

POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY OF THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY IN THE DIRECT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN INDONESIA IN 2024

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Abstract

In Indonesia's democratic system, the principle of popular sovereignty is concretely implemented through direct presidential elections. Since the enactment of the direct election system in 2004, the dynamics of national politics have undergone significant changes, especially in terms of the formation of political party coalitions. This study was designed to explore how political parties and their coalitions contribute to democratic strengthening. It also provides an analysis of the dynamics and future of these party alliances, particularly concerning the 2024 Presidential General Election. Based on a normative research method and a literature study, this research concluded that political party coalitions are a strategic instrument in a multiparty system that, due to the presidential threshold, does not allow a single party to nominate a presidential candidate on its own. Coalitions formed are often pragmatic, rather than ideologically common, making them vulnerable to division and difficult to ensure stable and accountable governance. The study also showed that the success of the coalition in winning elections is not solely determined by the size of the party's coalition, but also by the candidate's popularity, campaign strategy, and internal stability of the coalition. In the context of democracy, political coalitions have two sides: as a tool for political power integration that can strengthen government stability, but also have the potential to weaken the opposition's function and the principle of checks and balances if it is not built on the basis of transparency and accountability. Therefore, the formation of a coalition must be directed to strengthen the quality of democracy, not just to be a vehicle for short-term power.

Keywords: Coalition of Political Parties, Democracy, Presidential Election, Presidential Threshold.

INTRODUCTION

Article 1 paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution provides the basis that the people are the highest authority in the state. This means that all forms of governmental authority do not originate from the rulers, but from the people as the holders of sovereignty. This sovereignty is exercised through democratic mechanisms, such as general elections, in which the people use their voting rights to determine who will become the leader of the state and who will sit as representatives of the people in the legislative body. Further rules regarding the procedures for exercising people's sovereignty are set out in Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning Elections, which regulates how the election process takes place in a fair, free, and democratic manner. Elections are the main instrument for implementing the principle of popular sovereignty. Through elections, the people not only exercise their political rights to elect executive and legislative leaders, but also demonstrate that they are the highest authority in the country. This participation is important because it is a means for the people to convey their aspirations, determine the direction of policy, and oversee the running of the government. Thus, elections are a concrete manifestation of democracy that places the people as active subjects in determining the course of government.

Indonesia adopts a presidential system, which means that the president is both the head of state and the head of government. In this system, the president holds full executive power without depending on the legislature to run the government. This is different from a parliamentary system, in which the head of government can be removed at any time by parliament. The presidential system is enshrined in Article 4 of the 1945 Constitution, but it has only been fully implemented since the 2004 elections. After the amendment of the 1945 Constitution, Indonesia explicitly implemented a pure presidential system. One indicator of this is that the president and vice president are elected directly by the people, rather than through the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR). However, Indonesia's presidential system does not stand alone, but is implemented in conjunction with a political reality that embraces a multiparty system. This means that even though the president has strong executive power, the continuity of his administration is still influenced by the dynamics of political parties in parliament. This situation

creates a unique relationship: on the one hand, the president is directly elected by the people, but on the other hand, he still needs to build coalitions with various parties in order for the government to run effectively.

In Indonesia's multiparty political system, coalitions are a strategic necessity for political parties to win presidential elections. This is because it is rare for a single party to have a majority of support. Therefore, parties form coalitions in order to combine their voting power. Coalitions in Indonesia are usually dynamic and flexible, meaning that they can change according to current political interests, rather than being based solely on ideological similarities. Furthermore, the power of coalitions is not only evident in the nomination and election of the president, but also in securing positions in parliament.

Political party coalitions in Indonesia are an important part of the dynamics of democracy, as almost no party is capable of winning the presidential election on its own. This phenomenon was clearly evident during the leadership of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. When he first ran for president in 2004, SBY gained support from parties other than the Democratic Party. This support took the form of a political coalition, which proved to be an effective strategy for gaining power. In his second term, namely the 2009 elections, a coalition was formed again, this time with the Democratic Party as the main axis coordinating with other parties. The coalition not only ensured SBY's second victory, but also strengthened the stability of the government through parliamentary support. This also happened when the coalition was formed by PDIP in the presidential election that carried President Jokowi's candidate. The shift in coalitions in Indonesia is very flexible between political parties. Where when PDIP becomes the opposition in the government, SBY and other parties are in the circle of power, the government can turn into friends in the competition for power.

Indonesia's political landscape has changed dramatically since the direct presidential election system was implemented in 2004, especially regarding political power strategies and configurations in 2024. One of the important phenomena that emerged was the formation of political party coalitions as a strategic instrument to win the presidential election contest. Political party coalitions not only serve as a political vehicle for presidential candidates, but also reflect the configuration of elite interests and political actors in a multiparty democratic system. In the context of Indonesia, where no single party is consistently able to win a single majority of votes, the formation of a coalition is a political necessity. As stated by Marcus Mietzner (2009), the multiparty system in Indonesia which is fragmentative makes the coalition the main instrument in achieving executive power, especially in direct presidential elections.

However, the existence of coalitions is often not based on common ideologies or policy platforms, but rather pragmatic and opportunistic. The issue of how political party coalitions affect the quality of democracy is a key question. In Indonesia, many coalitions are driven by elite compromises and short-term goals, which can ultimately hinder the establishment of a robust democracy (Hadiz et al., 2004). Additionally, during direct elections, coalitions are a key factor in determining the balance of political power and the path of national policy once the election is over. For this reason, it is important to study the role of political parties in democracy, the dynamics of their coalitions in the presidential election, and their future role in ensuring the sustainability of democracy. Thus, the study of political party coalitions within the framework of direct presidential elections is important not only to understand contemporary political strategies, but also to evaluate the quality of democracy in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

The normative research method was essentially oriented towards theoretical and conceptual studies. In this study, this method was applied by relying on literature studies as the main source of data. This means that the researchers did not collect data directly in the field, but instead examined books, journals, laws and regulations, and other relevant sources of literature. Through the process of reading, noting, and classifying research materials, researchers can build a solid theoretical framework to answer the research questions. This literature study not only served to enrich the theoretical aspects but also provides an overview of the practical application of the research results. Thus, the normative method with literature study was an appropriate approach for academic research that focuses on the development of conceptual thinking and analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Role of Political Parties in the Sustainability of Democracy

Elections are an important instrument in a democratic system because they provide a space for the public to directly exercise their political rights. Through elections, the people can determine who has the right to lead the country or region and the direction of policies that will be implemented during a certain term of office. At the global level, democracy has become a standard that is valued by the international community, so that the continuity of free, honest, and fair elections is an important indicator of the legitimacy of a government. Elections are an important pillar in a democratic system because through this mechanism, the people can choose leaders who reflect their will. Thus, leaders who are elected through elections have legitimate authority because they represent the voice of the people. In line with this, Abadi (2019: 329) emphasizes that democracy essentially depends on the active participation of citizens, not just the government. The people are the key to upholding democratic

values, for example through elections, oversight of the government, and involvement in political life. (Pasaribu, 2017: 52).

The presence of political parties is important because they are representatives of the people through their representatives in the Indonesian government. Political parties are an absolutely necessary institution in a democratic system, as they provide a means for the public to express their wishes and aspirations (Saputro, 2015: 35). According to Karim Suryadi (2017: 104), the position of political parties is very strong, therefore the Law mandates an important task, one of which is to prepare a cadre of national leaders. In Law Number 2 of 2011 concerning Political Parties, it is stated that "Political Parties are national organizations and are formed by a group of Indonesian citizens voluntarily on the basis of the same will and ideals to fight for and defend the political interests of members, society, nation and state, as well as maintain the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945" (Law No.2 of 1945 2011). The essence of this is that political parties have a responsibility to strengthen democracy and national unity. One form of tangible contribution by political parties is through political education. Political education with a national perspective aims to instill an understanding of rights, obligations, and democratic values in society. This activity is very important because through political education, political parties can guide the public in making informed political decisions, developing active participation, and encouraging the creation of a stable and harmonious national life.

A democratic country, usually inhabited by many parties or multi-parties consisting of several political parties. Consequently, a democratic nation allows its people to join political parties and actively take part in shaping the country's direction for a better future, in line with national ideals. According to Maran (2002:84), a political party is an organized group with the aim of obtaining government positions. Meanwhile, the definition of political party is according to Law Number 31 of 2002 concerning Political Parties Article 1 which reads "A political party is a political organization formed by a group of citizens of the Republic of Indonesia voluntarily on the basis of the common will and ideals to fight for the interests of members, society, nation and state through general elections" (Law No. 31 of 2002).

Based on Law Number 31 of 2002, the objectives of political parties are not limited to short-term political interests, but are broad in nature and concern national interests. First, political parties serve to realize national ideals, as outlined in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution. Second, political parties are responsible for developing democracy based on Pancasila, with the principle of people's sovereignty as the basis for the legitimacy of government. Third, political parties play a role in efforts to achieve the welfare of the entire community, demonstrating that the role of politics must be in harmony with equitable social and economic development.

In addition to having general objectives, political parties also have specific objectives, namely to fight for their respective ideologies. These ideologies form the basis for parties in determining their programs, policies, and political direction. However, the fight for ideology cannot be carried out arbitrarily, but must be in accordance with the constitution and applicable laws.

Political parties serve as representatives of the people, channeling their aspirations into state policy. Thus, political parties are one of the main pillars of democracy because their existence and performance influence the quality of the democratic system in Indonesia. In the context of modern democracy, political theory states that the success of democracy is highly dependent on political parties, because they act as a link between the people and the government, shape public opinion, and facilitate political participation by the community (Katz, R. S., 1980). The existence of free, autonomous, and competitive political parties is an important foundation for the practice of democracy. Such political parties are able to channel the aspirations of the people, shape public opinion, and effectively oversee the running of the government. A democratic political system provides a space that allows these parties to operate independently and compete fairly. Therefore, the democratization of political parties is a key requirement for the overall political system to function democratically. Conversely, in authoritarian or non-democratic political systems, political parties are usually restricted, lack freedom or autonomy, and engage in unhealthy competition, thereby limiting their role in strengthening democracy (Manan, 2012).

Political parties have a strategic position in Indonesia's democratic system because they serve as a means of channeling the aspirations of the people while also determining leaders at the national and regional levels. The success of political parties as pillars of democracy can be seen from the experience of holding elections, in which parties are able to mobilize support, nominate leaders, and participate in the political process in a structured manner. This role is very influential in the national political system, given that Indonesian society is dynamic and continues to undergo changes in various aspects of life. Therefore, the political system places political parties as the main pillars of democracy, whose functions must be maintained so that they remain healthy and efficient. To ensure the optimal growth and performance of political parties, laws or regulations on political parties are very important.

In addition to carrying out political education, political parties are also mandated to carry out political recruitment. According to Maroontong (2020: 1) political recruitment is the selection or selection of a person or group to carry out a role in the political process. The recruitment function is a continuation of the function of seeking and maintaining power. In addition, the function of political recruitment is very important for the survival of the political system. Because without elites who are able to carry out their roles, the survival of the political system will be threatened. According to Komarudin Sahid in Utomo, it is said that political recruitment plays a role in a

country's political system, because this process can determine the people who will carry out the functions of the country's political system through political institutions (Utomo, 2020: 20).

According to Pasaribu (2017: 56), the presence of political parties in the form of political recruitment can be said to be a means for the party to expand public political participation. With this political recruitment, it is hoped that the community will be actively involved in the democratic process and state management. According to the Law on Parties, political parties have a role in determining potential leaders through this political recruitment (Riyadh & Sukmana, 205: 181). It can be said that political parties are the only organizations that can determine the leaders that the people will choose later. Political parties must have an openness in this political recruitment, so that every citizen can have the opportunity to become a candidate for leadership.

In addition, according to Miriam Budiarmo (2008: 26) in her book, political parties function or have the following roles:

1. Political parties are instrumental in bridging the gap in political communication

Political parties act as a link between the public and the government, enabling them to facilitate communication that flows from the bottom up. For this to work, however, they must also be effective at communicating among themselves

2. The process of political socialization is often carried out through political parties

Political parties help shape a person's political views. This is part of political socialization, where individuals adopt a particular attitude and orientation toward the political world that is typical of their society.

3. A primary role of political parties is to serve as a channel for recruiting individuals into the political system

Political parties rely on political recruitment to attract members and future leaders. This process is how they find and enlist talented people, which in turn helps expand public political participation.

4. Political parties can serve as a mechanism for conflict resolution.

In a democracy, competition and differences are normal. When these lead to conflict, it's up to political parties to resolve the issues.

Looking at the various functions of political parties, it is clear that they play a crucial role in maintaining and managing the democratic system. Without effective political parties, democracy cannot function optimally because the aspirations of the people are not properly channeled. The functions of political parties include facilitating public participation, channeling and filtering the aspirations of the people, and overseeing government policies to ensure they remain in line with democratic principles. In Indonesia, efforts to strengthen the capacity of political parties, maintain integrity, and ensure transparency are key factors in ensuring that democracy can develop in a healthy, fair, and sustainable manner. This shows that the success of democracy is not only measured by electoral procedures, but also by the quality of existing political party institutions.

Coalition of Political Parties in the 2024 Presidential Election

A coalition is a merger of a group of different political parties, which collectively produce a common agreement and have a perception of interests or threats in terms of looking at the country's future conditions (Andrew Heywood, 2000). A coalition can also be interpreted as a form of formal agreement made by two or more political parties to guarantee government power with a majority vote.

The formation of coalitions is one of the studies that has attracted the interest of social scientists for a long time (Riker, W. 1962). The coalition is an interesting subject of study because in a multi-party system, no political party is able to govern without building cooperation with other political parties. According to Heywood, in his explanation quoted by Pamungkas (2011), party coalitions can be divided into four main arenas that reflect the political strategies and functions of parties. Electoral coalitions emerge before elections, where parties work together to avoid competing with each other, so that they can maximize their combined number of seats. Legislative coalitions occur in parliament, in the form of agreements to support certain bills or programs, thereby making the legislative process more effective. Government coalitions are formed when two or more parties share executive power, including the distribution of ministerial portfolios, to form a stable government. Meanwhile, grand coalitions or national governments involve all major parties and usually emerge only in situations of national crisis or economic threat, when the unity of all political forces is needed to maintain the stability of the country.

In Indonesia's presidential election system, political parties cannot always nominate a single presidential candidate. If a party does not have enough votes to meet the minimum requirements for nomination, it must form a coalition with other parties. This minimum requirement is known as the presidential threshold, which is the number of votes or seats in parliament that must be held in order to nominate a presidential and vice-presidential candidate. The purpose of this threshold is to ensure that presidential candidates have sufficient political support to be able to form a stable government that represents the majority of the people.

The 2004 General Election was an important moment in Indonesian political history because the government began implementing a presidential threshold. This threshold set minimum requirements for political parties or coalitions of parties to be able to nominate a presidential and vice-presidential candidate pair. At the beginning of its implementation, the threshold was set at between 15% and 20% of the votes or parliamentary seats. This system was intended to ensure that presidential candidates had sufficient political support to form a stable government. Over time, this threshold has been adjusted, gradually increasing, and currently stands at around 20%–25%. The implementation of an increasingly high threshold has encouraged political parties to build strategic coalitions, so

that the presidential election contest is not only competitive, but also requires cooperation between parties to achieve sufficient majority support.

Law No. 7 of 2017 stipulates that political parties or coalitions of political parties must meet a certain threshold in order to nominate presidential and vice-presidential candidates. The threshold is set at 20% of the total number of seats in the House of Representatives or 25% of the total number of valid votes nationwide. This provision encourages political parties with fewer votes or seats than the threshold to form coalitions in order to nominate a presidential and vice-presidential pair. The application of this threshold is ongoing, so the results of previous elections are used as a reference to determine whether political parties can meet the requirements. For example, in the 2024 simultaneous elections, the results of the 2019 elections will be used as the basis for calculating the threshold, indicating that a party's success in obtaining seats in the previous parliament has a direct impact on their chances of nominating a presidential candidate.

Dynamics of the Formation and Pattern of Political Party Coalitions in the 2024 Presidential Election

The formation of political party coalitions in the 2024 Presidential Election shows that there's complex political dynamics. Political parties are forming strategic alliances to strengthen their position in the presidential race, because not all parties have enough votes or seats to nominate a presidential candidate on their own. In the 2019–2024 period, nine political parties won seats in the House of Representatives and obtained enough valid votes nationally to nominate presidential and vice-presidential candidates. These parties can nominate presidential pairs independently or by forming combinations with other parties through coalitions. Therefore, the political development of coalitions can be analyzed by observing the interactions and strategies that occur among these nine parties.

The political dynamics leading up to the 2024 Presidential Election began to take shape in 2022, particularly in relation to strategies for forming political party coalitions. The threshold for presidential and vice-presidential candidacy is an important factor because political parties that do not have enough seats or votes to meet the threshold must form alliances with other parties. This threshold requires a minimum of 20% of seats in the House of Representatives or 25% of the national valid votes to be able to nominate a presidential and vice presidential candidate pair. Based on calculations of seats and valid votes from the previous election results, it is estimated that three main coalitions will be formed, each supporting presidential candidates Anies Baswedan, Prabowo Subianto, and Ganjar Pranowo. These three candidates have met the provisions of Article 220 of Law Number 7 of 2017, which is the legal basis for presidential candidacy through political parties or coalitions of political parties.

The United Indonesia Coalition (KIB) is one of the first coalitions to emerge ahead of the 2024 General Election. This coalition was formed in June 2022 by three political parties, namely the Golkar Party, the National Mandate Party (PAN), and the United Development Party (PPP). KIB holds a total of 26.82% of seats in the House of Representatives, thereby meeting the threshold requirement for jointly nominating a presidential and vice-presidential candidate. The formation of this coalition demonstrates the political parties' strategy to strengthen their position in the national political arena. By uniting their forces, the three parties hope to enter the election with greater bargaining power (Gunanto, et al., 2024).

In addition, the coalition between the Gerindra Party and the PKB was initially known as the Great Indonesia Revival Coalition (KKIR), with a total of 23.66% of seats in the House of Representatives, which was significant enough to meet the threshold for joint presidential candidacy. However, internal political dynamics and coalition strategies led to changes in this composition when the National Mandate Party (PAN) and the Golkar Party joined, resulting in the coalition being renamed the Indonesian Progress Coalition (KIM). These changes in the coalition's structure and membership had political consequences, particularly for the PKB, which felt that its position had been weakened and that it had less influence in coalition decision-making. (Efriza, et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the Nasdem Party, the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), and the Democratic Party initially formed the Change Coalition to support Anies Baswedan as a presidential candidate. However, Anies' declaration that he collaborated with Muhaimin Iskandar (Cak Imin) from PKB as a vice presidential candidate in September 2023 caused the Democratic Party to withdraw its support, by joining the Advanced Indonesia Coalition (KIM). PKS still supports Anies, even though it has not given explicit support to Cak Imin (Efriza, et al., 2024). Meanwhile, PDI-P took a strategic step by nominating Ganjar Pranowo as its presidential candidate, supported by several other parties such as the United Development Party (PPP), the Indonesian Unity Party (Perindo), and the People's Conscience Party (Hanura). These parties combined had a total of 28.06% of the valid votes in the 2019 elections, thus meeting the threshold requirements for the nomination of a president and vice president (Attar, H. 2023). The following illustrates the coalition of political parties for the 2024 presidential election, categorized by how many seats each coalition holds in the national legislature (General Election Commission, 2023).

Table 1 Map of Political Party Coalitions in the 2024 General Election

The candidates for president and vice president	Supporting Parties	Supporting Parties
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Prabowo Subianto & Gibran Rakabuming Raka	• Gerindra Party: 78 seats (13.59%) • Labour Party: 85 seats (14.81%) • Democrats: 54 seats (9.41) • National Mandate Party: 44 seats (7.67)	• Indonesian Solidarity Party • Moon Star Party • Partai Gelora • Partai Garuda
	TOTAL: 45.48%	
Anies Rasyid Baswedan & Muhaimin Iskandar	• National Democratic Party: 59 seats (10.26%) • National Awakening Party: 58 seats (10.09%) • Prosperous Justice Party: 50 seats (8.70%)	• Ummat Party
	TOTAL: 29.04%	
Ganjar Pranowo & Mahfud MD	• Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle: 128 seats (22.30%) • United Development Party: 19 seats (3.31%)	• Hanura Party • Perindo Party
	TOTAL: 25.61%	

Based on the political party coalition map for the 2024 Presidential Election, the candidate pair Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka have received support from a number of political parties that hold significant seats in the House of Representatives. Major parties such as Gerindra, Golkar, Demokrat, and Partai Mandat Nasional contribute a total of 261 seats, thereby meeting the threshold requirements for presidential and vice presidential candidacy. In addition, additional supporting parties such as the Indonesian Solidarity Party, the Star Moon Party, the Gelora Party, and the Garuda Party strengthen this coalition. The coalition of parties chose the name Koalisi Indonesia Maju (KIM) to emphasize their political agreement and demonstrate unity in facing the 2024 elections. Then, the candidate pair Anies Rasyid Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar formed a coalition with several parties that had significant seats in the House of Representatives. The National Democratic Party, the National Awakening Party, and the Prosperous Justice Party together provided a total of 167 seats, fulfilling the requirements to legally nominate the candidate pair. In addition to these major parties, additional support was provided by the Ummat Party, which strengthened the political base of this candidate pair. The coalition supporting Anies and Muhaimin was named the Coalition for Change and Unity (KPP), reflecting the political agreement and common goals of the supporting parties.

In addition, the candidate pair Ganjar Pranowo and Mahfud MD formed a coalition involving several parties with a significant number of seats in the House of Representatives. The Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) provided the largest support with 128 seats, followed by the United Development Party (PPP) with 19 seats, bringing the total coalition support to 147 seats. Additional support was provided by the Hanura Party and the Perindo Party, strengthening the political base of this candidate pair. This coalition is known as the PDI-P and PPP Coalition, reflecting the strategic cooperation between the supporting parties to meet the threshold requirements for presidential and vice presidential candidacy.

Prospective Coalition of Political Parties on the Sustainability of Democracy

A collection of people united by common principles and goals, striving to secure political authority and positions to put their programs into action (Miriam Budiarmo, 2008: 406). Political parties not only have the goal of power, but also as a characteristic that characterizes a political party (Firmanzah, 2011: 68). Indonesia is a country where political parties form alliances to strengthen their power and compete for positions in elections at every level, particularly the presidential race. The coalition created among political parties in Indonesia is not rigid and tends to be flexible, because the coalition prioritizes common interests in gaining power. The influence of a coalition during a presidential election is directly linked to the parliamentary power of its member parties. This is done by coalitions from each supporter so that not only the coalition in the executive realm but also the legislature is also strengthened.

Of the many political parties that advanced in the elections, not all of them received large votes, but there were actually several large political parties that experienced a decline from the results of the previous election. Therefore, political parties that obtain less than expected results must form coalitions with major political parties that have superior voting results. According to Indrayana, D (2011: 180) the large number of existing political parties will make support for the government increasingly give rise to groups with different interests, therefore a large coalition is needed so that the risk of the election of a president with minority support in parliament is reduced. The coalition built in the presidential election is not only a momentary interest in the presidential election,

but a coalition will be developed in seizing legislative power. Even a coalition will provide a favorable place for political parties that carry an elected president. The position of the coalition's existence during the presidential election and will continue in the formation of the cabinet by the president.

In Indonesia's presidential election system, presidential and vice-presidential candidates are required to be nominated by a political party or coalition of political parties that meet a certain threshold. This provision is regulated in Article 9 of Law Number 2 of 2008 and updated through Article 222 of Law Number 7 of 2017. The threshold requires political parties or supporting coalitions to have at least 20% of seats in the House of Representatives or 25% of valid votes nationally in the previous legislative elections. The purpose of this provision is to ensure that presidential candidates have sufficient political support and are able to form a stable government. In addition, this requirement encourages political parties to form strategic coalitions, so that the political dynamics leading up to the election are not only determined by the strength of individual parties, but also by their ability to forge effective alliances and strengthen the support base for presidential and vice presidential candidates.

Political party coalitions in Indonesia play a strategic role in the national political system. Parties that form coalitions leverage their combined strength to increase their chances of gaining power in elections for the President, Vice President, Governors, and Regents/Mayors. Coalitions are usually formed based on shared interests, with coalition members uniting to support specific candidates or policies. In addition, the number of seats in parliament is an important factor that strengthens coalitions, because coalitions not only focus on the executive branch, but also strengthen political influence in the legislature. This shows that coalition strategies in Indonesia are a combination of short-term political interests and long-term planning to ensure optimal influence in both branches of government.

The Role of Political Party Coalitions in Democracy

Coalition governments in Indonesia are not new. Since Indonesia's independence, which he called the era of parliamentary democracy, the government or cabinet has always been built on the basis of coalitions (Feith, H. 2007). The government coalition is also run when the form of government is no longer parliamentary but a presidential system. The Indonesian Constitution affirms that Indonesia adheres to the presidential system as stipulated in Article 4 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (1945 Constitution) and began to be fully implemented in the 2004 elections. The amendment of the 1945 Constitution has succeeded in ushering in the Indonesian government to a pure presidential system. It is marked by the direct election of the president and vice president by the people. In Indonesia, the presidential system is combined with a multiparty system. The implementation of the direct presidential election system as an affirmation of the pure presidential system is actually supported by multi-party.

A key challenge of multiparty systems in certain countries, including Indonesia, is the creation of fragile party structures with low levels of institutionalization. This instability can lead to internal strife and party fragmentation, making it difficult for parties to enforce discipline. As a result, it's common for politicians to move between different parties. The composition of a government's cabinet of Ministers is directly impacted by the coalition's makeup, which is determined by parliamentary seats and the support each party garnered during the presidential election. The formation of the coalition is expected to provide stability to the president's political and work agenda due to strong political support in parliament. Thus, the solidity of the coalition can be based on the common goals and political agenda among the coalition of political parties.

With the 1945 Constitution's amendment, the presidential system, which now operates within a multiparty political structure, has been strengthened as the basis for the state administration. There are two categories of multiparty systems, namely simple multiparty systems and extreme multiparty systems. Indonesia adheres to an extreme multiparty system, which means that there are parties with a large number of parties. There are no restrictions on the establishment of political parties, nor are there strict requirements for their participation as elected members. As a result, the party grows like mushrooms in the rainy season, and is seen as part of the expression of democratic freedom. The increase in political parties and their widespread participation in elections is strong evidence of a developing democratization within the nation. However, it must also be understood that the growth of democracy must not only be considered, but also competing political forces must be able to realize the welfare of the community.

Coalitions among political parties are a natural consequence in Indonesia because its multiparty system aligns with the country's diverse cultural landscape. When this multiparty system is combined with the presidential system of government, juridical implications arise that affect the relationship between the executive and legislative institutions. This change in political dynamics will certainly have an impact on the concept and strategy of forming political party coalitions in the upcoming elections, considering the importance of stability and government effectiveness in the ever-evolving political context.

This coalition of political parties is part of the political forces to seize power ranging from presidential elections to regional heads. A major cause of government ineffectiveness in Indonesia is the instability of political party coalitions. From a legal standpoint, the problem is that these alliances lack a common vision and program, and are typically formed for only a brief period. With inter-party compromise, various policies can be implemented to represent the broader interests of the community. This coalition of political parties has an effect on political stability, government formation, and the resulting policies.

Because Indonesia has many political parties and no single one is strong enough to control parliament alone, forming a coalition is a key part of its democracy. Parties team up to nominate candidates for president and vice president and to build a government that can actually get things done.

Political party coalitions play an important role in ensuring the success of presidential candidates in Indonesia. Historical examples show that from the 2004 elections to the 2024 elections, the winning presidential candidates were generally supported by strong and strategic political party coalitions. In 2004, the SBY-JK pair received support from several parties, while in 2014, the Jokowi-JK pair was supported by the Great Indonesia Coalition. Ahead of the 2024 elections, the Indonesia Maju Coalition has become the largest coalition supporting the Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka pair. This phenomenon shows that success in presidential elections in Indonesia is greatly influenced by the ability of political parties to form strategic alliances.

Overall, coalitions are a cornerstone of Indonesia's democratic stability. By bringing parties together, they facilitate the nomination of national leaders and the creation of a stable government. This also ensures that different public interests are represented in political decisions, making coalitions a crucial, if often pragmatic and dynamic, mechanism.

The Impact of Political Party Coalitions on the Sustainability of Democracy

The impact of political party coalitions on the sustainability of democracy in Indonesia shows complex dynamics. On the one hand, coalitions have great potential to strengthen democratic governance systems, especially in the context of a multiparty presidential system like Indonesia. In this system, the president needs the support of a majority in parliament to carry out his government's agenda. Therefore, the coalition is an important means of building political consensus and ensuring government stability. The coalition in Indonesian democracy is a response to post-reform political fragmentation, which is characterized by the large number of political parties that have representation in the House of Representatives (Ambardi, K. 2009). In this context, coalitions help reduce the risk of political deadlock and encourage compromise between various political forces.

However, coalitions also have a negative impact on the sustainability of democracy if they are not managed with the principles of transparency and accountability. One of the main impacts is the erosion of the opposition's function as a balance of power. As argued by Warburton, E. (2019) a grand coalition that embraces almost all parties in parliament, as happened in the second term of President Joko Widodo's administration, has blurred the line between opposition and coalition. This leads to weak control over the government, as well as reducing the quality of deliberation in the legislative and supervisory process. In such conditions, the system of checks and balances becomes suboptimal, and democracy is at risk of regression.

Coalitions formed based on pragmatic and transactional interests can also have a detrimental impact on political integrity. In many cases, the parties that are members of the coalition tend to put the interests of the party and the elite above the public interest. As explained by Buehler, M. (2013) the practice of political patronage is still strong in coalition formation, where ministerial seats and public positions are often used as bargaining tools. The subsequent impact is weak governance and the potential for political corruption. This threatens the quality of substantive democracy that not only relies on electoral procedures, but also guarantees clean, effective, and accountable governance.

In addition, the coalition also poses a serious threat to democracy. Often, coalitions are built not on the basis of common ideology or a long-term vision, but rather on pragmatic interests to gain power. This can result in policies that are not on the side of the people, because they prioritize party elites more. The dominance of large coalitions also has the potential to weaken the opposition's function, which is supposed to oversee government policies, so that the checks and balances mechanism becomes dull. Another threat is the emergence of a political oligarchy, where important decisions are made only by a handful of party leaders in the coalition. This risks limiting public participation and narrowing the democratic space. If the coalition is only used to maintain power without regard for the interests of the people, then people's trust in the political system will be eroded. For this reason, transparency and accountability in building coalitions are the key to maintaining a healthy and inclusive democracy.

An inter-party coalition based on purely political interests will only have an impact on the emergence of minority elite classes that rule over the majority of the people, where democracy cannot be fully implemented because the elite only attaches importance to power and the distribution of allotments to fellow parties in coalition. Meanwhile, a coalition that aims on the basis of the common views and politics of national democracy in order to achieve national ideals and goals, will have a positive impact on the preservation of the interests of the people and the guarantee of all the needs of the people.

Based on the rules of the article, the coalition is the only option for political parties to be able to propose who is the pair of presidential and vice presidential candidates to be proposed to fight in the general election. In addition to being based on the rules of the General Election Law, the implementation of political party coalitions also occurs as a result of the party system and the general election system implemented in Indonesia. In the parliamentary system, this coalition is common, although in practice, the existence of a coalition of political parties actually interferes with the executive in running the government optimally.

Currently, what happens is that political party coalitions tend to be instantaneous, which means that the coalitions carried out are more concerned with short-term political interests and are not based on a mutually agreed political program for a certain period of time and is permanent. In the period of political transition, the relationship between

the system of government, which in theory is closely related between efforts to organize a democratic political system with a stable, strong and effective system of government and the arrangement of a democratic political system is something very important, and must be sought so that there are no complications between the relationship between the two to the presidential system adopted in Indonesia.

Thus, the impact of political party coalitions on the sustainability of democracy in Indonesia is paradoxical. On the one hand, coalitions are needed to create stability in a pluralistic political system. But on the other hand, if a coalition is only built on the basis of pragmatic interests, without commitment to democratic principles, then it can actually weaken the quality of democracy itself. Therefore, a strong institutional design and political ethics are needed to ensure that coalitions function to support democracy, not undermine it.

CONCLUSION

In Indonesia, direct presidential elections are a tangible manifestation of people's sovereignty, which is at the heart of the democratic system based on the 1945 Constitution. However, in practice, these elections not only involve individual candidates, but also demonstrate the power and strategies of political parties that form coalitions. The formation of these coalitions is closely related to the presidential threshold, which requires a party or coalition of parties to have a minimum of 20% of seats in the House of Representatives or 25% of the national valid votes in order to nominate a presidential and vice-presidential candidate pair. Because the presidential system is combined with a multiparty system, no single party is strong enough to nominate a president, making coalitions a strategic necessity. The coalitions that are formed tend to be pragmatic, flexible, and based on short-term interests rather than ideological similarities. This situation poses a challenge for the consolidation of democracy, as the stability and quality of democracy are highly dependent on the integrity and sustainability of political cooperation between parties.

In the context of the 2024 presidential election, the dynamics of coalition formation describe intense political contestation with the emergence of three major axes: the Advanced Indonesia Coalition (Prabowo-Gibran), the Coalition for Change for Unity (Anies-Muhaimin), and the PDI Perjuangan Coalition (Ganjar-Mahfud). Each coalition combines major and small parties to meet the nomination threshold, while expanding the political support base. Election results show that the size of a coalition is often directly proportional to vote gain, but it does not guarantee victory if it is not supported by the candidate's popularity and effective campaign strategy. Coalitions also bring ambivalent impacts to democracy; on the one hand it strengthens the stability of government and political representation, but on the other hand it can weaken the function of the opposition and encourage transactional political practices that threaten the principles of substantial democracy. Therefore, in building a coalition in the future, integrity, transparency, and commitment to the national vision are needed so that the coalition is not only a tool for power grabbing, but also a pillar that supports a healthy and sustainable democracy.

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