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OLIGARCHIC CAPTURE OF CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY: A SOCIO-LEGAL LITERATURE REVIEW

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Constitutional Democracy, Oligarchy, Policy, Institutions, Legitimacy of Power. Public State	The practice of constitutional democracy demonstrates a tendency toward an increasingly strong concentration of power in the political and legislative processes. The influence of powerful economic actors and interconnected interests within state institutions contributes to shaping policy directions that do not fully reflect the broader public interest. This situation is reinforced by the formation of public narratives that influence public perceptions and support the legitimacy of existing power. This study aims to examine how these practices reflect an imbalance of influence in the implementation of constitutional democracy. This research uses a qualitative approach based on a socio-legal literature review, utilizing various relevant sources. The results show that the concentration of power, interference with the independence of state institutions, and policy distortions form interrelated and recurring patterns. The direction of public policy tends to reinforce certain interests, while accountability and participation mechanisms are not functioning optimally. The formation of public narratives plays a role in maintaining the legitimacy of power, thereby narrowing the scope for correction of practices that align with the broader public interest.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of constitutional democratic practices in recent decades has shown tendencies that do not fully align with the normative expectations inherent in the system. Electoral mechanisms, which should create space for fair competition, often result in the concentration of power in the hands of certain groups with greater access to economic resources and political networks (Habermas, 2022). In various contexts, legislative processes, public policymaking, and even the appointment of strategic positions do not fully take into account the broader public interest, but are increasingly influenced by the interests of limited groups capable of systematically mobilizing influence. This situation raises fundamental questions about the extent to which constitutional democratic institutions can maintain their integrity amidst pressure from increasingly organized interests (Anderson et al., 2020).

The close relationship between economic power and the political process is not only evident at the national level but also permeates down to the local level. The patterns of relationships formed between business actors, political elites, and legal institutions demonstrate a mutually reinforcing tendency that has implications for the direction of resulting policies (Stoffelen et al., 2020). In many cases, decisions made by state institutions demonstrate disproportionate favoring of certain groups, whether through favorable regulations, ignoring violations, or selective administrative practices. This reality shows that the formal processes carried out by state institutions often do not reflect an equal distribution of power among citizens (Amigud & Pell, 2021).

The tensions arising from these conditions become increasingly apparent when the principles enshrined in the constitution are confronted with the day-to-day practice of exercising power. Provisions designed to guarantee justice, accountability, and the protection of citizens' rights often undergo adjustments during implementation. These adjustments are not always explicit, but rather occur in the form of interpretations, delays, or even gradual neglect. It is in these spaces that certain interests find loopholes to influence policy direction without directly violating applicable formal provisions (Guttmann, 2021).

The role of law enforcement agencies in such situations becomes increasingly complex. Public expectations of independence and professionalism often clash with the reality of pressure, both direct and indirect. The handling of cases involving actors with significant economic and political power exhibits a pattern of inconsistency, where law enforcement standards can change depending on who is involved. This not only impacts public trust in legal institutions but also reinforces the perception that the law can be treated differently according to one's social and economic status (Karimullah, 2024).

Furthermore, formally open spaces for public participation do not always guarantee meaningful engagement. Public consultation processes, public hearings, and other aspiration mechanisms often take place within a predetermined framework, limiting the opportunity to influence the outcome. Community groups without access to adequate resources tend to be at a disadvantage in these processes. As a result, voices that should represent broader interests are less likely to be accommodated in the resulting policies (Hofer & Kaufmann, 2023).

Changes in the media and information technology landscape also have complex implications. While access to information is increasingly open, the ability to shape public narratives is increasingly concentrated in the hands of actors with significant resources (Macnaghten et al., 2019). The use of media as a tool to build legitimacy or divert attention from certain issues demonstrates that the public communication arena is not entirely neutral. In this context, public perceptions of policies and institutions can be shaped through well-planned communication strategies, thereby strengthening the positions of certain groups within power structures (Dellmuth & Tallberg, 2021).

This situation is further exacerbated by practices that occur in the political financing process. The need for significant resources in political contests encourages close ties between candidates or political parties and financially powerful parties. These relationships do not stop at the stage of support during the election process, but often continue to influence policy after power is secured. In such situations, the line between public and private interests becomes increasingly blurred (Arriola et al., 2022).

The accumulated influence of these various factors creates conditions in which democratic institutions are unable to fully carry out their oversight function effectively. The checks and balances designed to prevent abuse of power often fail to function optimally when the actors who should be monitoring each other actually have intertwined interests. This narrows the space for making corrections to policies or actions that are detrimental to the public interest (Onyango, 2020).

This trend did not emerge suddenly, but rather resulted from a long process involving various changes in social, economic, and political structures. Economic transformations that resulted in the concentration of wealth in certain groups gave them the capacity to significantly influence the political process (Ahlstrom et al., 2020). At the same time, changes in the political system opened up opportunities for these actors to enter and play a role in decision-making. The interaction between these two aspects created conditions that allowed for increasingly profound influence on democratic institutions (Catro-Arce & Vanclay, 2020).

This evolving situation has broad implications for the overall quality of democracy. When public policy increasingly reflects the interests of certain groups, the goal of achieving equitable prosperity becomes increasingly difficult to achieve. Inequality exists not only in the economic sphere but also in access to justice and opportunities to participate in the political process. This has the potential to reinforce a cycle of inequality that is difficult to break (Van Niekerk, 2020).

Various responses to this situation have emerged in the form of institutional reforms, increased transparency, and strengthened civil society. However, the effectiveness of these efforts still faces numerous challenges. Limited resources, resistance from those benefiting from existing conditions, and the complexity of power relations make the desired changes challenging to achieve. In many cases, reform efforts are met with adaptation by actors seeking to maintain their influence (Waddington et al., 2019).

In this context, studies focusing on the relationship between power practices and legal institutions are becoming increasingly relevant. An approach that examines the interaction between norms, actors, and social structures provides a platform for understanding how these influences operate in practice. Analyzing findings in the existing literature can help identify recurring patterns and provide insight into the varying contexts in which these phenomena occur.

The need to examine this phenomenon more deeply is also driven by increasing indications that the changes occurring are not temporary. The patterns that emerge demonstrate relatively stable tendencies, thus requiring more serious attention in understanding and responding to them. Without adequate understanding, the risk of weakening the quality of democracy will increase, with consequences felt not only in the short term but also in the long term.

Taking these developments into account, this research aims to explore and examine how practices within constitutional democracy reflect the disproportionate influence of certain groups in the exercise of power. Through this exploration, this research also aims to develop a more comprehensive picture of the evolving conditions and identify opportunities for strengthening the function of democratic institutions to be more responsive to the public interest as a whole.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Oligarchy comes from the Greek word "oligarkhia." The word is composed of "oligoi," meaning few, and "arkhein," meaning government. Therefore, oligarchy can be interpreted as the rule of a small group. The common definition of oligarchy throughout history is a way to maintain and strengthen inherent wealth. Oligarchy is a form of government in which political power rests with a small group of society members. Almost all theories state that oligarchy is a form of government governed by a small group (Septiana, 2023).

The term "oligarchy" is frequently used in literature on post-colonial and post-communist countries. However, the term is less frequently used in the context of advanced industrial nations. This is because oligarchy is considered to have been defeated by electoral democracy (Bluhm & Varga, 2020). Oligarchy is the ownership and use of power whose primary target is not the general public (society) but the actors themselves. Oligarchy is understood as a power relationship between a politico-business coalition to enrich itself by exploiting public resources. This means that the primary goal of oligarchy is to enrich itself by exploiting power to control public resources (Setia Negara et al., 2024).

Oligarchy is the rule of a small group oriented toward personal interests. This small group's power can control many people because it is supported by political and material power. Therefore, it can be said that the primary goal of oligarchy is to fulfill personal interests (Tambunan, 2023). Oligarchy is a political system in which the ruling party consists of a small number of individuals or a group of individuals (the elite). This small elite group forms a system to maintain its power. These elites ensure the existence of the system by participating in it through political parties (Faedlulloh et al., 2023).

Oligarchy cannot be considered a system of rules, but rather a specific set of actors. Oligarchies are found across the political spectrum, including in developed democracies. This means that oligarchies do not conflict with existing systems of rules; oligarchic systems can adapt to existing systems, such as democracies (Arlen, 2019). In a democratic world, electoral systems require significant material resources to gain political power. Money politics is a material resource that is very common in these conditions. This is exploited by oligarchs, as owners of wealth and control of natural resources, to gain political power (Pratama et al., 2019).

An oligarchy can be defined as an actor who controls large concentrations of material resources that can be used to maintain and enhance their personal wealth and exclusive social position. Oligarchs can control those within their environment (Bogliaccini & Madariaga, 2024). In fact, these individuals are willing to sacrifice their freedom for the oligarchy's interests. Oligarchs control natural resources because they provide enormous wealth. Even in Indonesia, the influence of oligarchs in controlling natural resources is increasing. Therefore, political power is needed to ensure the maintenance of control over these natural resources (Nugroho, 2022).

METHOD

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach focused on exploring and examining practices within constitutional democracy, particularly regarding the

disproportionate influence of certain groups in the exercise of power. This approach was chosen to allow for a more in-depth examination of the findings of previous studies, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of emerging patterns. Data were obtained from various relevant sources, primarily from previous research, scientific journal articles, and other academic literature related to the focus of the study. All collected data were then processed through a qualitative analysis process, emphasizing the interrelationships between findings, the grouping of recurring issues, and a critical examination of the surrounding context. This process was undertaken to produce a comprehensive picture of the evolving conditions and to identify opportunities for strengthening democratic institutions to be more responsive to the public interest as a whole. Through this stage, the research is expected to not only summarize existing findings but also provide analytical contributions that enrich the discourse on the relationship between the practice of power and the implementation of constitutional democracy (Rukin, 2019).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Patterns of Concentration of Power in the Political and Legislative Process

The concentration of power in political and legislative processes is showing a growing trend, as actors with significant economic capacity increasingly influence policy direction. This involvement is not always overtly visible in formal procedures, but rather manifests through various forms of influence integrated into the political agenda-setting process. Access to resources allows certain actors to influence the priority of issues raised in decision-making forums, including the development of legislative programs. The initial space for agenda-setting is a crucial point that is often not fully transparent, thus opening up opportunities for certain interests to direct the focus of policy before it enters broader deliberations. In this context, limited access for groups without comparable resources demonstrates the inequality in the process of interest representation.

The pattern of interaction between economic power and political agenda-setting can be more clearly understood through a structured visualization of the relationships among key actors and institutional processes (see Figure 1).

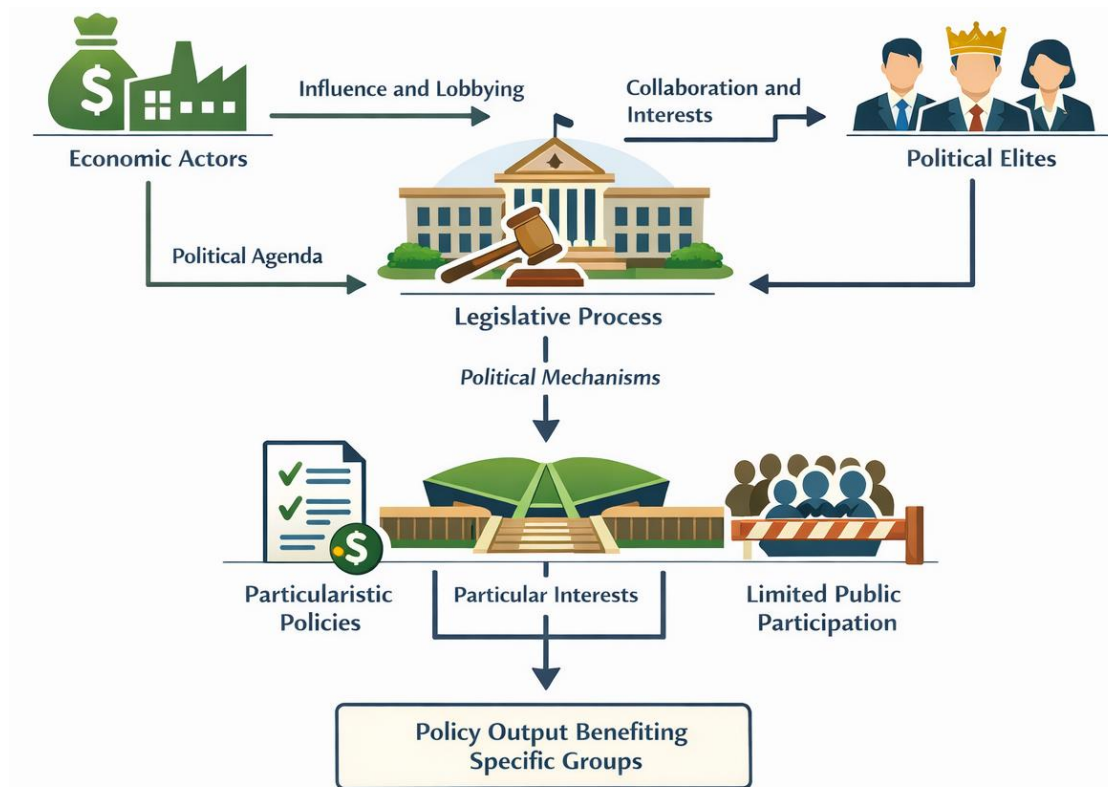


Figure 1. Patterns of Power Concentration in Political and Legislative Processes

The direction of public policy resulting from this process demonstrates a tendency toward unequal partisanship. The substance of regulations in several areas exhibits a pattern that accommodates certain interests more intensively than the needs of the public as a whole. Formulated provisions often provide convenience or protection for groups with strong economic positions, while their impact on other groups is not always a primary consideration. This is evident in how some regulations are drafted with investment stability or the interests of specific industries in mind, while simultaneously neglecting aspects of social protection or environmental sustainability. This imbalance is reflected not only in the content of the policies but also in the implementation process, which tends to strengthen the positions of groups with pre-existing advantages.

The legislative process, formally designed to be open and participatory, in practice does not fully reflect equal involvement. Informal mechanisms play a significant role in determining the direction of deliberations, whether through closed meetings, communications outside of official forums, or negotiations that are not publicly documented. The existence of such mechanisms limits the space for meaningful participation for the wider public, as important decisions are often made before formal deliberation. Within the legal framework governing the formation of legislation, such as provisions regarding public participation in the legislative process, there is an expectation that the public can actively provide input. However, the implementation of these provisions is often procedural in nature and does not significantly impact the outcome.

The relationship between political elites and capitalists demonstrates a mutually reinforcing pattern in the decision-making process. Financial support provided in

political contests creates relationships that continue after the electoral process ends, particularly in the form of access to policymakers. This relationship is not always manifested in explicit agreements, but rather through closeness that allows for a continuous exchange of interests. The strategic positions held by political actors provide space for capitalists to directly express their interests, while political actors obtain the support necessary to maintain their positions. This type of interaction creates a relatively stable pattern, where the decision-making process is not entirely based on considerations of the broader public interest.

This relationship is also reflected in the process of filling public offices, which play a crucial role in policy formulation and implementation. The influence of certain groups allows them to promote individuals with similar interests into strategic positions, whether in legislative, executive, or other institutions. This condition strengthens the sustainability of influence in the long term, because individuals in these positions have the capacity to influence policy in accordance with pre-established interests. In the legal framework governing governance, the principles of meritocracy and transparency are often used as the basis for filling positions, but reality shows that considerations outside of formal criteria still play a significant role.

The tendency toward power reproduction becomes increasingly apparent when these patterns recur throughout the political cycle. Actors who already hold powerful positions tend to maintain their influence through various mechanisms, including established networks and maintained access to resources. This reproduction occurs not only through the continued presence of the same individuals or groups within the power structure, but also through patterns of relationships that persist despite changes in actors. Political structures formed under these conditions become relatively closed to significant change, due to vested interests in maintaining configurations that benefit certain parties.

In a legal context, these conditions have implications for the effectiveness of principles that should ensure a balance of power and protect the public interest. Provisions governing transparency, accountability, and participation are often insufficient to counterbalance the organized influence of certain groups. When legal norms are confronted with ongoing practices, a gap appears between what is regulated and what actually occurs. This gap creates room for practices that do not fully align with the objectives of the norms, without necessarily directly violating existing provisions.

Intervention of Interests in the Independence of State Institutions

Interference from vested interests in the independence of state institutions exhibits a pattern that does not always manifest itself in overt violations, but rather through subtle and layered pressure, particularly in handling strategic cases. Law enforcement agencies, which are normatively expected to act neutrally, often find themselves in a position that is not entirely free from external influence. Cases involving actors with significant economic and political power tend to be treated differently, both in terms of the speed of handling, the depth of investigation, and the courage to bring cases to the prosecution stage. Pressure can manifest in various forms, from direct intervention to signals conveyed through informal channels, ultimately influencing the direction of decisions taken. Within the Indonesian legal framework, guarantees for the independence of law enforcement agencies are stipulated in various regulations,

including provisions that affirm the position and authority of institutions such as the prosecutor's office and the anti-corruption agency. However, the existence of these norms does not necessarily eliminate the possibility of influence operating outside formal procedures.

The pattern of selectivity in rule enforcement is one indicator of the existence of interfering interests in institutional practices. Law enforcement is not always consistent across all parties, but rather shows variation depending on the social, economic, and political standing of the parties involved. Certain cases are processed with high intensity, while others with similar characteristics receive less attention. These differences in treatment cannot always be explained solely through technical considerations, giving rise to the perception of unstated preferences. Provisions regarding the principle of equality before the law, as stipulated in various laws and regulations, including the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, provide a strong normative basis for rejecting such practices. However, the implementation of this principle in practice demonstrates a gap between the regulated norms and the prevailing reality.

The interconnected interests of state institutions in the oversight process also reinforce the tendency to weaken independence. The checks and balances mechanism, designed to ensure mutual oversight between institutions, does not always operate effectively when intertwined interests exist. Institutions that are supposed to carry out oversight functions can find themselves in a less-than-fully independent position due to ties with the parties they supervise, whether through political, economic, or personal networks. This situation creates a situation where the oversight process takes place formally but fails to produce meaningful corrections to potential irregularities. Various legal provisions governing the oversight function, such as those contained in the laws concerning legislative institutions and state audit institutions, emphasize the importance of independence and objectivity. However, in practice, the effectiveness of oversight is heavily influenced by the power configurations surrounding these institutions.

External influence in the appointment to public office is one of the main channels through which vested interests can be institutionalized more permanently. The selection process, formally designed to ensure transparency and accountability, is often subject to pressure from actors with vested interests in certain positions. This influence can manifest itself in the form of political recommendations, financial support, or negotiations that take place outside of official mechanisms. Individuals selected under these circumstances carry certain expectations that can influence how they carry out their duties and responsibilities. Provisions regarding merit systems and open selection mechanisms, as stipulated in laws and regulations concerning state civil servants, provide a normative framework to prevent such practices. However, their implementation is not entirely free from interventions that occur at stages difficult to access by public scrutiny.

The imbalance in the positions of actors within the checks and balances system demonstrates that not all institutions have equal capacity to effectively carry out their oversight function. Institutions with greater political support and resources tend to exert more dominant influence in determining policy direction and responding to oversight efforts. Meanwhile, institutions in weaker positions often face limitations in accessing information, mobilizing resources, or even maintaining their independence.

This imbalance creates space for certain actors to evade what should be a balanced oversight. Within the constitutional framework, the division of powers is designed to prevent the domination of one party over another, but reality shows that an unequal distribution of power can disrupt this balance.

The conditions formed by these various factors demonstrate a pattern of intervention that is not sporadic, but rather structured and recurring. Pressure on law enforcement institutions, selectivity in enforcing regulations, intertwined interests in the oversight process, influence in filling public offices, and imbalances in the checks and balances system are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. This pattern creates an institutional environment vulnerable to the influence of particular interests, while simultaneously narrowing the space for truly independent practice. When this situation persists over a long period of time, the impact is felt not only on the performance of state institutions but also on public trust in the legal system and government as a whole.

The implications of this situation demand more serious attention to how legal norms are implemented in institutional practice. Efforts to strengthen the independence of state institutions are not sufficient through the creation of more detailed regulations; they also require mechanisms capable of ensuring that these regulations are implemented without undue interference. In this context, it is important to examine how existing power relations can influence the effectiveness of legal norms and how improvements can be made, taking these conditions into account. An approach that combines a reading of legal texts with an analysis of ongoing practices provides space to understand the existing complexities and opens up the possibility of formulating measures that are more responsive to the challenges faced.

Distortion of Policy Direction and Its Impact on Public Interest

The distortion of public policy direction is evident not only in the content of regulations but also in the lengthy process that precedes them. The substance of the resulting policies often shifts from broader needs to narrower interests, as various influences enter the formulation stage. These changes are not always explicitly apparent, but are instead structured through the formulation of norms that appear technically neutral but have varying implications when implemented. The resulting provisions may contain clauses that implicitly benefit certain groups, while denying others equal protection or access. Within the national legal framework, various regulations governing the policy-making process, including the Law on the Formation of Legislation, emphasize the importance of openness and participation. However, in practice, the resulting substance does not always reflect the aspirations gathered through these mechanisms.

The strengthening of particular interests through regulations is one concrete form of this distortion. The resulting regulations serve not only as regulatory instruments but also as a means to strengthen the position of certain groups within the economic and social structure. Provisions that facilitate access to resources, provide specific incentives, or protect against competition are often designed with specific interests in mind rather than the needs of the public as a whole. This is evident in how some regulations provide greater room for certain actors to expand their influence, while other groups face stricter restrictions. This influence is not limited to a single sector but can extend to multiple interrelated areas, thereby continuously strengthening the

position of certain groups.

Access to community groups in the policy formulation process also presents significant limitations. Although formal public participation mechanisms exist, such as consultation and input, their effectiveness does not always align with expectations. Community involvement is often symbolic, with the available space not providing significant influence on the final policy outcome. Community groups lacking adequate organizational capacity or resources tend to struggle to effectively express their aspirations. Meanwhile, groups with greater resources can utilize various channels, both formal and informal, to ensure their interests are accommodated in the policies being developed. Provisions regarding public participation stipulated in various regulations do not fully guarantee that all groups have an equal position in the process.

The unequal distribution of benefits from the resulting policies is a direct consequence of this imbalanced process. Policies designed with specific interests in mind tend to concentrate benefits on those same groups, while their impacts on other groups are not always prioritized. This unequal distribution of benefits can deepen existing inequalities, both in economic terms and in access to public services. In many cases, disadvantaged groups bear the brunt of policies that fail to fully consider their circumstances. This demonstrates that public policy serves not only as a regulatory tool but also as a mechanism that can influence the distribution of resources within society.

The decline in accountability in policy implementation further exacerbates the impact of these distortions. The policy implementation process is often lacking effective oversight mechanisms, creating room for deviations from established objectives. Accountability reports do not always reflect the true situation, while public access to relevant information remains limited. Within the legal framework, the principle of accountability has been affirmed in various regulations, including provisions concerning public information disclosure and state financial management. However, the implementation of this principle faces numerous obstacles, particularly when vested interests seek to maintain existing conditions. Limitations in oversight stem not only from weak formal mechanisms but also from vested interests that compromise the independence of oversight institutions.

The interrelationships between these various aspects form a pattern that demonstrates how distortions in policy direction do not exist in isolation but result from the interaction of various interrelated factors. Changes in policy substance, the strengthening of particular interests, limited participation, unequal distribution of benefits, and weak accountability form a complex chain that is difficult to separate. Each aspect contributes to the development of conditions where public policy does not fully reflect the interests of the broader public. This pattern also shows that efforts to improve one aspect without considering others will not produce significant change.

This situation places public policy in a position where it is influenced not only by technical and administrative considerations but also by the configuration of power surrounding it. When the process of policy formulation and implementation occurs within an environment influenced by particular interests, the resulting outcomes tend to reflect the existing balance of power. In such situations, the legal norms governing the policy process face challenges in ensuring that the stated objectives are achieved. The gap between norms and practice becomes increasingly apparent, raising questions

about the effectiveness of legal instruments in directing policy toward the public interest.

The Formation of Public Narratives and Their Influence on the Legitimacy of Power

The formation of public narratives plays an increasingly decisive role in influencing how the public understands policies, institutions, and practices of power. Circulating information is not presented as neutral, but rather through a process of selection, formulation, and distribution involving various interests. Information management becomes an effective instrument for constructing perceptions that favor certain actors, especially when presented consistently through various communication channels. Selective presentation of facts, emphasis on certain aspects, and neglect of other information create a picture that does not fully reflect the existing conditions. Within the legal framework, the public's right to information is guaranteed through regulations such as the Law on Public Information Transparency, but reality shows that access to information is not always accompanied by a balanced diversity of perspectives.

The dominance of certain actors in the public communication space strengthens their ability to direct the narratives that develop in society. Access to media, both conventional and digital, is unequally distributed, allowing groups with greater resources to control communication channels with broad reach. Media ownership, proximity to platform managers, and the ability to produce content sustainably are determining factors in shaping the flow of information. This situation creates an imbalance in representation, where the views of certain groups are more easily represented than those of others. When communication spaces are dominated by actors with vested interests, the resulting narratives tend to legitimize their positions.

The media's role in framing policies and institutions is inseparable from the process of shaping public perception. The way a policy is reported, the issues raised, and the perspective used in presenting information significantly influence how the public perceives it. Framing that emphasizes successes without a balanced discussion of consequences or criticism can create an incomplete perception. Conversely, emphasizing certain negative aspects without adequate context can also steer public opinion in a particular direction. In practice, these editorial choices are not always independent but are intertwined with vested interests within the media institution itself. Regulations governing broadcasting and the press provide a framework for maintaining independence and balance, but their implementation is highly dependent on the ownership structures and relationships underlying them.

Discourse control is one mechanism used to reduce the space for criticism of policies and institutions. This control is not always achieved through direct restrictions, but also through more subtle strategies such as diverting issues, producing counter-narratives, or reframing emerging criticism. The space for dissenting views can be narrowed through means that do not explicitly violate legal provisions but are effective in limiting the reach and impact of such criticism. In some contexts, legal instruments such as regulations on electronic information and transactions can be used to regulate the dissemination of information, but their application also has the potential to have a limiting effect on expression if not implemented proportionately. This situation creates an environment where criticism is not eliminated, but is limited in terms of visibility

and influence.

The link between public narratives and the sustainability of power becomes increasingly clear when public perceptions contribute to the acceptance of existing policies and institutions. Legitimacy is not only established through formal procedures such as elections or policy approval, but also through the acceptance of evolving narratives. When dominant narratives foster the belief that policies are in line with the public interest, the space for questioning them becomes increasingly limited. Conversely, when emerging narratives demonstrate a mismatch between policies and the public interest, legitimacy can significantly decline. In this context, narrative management becomes an integral part of maintaining positions within power structures.

The relationship between these various aspects forms a pattern that demonstrates how the formation of public narratives is not only related to communication but also to the distribution of power within society. Information management, dominance in the communication space, media framing, discourse control, and their relationship to the legitimacy of power are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. This pattern creates conditions in which public perceptions are not formed entirely freely, but rather through a process influenced by particular interests. In such situations, legal norms governing freedom of expression and access to information face challenges in ensuring that public spaces remain open and inclusive.

CONCLUSION

There is a pattern of interconnectedness between the concentration of power, intervention of interests within state institutions, distortion of policy direction, and the formation of public narratives that strengthen the positions of certain actors within the power structure. Political and legislative processes do not fully occur within a framework of equal representation, but are instead influenced by actors with stronger economic capacity and networks. This situation impacts the independence of state institutions, which face pressure in carrying out their law enforcement and oversight functions. Consequently, the principles guaranteed in various laws and regulations are not always realized in practice. The interconnected interests formed among various actors demonstrate that existing formal mechanisms often coexist with informal practices that are more decisive in determining the direction of decisions. The direction of public policy produced under these conditions tends not to fully reflect the needs of the wider community. The substance of the policy, the formulation process, and its implementation demonstrate biases that have implications for the unequal distribution of benefits and weakened accountability. The formation of public narratives also reinforces this condition through information management and dominance in the communication space, which shapes public perceptions of policies and institutions. The developing narratives not only influence how policies are understood but also contribute to the legitimacy of power, allowing these patterns to continue. The interconnectedness of these aspects demonstrates that the issues faced are not isolated but rather part of a mutually supportive structure. It is important to examine the relationship between legal norms and the practice of power more critically, particularly in the context of how democratic institutions operate. Legal provisions designed to ensure justice, participation, and accountability require strengthening in

their implementation to prevent them from being undermined by the influence of vested interests. Understanding these evolving patterns provides a basis for encouraging more responsive efforts to improve the quality of constitutional democracy, so that the functions of state institutions can be reoriented toward the broader public interest.

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