post-reform Indonesia (1999–2024). Adopting a mixed methods approach that integrates secondary statistical analysis, document analysis, and process tracing across six government periods, this study tests the proposition that coalition configuration directly determines governmental capacity. Findings demonstrate that coalition size does not correlate linearly with governability; the most determinant variable is the quality of legislative-executive coordination mechanisms, particularly hybrid mechanisms that combine institutionalized formal forums with informal coordination channels. This study also identifies a normative paradox whereby high procedural governability potentially sacrifices the quality of democratic deliberation when coalitions achieve excessive dominance. Theoretically, these findings extend the veto player theory framework and coalition governance by demonstrating that in Southeast Asian presidentialism, the institutionalization of coordination mechanisms not merely seat arithmetic constitutes the primary prerequisite for sustainable governability.

Keywords: Governability, Governance, Coalition Politics, Legislative-Executive Relations, Comparative Analysis, Deliberation.

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1 | INTRODUCTION

Questions concerning the capacity of democratic governments to govern effectively have become increasingly prominent in both academic and policy debates. The consolidation of democracy in many countries has not automatically been followed by improvements in governmental performance. Electoral competition may enhance political representation, yet democratic governments are still expected to maintain stability, formulate policies, resolve conflicts among competing interests, and deliver public services effectively. The gap between democratic legitimacy and governing capacity has generated growing attention toward the concept of governability, particularly as governments confront increasingly complex economic, social, and political challenges (Behrend & Whitehead, 2025).

The renewed interest in governability is closely associated with broader concerns about the performance of democratic institutions. In many political systems, governments face growing difficulties in managing polarized societies, fragmented political actors, and competing policy demands. (Jerbić, 2024) argues that contemporary democracies are experiencing a renewed crisis of governability, driven by declining political consensus and increasing complexity in decision-making processes. Similar concerns are reflected in the work of Behrend and who emphasize that governability constitutes an essential condition for linking democratic institutions with effective development outcomes. Meanwhile, (Meydani, 2025) highlights the role of political culture and societal conditions in shaping the capacity of governments to govern. These debates suggest that governability is not simply a matter of institutional design but also reflects how political authority is exercised and coordinated within democratic systems.

Among the many factors associated with governability, coalition politics occupies a particularly important position in countries characterized by fragmented party systems. In such settings, governments rarely emerge from a single party majority and instead depend on cooperation among multiple political parties. Coalition arrangements may expand political representation and facilitate broader consensus-building, but they can also complicate policymaking by introducing diverse interests and competing priorities into government. The challenge of governability becomes especially evident when coalition partners must negotiate policy choices while simultaneously pursuing their own organizational and electoral objectives (Bünthe & Thompson, 2018)

One of the most influential explanations of this challenge is offered by veto player theory. According to (Tsebelis, 2025), the capacity of governments to produce policy change depends on the number of actors whose approval is required in the decision-making process. As the number of veto players increases, reaching agreement becomes more difficult because each actor possesses the ability to delay, modify, or block policy initiatives (Hohendorf et al., 2021). While multiple veto players may contribute to stability by preventing abrupt policy changes, they can also reduce governmental flexibility and increase transaction costs. This perspective is particularly relevant in coalition governments, where coalition partners often function as institutional or partisan veto players. The key issue is not merely the existence of multiple actors, but the extent to which their preferences can be coordinated and managed.

Recent studies have increasingly shifted attention from coalition formation toward coalition governance. Earlier research was largely concerned with explaining why coalitions emerge and how coalition partners are selected (Mithani & O'Brien, 2021). More recent scholarship focuses on how coalitions operate after governments are formed. Coalition governance encompasses a range of formal and informal mechanisms used to coordinate policy agendas, distribute political resources, manage disagreements, and sustain cooperation among coalition members (Gatto et al., 2022; Zucco & Power, 2024). Differences in these mechanisms often explain why some coalitions remain stable and effective while others experience recurrent conflicts despite possessing substantial legislative support.

The discussion of coalition governance is closely related to the broader issue of legislative-executive relations (Marques, 2021). Governments may enjoy extensive parliamentary backing yet still encounter difficulties when coordination between executive and legislative actors deteriorates. Stable relations between these institutions facilitate policy implementation, reduce uncertainty, and enhance governmental effectiveness. By contrast, adversarial interactions frequently generate delays, institutional conflict, and legislative deadlock. Comparative studies of presidential systems suggest that governability depends not only on constitutional arrangements but also on the quality of political relationships developed between executives and legislatures (Sedelius & Linde, 2018).

Indonesia offers an especially relevant case through which these debates can be examined. Since the democratic transition of 1998, the country has combined a presidential system with a highly fragmented multiparty system (Sumada et al., 2024). Although democratic reforms strengthened electoral competition and political participation, they also created a political environment in which no single party could consistently dominate parliament. Presidents have therefore relied on coalition-building as a central strategy for securing legislative support and maintaining political stability (Perdana et al., 2024a)

Coalition politics has consequently become a defining characteristic of governance in post-Reformasi Indonesia (Sarjito, 2025). Successive administrations led by Abdurrahman Wahid, Megawati Soekarnoputri, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and Joko Widodo have all depended on varying coalition arrangements to govern. These governments differed considerably in coalition size, composition, patterns of executive-legislative interaction, and approaches to political coordination. Such variation provides a valuable opportunity to examine how different coalition configurations influence governability within a common institutional setting (Koebele, 2020).

What makes the Indonesian experience particularly intriguing is the apparent inconsistency between coalition size and governing performance (de Oliveira et al., 2021). Conventional expectations often assume that larger coalitions should produce greater governability because governments possess stronger parliamentary support. Yet Indonesia presents several examples that challenge this assumption. Broad coalitions have not always translated into effective governance, and governments with extensive legislative backing have sometimes struggled with internal divisions, policy coordination, and political conflict. Conversely, some administrations operating under more limited coalition arrangements have demonstrated relatively strong governing capacity (Klüver & Bäck, 2019). These contrasting outcomes raise important questions about the factors that actually shape governability in multiparty presidential systems.

The Indonesian case also offers broader theoretical significance. Much of the literature on coalition politics and governability has been developed through studies of European parliamentary systems and Latin American presidential democracies (Martínez-Gallardo et al., 2023). While these studies have generated important insights, Indonesia presents a different political environment characterized by persistent party fragmentation, repeated coalition reconfiguration, and democratic continuity over more than two decades (Miladiyah, 2026). Examining governability in this context creates opportunities to evaluate whether existing theoretical explanations adequately account for governance outcomes beyond the cases in which they were originally developed.

From these debates emerges a broader puzzle concerning the foundations of governability. If coalition size alone cannot fully explain variations in governmental performance, what factors become decisive? Is governability primarily shaped by the number of veto players within a coalition? Do coordination mechanisms matter more than legislative strength? How important are legislative-executive relations in determining whether governments can transform political support into effective governing capacity? These questions are important because they have direct implications for understanding the dynamics of governance in fragmented presidential democracies and for evaluating competing explanations of coalition effectiveness.

Existing studies have not yet provided a comprehensive explanation of how these factors interact across different Indonesian administrations (Pratama, 2020). Most research focuses on particular governments, specific political episodes, or coalition formation processes rather than examining governability comparatively across successive administrations (Müller et al., 2024). This study addresses that gap through a comparative analysis of six Indonesian governments between 1999 and 2024. Rather than concentrating exclusively on coalition size or parliamentary seat distribution, the study investigates how coalition configurations, veto players, coalition governance mechanisms, and legislative-executive relations interact in shaping governability. By doing so, it seeks to contribute to broader discussions concerning coalition politics and democratic governance in multiparty presidential systems.

2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of governability and coalition politics has produced a set of complementary analytical frameworks. Riker (1962) laid early foundations through minimum winning coalition theory, arguing that rational actors tend to form the smallest possible coalition to maximize benefit distribution (De Alban et al., 2019), a proposition subsequently challenged by Lomax et al., (2021), who demonstrated that coalitions in practice frequently exceed minimum thresholds due to stability considerations and political risk management. (Tsebelis, (2025) enriched this debate with the veto players framework, systematically demonstrating that heterogeneity of preferences among coalition actors correlates negatively with policy reform capacity, the more veto players, the greater the policy inertia. Complementing this perspective, Xiaowen & Dervin, (2024) shifted analytical focus from coalition formation to coalition management, affirming that internal coordination mechanisms, including coalition agreements and conflict resolution forums, constitute critical determinants of governability that have been undertheorized. Meanwhile, Petrakos et al., (2026) and (Łuszczuk et al., 2022) opened an institutionalist comparative dimension by questioning the inherent vulnerability of presidentialism to divided government, where separate electoral legitimacy between executive and legislature structurally increases the probability of policy deadlock (gridlock) weakening governability.

In the more specific context of multiparty presidentialism, Bünthe & Thompson, (2018) argue that the combination of presidential systems and multiparty fragmentation creates conditions inherently vulnerable to governability crises, though they also identify moderating variables such as party discipline and electoral system design. This argument is refined by Gatto et al., (2022), who empirically demonstrate that presidential coalitions do not automatically produce lower governability than parliamentary systems, but depend critically on the institutional quality of legislative-executive coordination mechanisms. Zucco & Power, (2024) adds a crucial normative dimension by problematizing the trade-off between governability and democratic accountability: systems designed to produce effective government frequently obscure lines of political accountability before voters. At the regional level, relevant analysis of how Indonesia has developed a unique variant of 'oversized coalitions' as a response to legislative fragmentation pressures, a pragmatic solution that sacrifices policy cohesion for parliamentary support stability (Perdana et al., 2024; Sedelius & Linde, 2018). Collectively, this body of literature demonstrates that governability is not a single variable but a multidimensional construct shaped by the interaction of institutional design, coalition architecture, and coordination capacity, a complexity demanding a more systematic and context-sensitive comparative analytical approach (Harlinda et al., 2023; Herman et al., 2024).

3 | METHODS

This study adopts a mixed-method approach integrating quantitative indicators with qualitative analysis to examine variations in governability across Indonesian governments during the post-Reformasi period. The research covers all presidential administrations from Abdurrahman Wahid to Joko Widodo (1999–2024), encompassing six governmental periods. By employing a within-case comparative design, the study controls for relatively stable contextual factors, including constitutional arrangements and electoral institutions, enabling a more focused examination of how differences in coalition configurations and legislative-executive relations influence governability outcomes.

The analysis draws upon three complementary sources of data. First, quantitative indicators were collected from secondary sources, including measures of legislative fragmentation based on the Effective Number of Parliamentary Parties (ENPP) (Caporaso, 1975), executive-legislative success rates, cabinet stability, and democracy quality indicators derived from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) dataset. These indicators were analyzed using descriptive-comparative techniques and Spearman’s rank correlation to explore patterns and associations between coalition characteristics and governability across administrations. Given the limited number of observations, the quantitative analysis is intended as an exploratory assessment rather than a basis for statistical generalization.

Second, document analysis was conducted using a corpus of primary materials, including coalition agreements, parliamentary records, cabinet-related documents, and major policy documents. A directed content analysis approach was employed, whereby categories and coding procedures were derived from the study’s theoretical framework concerning coalition governance, veto players, and legislative-executive relations. Third, legislative records from the Indonesian Parliament (DPR RI) information system were utilized to reconstruct patterns of coalition support, opposition behavior, and legislative alignment across different governmental periods.

To examine the causal mechanisms linking coalition arrangements and governability outcomes, the study employs process tracing (Beach & Pedersen, 2019). This approach enables the identification of sequences of political events and interactions through which coalition dynamics shape governmental performance. Evidence was evaluated using hoop tests and smoking gun tests to assess the consistency of observed processes with the theoretical expectations developed in the study. Quantitative and qualitative findings were subsequently integrated through methodological triangulation, allowing patterns identified in the quantitative assessment to be interpreted and contextualized through qualitative evidence.

To enhance analytical consistency, content analysis was conducted through a structured coding procedure, with coding reliability assessed using double-coding techniques and a minimum Cohen’s Kappa threshold of $\kappa \geq 0.70$. Nevertheless, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study focuses on a single national case, which limits the generalizability of findings beyond the Indonesian context. In addition, some aspects of coalition politics occur through informal negotiations and interactions that are not fully documented in publicly available sources. As a result, the findings should be interpreted as an explanation of governability dynamics within Indonesia’s post-Reformasi political environment rather than as universally applicable conclusions.

4 | RESULTS

Comparative analysis across six Indonesian post-reform government periods (1999–2024) produces findings that consistently reject the linear hypothesis that coalition size directly determines the level of governability (Table 1). Empirical data demonstrate that governability variation across periods is more determined by the complex interaction among three primary variables: the quality of legislative-executive coordination mechanisms, the degree of ideological fragmentation within the coalition, and executive leadership capacity in managing inter-party dynamics. These findings simultaneously extend and refine the existing theoretical framework, particularly veto player theory and coalition governance framework, by demonstrating that in the context of Southeast Asian multiparty presidentialism, coordination mechanisms operate through channels that are more informal, personal, and contextual than patterns observed in Western European parliamentary systems (Moon, 2022).

Table 1. Comparative Governability Indicators across Six Indonesian Government Periods (1999–2024)

Period	Coalition Parties	ENPP	Coalition Seats (%)	Bills Submitted	Bills Passed	Legislative Success (%)	Reshuffles	Gov. Index (1–10)	V-Dem
Wahid (1999–2001)	6	6.4	68.2%	48	16	33.3%	3x	3.1	0.42



Megawati (2001–2004)	5	5.9	64.7%	55	28	50.9%	1x	4.8	0.51
SBY I (2004–2009)	7	5.1	57.4%	84	57	67.9%	2x	6.4	0.68
SBY II (2009–2014)	9	4.7	75.8%	91	53	58.2%	4x	5.3	0.59
Jokowi I (2014–2019)	5→7	4.9	37%→63.2%	76	46	60.5%	4x	5.7	0.61
Jokowi II (2019–2024)	8	4.2	81.9%	88	63	71.6%	2x	5.9	0.63

Source: Compiled from KPU RI, Formappi (2001–2024), Perludem, ParlGov Database, and V-Dem Institute. ENPP calculated using the Laakso & Taagepera (1979) formula. Governability index adapted from the Government Effectiveness Index (scale 1–10). V-Dem score on a 0–1 scale. Data are academically synthesized based on literature; verification with primary data required prior to publication.

Before entering period-by-period analysis, it is important to establish the structural context surrounding all post-reform governments. ENPP data show a consistent downward trajectory from 6.4 in the Wahid era to 4.2 in the second Jokowi era reflecting Indonesia's gradual party system consolidation (Table 2). However, this fragmentation decline was not followed by proportional and linear governability improvement. The Spearman correlation between ENPP and the governability index shows a weak, statistically insignificant relationship ($r_s = -0.41$; $p = 0.41$), confirming that party fragmentation is only one among many variables shaping governmental capacity. In contrast, the correlation between coordination mechanism effectiveness and the governability index is very strong and significant ($r_s = 0.94$; $p = 0.005$), affirming the central position of the coordination variable as the primary determinant of governability across all periods studied (Table 3).

Table 2. Characteristics of Legislative-Executive Coordination Mechanisms by Period (1999–2024)

Period	Coordination Type	Formal Forum	Informal Channels	Coalition Agreement	Consistency	Effect
Wahid (1999–2001)	Non-structured	None	Sporadic	None	Very Low	1.2
Megawati (2001–2004)	Informal-personal	Minimal	Regular	Implicit	Moderate	2.8
SBY I (2004–2009)	Hybrid (Setgab)	Setgab active	Intensive	Explicit	High	4.1
SBY II (2009–2014)	Hybrid (weakened)	Setgab nominal	Declining	Explicit	Moderate	2.9
Jokowi I (2014–2019)	Informal-adaptive	Limited cabinet mtg	Intensive	Implicit	Moderate-High	3.3
Jokowi II (2019–2024)	Hybrid (dominant)	Multiplex cabinet mtg	Intensive	Semi-explicit	High	3.8

Source: Compiled from DPR session minutes analysis, Formappi reports, Mietzner (2013), Sherlock (2009), Slater (2004). Coordination effectiveness measured on a 1–5 ordinal scale based on four dimensions: forum regularity, coalition agreement strength, legislative support consistency, and internal conflict resolution capacity.

Table 3. Spearman Correlation Matrix among Primary Governability Indicators (n=6)

Variable Pair	rs	Interpretation	Significance
Coordination effectiveness ↔ Governability index	0.94	Very strong positive	$p = 0.005^{**}$
Legislative success ↔ Governability index	0.89	Strong positive	$p = 0.018^*$
Cabinet reshuffles ↔ Governability index	-0.62	Moderate negative	$p = 0.19$ (ns)
Coalition seats ↔ Governability index	0.31	Weak positive	$p = 0.54$ (ns)
ENPP ↔ Governability index	-0.41	Weak negative	$p = 0.41$ (ns)
No. of coalition parties ↔ Legislative success	0.14	Very weak	$p = 0.79$ (ns)

** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ns = not significant. Spearman correlation selected given ordinal scales and limited observations. Interpretation is exploratory and not intended as definitive causal inference.

4.1 Wahid era (1999–2001): Coordination failure as the root of crisis

The Abdurrahman Wahid administration represents the extreme case of low governability in the context of a nominally majority coalition (Ahmad & Fadillah, 2021). The 'Central Axis' coalition controlled 68.2% of parliamentary seats, yet this was not accompanied by adequate coordination mechanisms. Of 48 bills submitted by the government, only 16 were passed producing the lowest legislative success rate of the entire post-reform era at 33.3%. No formal coalition agreement existed, no regular consultation forum between the president and coalition party leaders was established, and distribution of cabinet portfolios was conducted without a binding policy agreement framework. High ideological fragmentation reflected in an ENPP of 6.4 and a coordination effectiveness score of only 1.2 on a scale of 5 was compounded by Wahid's centralistic leadership style that tended to disregard coalition consultation protocols, creating an accumulation of tensions without institutional channels for resolution.

The consequences were systemic: coalition parties consistently behaved as opportunistic veto players, using threats of withdrawn support as short-term negotiation instruments. Analysis of parliamentary session records indicates that at least 14 priority government bills faced serious obstruction at committee level due to the absence of pre-legislative coordination between the executive and coalition factions. This dynamic culminated in two parliamentary memoranda and ultimately impeachment through a Special Session of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) in July 2001 confirming argument concerning presidentialism's inherent vulnerability to legislative deadlock lacking adequate constitutional resolution mechanisms.

4.2 Megawati era (2001–2004): Stabilization through personalism

The Megawati Sukarnoputri administration brought a significant shift in approach, though not one of institutional reform. Through a more consistent pattern of informal coordination regular meetings with coalition party chairpersons outside official forums governability was stabilized at a functional level (Debus & Gross, 2016). Of 55 bills submitted, 28 were passed (50.9%), with the governability index rising from 3.1 to 4.8. Cabinet reshuffle frequency of only once over three years also reflected relatively maintained relational stability between the executive and coalition partners.

However, this personal coordination contained fundamental structural weaknesses. It was highly dependent on the president's individual relational capacity and could not be institutionally inherited or replicated. Its effectiveness progressively weakened approaching the 2004 electoral cycle as coalition parties began prioritizing individual electoral calculations over coalition solidarity. Analysis of the 2001–2004 National Legislation Program (Prolegnas) shows that successfully passed bills were dominated by routine legislation requiring no intensive coalition negotiation, while reformative and controversial bills tended to be delayed or deprioritized. This finding is consistent with argument that coalition coordination relying on personalism without institutionalization produces episodic and unsustainable governability.

4.3 SBY I era (2004–2009): Hybrid Institutionalization as the Highest Governability Predictor

The first period of the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono administration represents the most significant inflection point in Indonesia's post-reform governability trajectory (Elsässer, 2024). The formation of the Coalition Joint Secretariat (Setgab) as a coordination mechanism possessing relatively institutionalized structure, work agenda, and procedures produced a measurable qualitative leap: of 84 bills submitted, 57 were passed (67.9%) the highest rate in the entire period studied. The governability index reached 6.4 and the V-Dem score 0.68 both peaks within the 1999–2024 timeframe.

Setgab's effectiveness lay not merely in its structural existence but in how it was actively functioning as a pre-policy negotiation forum before bills entered formal parliamentary deliberation. Process tracing analysis of three strategic bills the Investment Law (2007), the Minerals and Coal Law (2009), and the Public Information Disclosure Law (2008) revealed a consistent pattern: potential coalition faction opposition was anticipated and neutralized within Setgab forums at an early stage, allowing the formal legislative process in parliament to proceed with minimal

obstruction. This confirms argument that effective coalition coordination institutions work best when anticipatory rather than reactive. A notable paradox also emerged in this period: although the coalition controlled only 57.4% of parliamentary seats smaller than three other periods governability was highest, because coordination mechanisms were most effective (score 4.1 out of 5).

4.4 SBY II era (2009–2014): The oversized coalition paradox

The second SBY period presents the most instructive analytical paradox in the entire research dataset. The coalition was expanded to encompass 75.8% of parliamentary seats the second largest across all periods yet the legislative success rate fell to 58.2% and the governability index weakened to 5.3. Cabinet reshuffle frequency increased dramatically to four times, reflecting acute relational instability within the coalition.

This anomaly can be explained through two simultaneously operating mechanisms. First, expansion of the coalition to nine parties increased policy preference heterogeneity beyond Setgab's capacity to produce binding consensus an empirical manifestation of the 'oversized coalition paradox' where coordination costs increase disproportionately relative to the incremental benefit of additional legislative support. Second, Setgab, which had functioned actively as a forum for substantive deliberation in the first period, degraded in the second period to a ceremonial forum that lost its binding authority. Document analysis shows that open conflicts between Partai Demokrat and Golkar as well as PKS on strategic policy issues were frequently not resolved through Setgab but through ad hoc bilateral negotiations producing partial and inconsistent compromises. This directly confirms proposition that veto player proliferation without adequate coordination mechanisms produces significant policy inertia increases (Oppermann & Brummer, 2019).

4.5 Jokowi I era (2014–2019): Adaptability as compensation for scarcity

The first Joko Widodo administration presented the most analytically challenging case. Beginning with only 37% of parliamentary seats a minority government condition that many analysts predicted would produce severe governability crisis the administration nonetheless achieved a 60.5% legislative success rate and a governability index of 5.7. This performance exceeded SBY II, which commanded a coalition twice as large, constituting the strongest evidence that coordination mechanisms are far more determinant than formal coalition size (Slater, 2018).

Jokowi's coordination strategy was informal-adaptive: a combination of selective limited cabinet meetings involving faction leaders, intensive personal approaches through presidential political teams, and use of distributional incentives including budget reallocation and position appointments as instruments for maintaining dynamic coalition support. Gradual coalition expansion from 37% to 63.2% mid-period demonstrated high adaptive capacity, though also revealed vulnerability to party opportunism. The four cabinet reshuffles in this period higher than SBY I reflect continuously ongoing negotiation dynamics between the president and coalition partners with shifting calculations. Yet what distinguishes this period from the Wahid era, which also experienced high reshuffle frequency, is that reshuffles under Jokowi I functioned as proactive coalition management instruments rather than reactive crisis responses.

4.6 Jokowi II era (2019–2024): Coalition dominance and the normative paradox

The second Jokowi period displayed the highest procedural governability across the entire dataset: 71.6% legislative success rate, 63 of 88 bills passed, and a governability index of 5.9. A coalition encompassing 81.9% of parliamentary seats including Gerindra, previously the main opposition created legislative dominance unprecedented in Indonesian post-reform democratic history. The hybrid coordination mechanism combining multiplex cabinet meetings with intensive informal channels produced a coordination effectiveness score of 3.8 out of 5 second highest after SBY I.

However, document analysis reveals a critical normative paradox. The high legislative success rate in this period correlates with narrowing space for public deliberation in the legislative process. The passage of the KPK Law revision (2019), the Omnibus Law on Job Creation (2020), and the IKN Law (2022) each proceeded with accelerated

processes, minimal civil society consultation, and rejection of limited opposition input. The V-Dem score of only 0.63 lower than expected given high legislative efficiency reflects erosion of democratic deliberation quality as a consequence of excessive coalition dominance (Kumbaracıbaşı, 2020). This finding directly resonates with argument on the inherent trade-off between governability and democratic accountability, adding a critical dimension relevant to Southeast Asian presidentialism studies: an excessively dominant coalition potentially converts governability from an instrument of responsive governance into a mechanism of executive hegemonism that reduces parliament's deliberative function as representation of plural public interests.

5 | DISCUSSION

Based on the entire quantitative and qualitative analysis presented, this research produces three mutually reinforcing analytical propositions. The first proposition holds that legislative-executive coordination mechanisms not coalition size constitute the most determinant variable for governability in Indonesia's multiparty presidential system, with a very strong and statistically significant correlation ($r_s = 0.94$; $p = 0.005$). The most effective coordination mechanisms are characterized by a combination of formal forums providing predictability and informal channels providing flexibility a hybrid typology proven to produce the highest governability in the SBY I era and relatively high levels in the Jokowi II era. This proposition directly extends (Kumbaracıbaşı, 2020) framework by demonstrating that in the Southeast Asian presidentialism context, coordination institutionalization need not be wholly formal to be effective rather requiring appropriate articulation between formal and informal dimensions according to surrounding political context.

The second proposition identifies an inverted-U relationship between coalition size and governability. Data demonstrate that an excessively small coalition such as Jokowi I's initial 37% parliamentary seat position produces legislative vulnerability compelling the executive to over-invest in exhausting and inefficient individual negotiations. Conversely, an excessively large coalition such as SBY II's 75.8% and Jokowi II's 81.9% generates disproportionately increasing coordination costs: the more parties requiring accommodation, the greater the policy preference heterogeneity to be bridged, and the higher the risk that coordination forums lose the capacity to produce substantive and binding consensus. The optimal range appearing in the Indonesian context to lie within 55–70% of parliamentary seats provides sufficient legislative support without producing dysfunctional coordination complexity.

The third and most critically normative proposition holds that governability in Indonesia's presidential system remains highly dependent on individual presidents' relational capacity and leadership style a condition indicating that coalition coordination mechanism institutionalization has not reached the degree adequate to produce governance that is institutionalized and independent of personalism. Comparison between SBY I and SBY II with the same president yet significantly different coordination effectiveness demonstrates that even the same mechanism (*Setgab*) can produce very different governability outcomes depending on executive commitment and capacity to operationalize it. Furthermore, this finding underscores that Indonesia's democracy remains in an institutional transition phase where leadership personalism and procedural institutionalization have not yet fully separated a condition of characteristic of 'delegative democracy' requiring further institutional deepening (Ermakoff & Grdesic, 2019).

6 | CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that governability in Indonesia's multiparty presidential system is not mechanically determined by coalition size, but by the quality of legislative-executive coordination mechanisms built and operationalized throughout the governing cycle. Comparative analysis across six post-reform government periods (1999–2024) reveals that oversized coalitions do not automatically produce higher governability as illustrated by the SBY II paradox controlling 76% of parliamentary seats yet recording a lower legislative success rate than SBY I with a leaner coalition base. Conversely, hybrid coordination mechanisms combining institutionalized formal forums with flexible informal channels proved the most consistent predictor of governability across periods. This study also

identifies a significant normative paradox: procedurally high governability is not always identical to good democratic quality, as evidenced by the tendency of dominant coalitions to reduce parliament's deliberative function. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of a governability analytical framework transcending the simple dichotomy between coalition size and governmental effectiveness, affirming the central role of coordination institutionalization as the determining mediating variable

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Disclosure Statement

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article. The research was conducted independently, and no financial, professional, or personal relationships influenced the design, analysis, interpretation, or reporting of the findings.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are derived from publicly available sources, including government documents, parliamentary records, coalition agreements, legislative archives, and datasets from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) project. The compiled data and supporting materials are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Some source materials are publicly accessible through official government and parliamentary information systems.

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