

How Do Political Parties Handle Their Internal Problems? A Comparative Study between the Nationalist Party and Islamic Party in Indonesia (*Golkar and PKS*)

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ABSTRACT

Recently, many parties have been trapped into an internal conflict, such as Golkar and PKS that have different ideological foundations. There are significant differences on their conflict resolution mechanisms, but the internal conflicts are still similar related to the existence of party elites, especially when the conflict is solved through the binding decision of the Supreme Court. This study aimed to examine the political parties in Indonesia and how they solve the internal problems to prevent any impact to their work. Qualitative method was implemented in this research, and most of the data were obtained from the literature review and the secondary data of the parties. The results of the research revealed that the factors that influence the internal conflicts between the parties are not caused by the ideological aspects, but caused by the needs of the elites. It can be solved by strengthening the position of the party court and increasing the number of members in the party court.

Keywords: Political Party, Conflict, Golkar, PKS.

1. INTRODUCTION

In a democratic system, one main element which plays a very important role is a political party. Indonesia, as a democratic country, has a long history of its political parties. As cited from Government Regulation No. 10 of 1945 about the importance of the establishment of the party, the first Indonesian election was held in 1955, and it was considered as the most democratic election in Indonesia. Based on data, there are 172 political parties in Indonesia [1]. On the other hand, in the world context, the parties in Indonesia declined due to Soekarno's political ambitions as the factor that caused his downfall, and went into a new order which had a similar system and it was even not that better than Sukarno's order. However, the internal conflict between the political parties was left unresolved, and it might have an impact on the parties' solidarity [2]. Furthermore, a conflict would cause a change in the organizational structure [3]. Therefore, in this study, the researchers tried to analyze how the political parties that have different ideologies manage their internal conflict.

During the order, although the fact reveals that the internal divisions of Sarekat Islam turn into the red and the white, the ruin of Masyumi continued to cause a conflict in the reformation era, such as the internal conflict occurred in PAN and caused their cadres' move to other parties [4]. In addition, the conflict of duality of the conferences and leadership of PPP [5] was the real example of political parties' internal conflict that happened in Indonesia in recent years. One of the parties that has bad luck in experiencing internal conflict is Golkar. Usually, the internal conflict is caused by the decolonisation process, ineffective conflict management, and recruitment process [6], [7]. Golkar has a long history of conflict; even this party considered the internal conflict as a source of power [8]. Golkar was initially formed to solve the influence of the Communist Party of Indonesia in 1964, which then perceived the function of the political party and began to join the first election in 1971 [9]. Over the last five years, Golkar's internal conflict is not only at the central level, but it increases to the local level. For example, in the Golkar dualism conflict, the impact has been felt in several regions, including the region where the Golkar voters come from.

For example, like in DPD Golkar of West Sulawesi, an internal conflict is caused by a unilateral termination done by DPP Golkar, and it is getting complex due to the duality of leadership in the centre [10]. The same case happened in Riau

Province [11], which took the focus of Golkar cadres to internal problems and gave impacts on the electability of Golkar party in the region. Another similar case happened on the Golkar's vote in the Regional Head Election Level 2. Factionalization became the factor that caused Golkar's failure to win in some areas since they could not give their best performance, for example when Golkar finally lost their hegemony in Gowa, one of the areas where the Golkar voters come from. [12]. It also happened in other provinces, when the conflict of DPP had caused a turbulence in the area where the Golkar voters come from, namely South Sulawesi, even though the condition in this area was still better due to the presence of Syahrul Yasin Limpo (now Nasdem's politician), who played a role in solving the conflict of dualism in the centre [13].

The demisioner period in Golkar's organization structure seems to be useless in solving the internal conflicts which continuously occur. The election of Airlangga Hartarto as a chairman was conducted quietly, and it still caused other internal conflicts. The debate during the National Congress (Munas) became the initial trigger of the conflict, until now. The internal conflict occurred between Airlangga and Bambang Soesatyo. The conflict had increased when Bambang Soesatyo stated that he had been reconciling with Airlangga; as posted on Golkar's official account on Instagram (<http://instagram.com/PartaiGolkar/>) which fully supports Bambang to be the chairman of the MPR [14]. However, in some media, the declaration of Bambang Soesatyo as the candidate for the Golkar's chairman has caused a worse conflict between the two loyalists that cannot be prevented [15], [16]. Both strongholds had claimed the support from President Joko Widodo and DPD Golkar as well. Due to this conflict, Airlangga Hartarto and several stakeholders in Golkar are reported by several Golkar cadres to the party court, although the party court had previously given a tendency of alignments to Airlangga Hartarto [17], [18].

On the other hand, if we see the mechanism of the election in Golkar, the chairman has implemented intra-party democracy theory. This theory can be implemented differently by each party, but there is a tendency that the system will be used in the short period [19]. In this case, the application of intra-party democracy through direct selection often indicates a tendency to trigger internal conflicts, such as the unrest in national deliberations to the duality of leadership. Internal elections will seem very democratic if the election process is conducted transparently. Meanwhile, the untransparent system

of the election tends to cause more stable conditions [20], and the political party should have been thinking of problem solving.

In addition to the issue of duality in leadership, Golkar cadres tend to have a certain standard based on the performance of the members, and this standard often puts the Golkar's chairman at the central or regional level, and they should work hard to meet the cadres' demands. This conflict also happened recently at DPW Golkar of Yogyakarta. Haryadi Suyuti, who is the chairman of Golkar in the Special Region of Yogyakarta and as the mayor of Yogyakarta, and he asked to release his position as a chairman due to the decline of Golkar electability in this region [21]. This case is very contradictory with the general issue that the public are likely to choose a leader who can show his capability [22]. Meanwhile, the Golkar cadres tend to prefer the track record and achievement.

Golkar is known as the party that became the forerunner of the new party's growth, as caused by many factions in this party, and it was caused by both fusion and merger that occurred in the new order. The existence of the influential figures in Golkar is one of the factors that triggers a conflict. According to Huddy, internal conflicts will potentially occur if the members of individuals in the organization tend to have strong personal identification values [23]. Hence, it really occurs in the internal politics of Golkar, but the conflict becomes the party's primary source of strength. However, it is considered as a 'red light' for the continuity of Banyan in the future.

Similar to Golkar, another party, which is called as a party with the best regeneration system and the most solid party, namely PKS (Partai Keadilan Sosial) also experiences a conflict. The conflicts are the termination of some members at the central level, such as Fahri Hamzah and Anis Matta, and the effort in "cleaning" the cadres in district level. The termination conflict occurred in PKS and it is getting worse due to Fahri Hamzah's demand in the Jakarta state court, which then continued until the next level, and won by Fahri Hamzah with the demand of the material amounted to 30 billion Rupiah, or seized the assets of PKS including their Central Leadership Council [24].

This conflict also triggered the emergence of a new party with a similar ideology held by Fahri Hamzah and Anis Matta, called as Gelora. The internal conflicts have re-opened the faction that exists in PKS, such as the justice faction and the prosperous faction [25]. The stronghold is in the

body of PKS. The same case occurred when Golkar did not often give solutions for the internal condition of the political party. The internal conflict will undoubtedly be the challenge of PKS's regeneration in the future, considering one of the main characteristics of the PKS that has existed since it is still a Justice Party (PK), and the democracy achieved through a representation or deliberation [26]. PKS is currently considered to have a conflict when it abandoned the value of Da'wah party and increased the pragmatic-oriented due to the relationship of this party with the Nationalist Party (Basyir, 2014). The internal conflict nuanced this final pragmatic end will trigger the public's confidence significantly against this party. PKS could have survived in the 2019 political contest, but PKS has to face the possibility of a sound proliferation due to the increased electability which is seized by the Internal conflict.

In the institutional theory of political parties, a political party can be declared successful in adapting if it unites all social forces as the development of the era [27]. In the context of the internal conflict management in internal political parties of Indonesia, the rules have been determined based on the Law No. 2 of 2011, political party conflicts resolved through 3 primary mechanisms, the first is through the ARTICLE OF ASSOCIATION of the party, the second is through the internal party court, and the third is by reporting to the state court that can be continued to the level of cassation in the Supreme Court (MA) [28]. However, the parties have different ideological foundations and different conflict resolution processes, but they have similar internal conflicts related to the existence of party elites, especially when the conflict is solved through the binding decision by the Supreme Court. Therefore, this study aimed to analyze how the political parties in Indonesia solve the internal problems without having impacts on the internal party.

2. METHODS

A qualitative method was implemented in this study. Qualitative research can be interpreted as a study that consists of many methods. Qualitative research steps systematically include: collecting data, organizing data, and interpreting textual information including video and images (Young & Hren, 2008). The data collection process in this study began by conducting literature review to find issues related to this study, as well reviewing the theories and data. After that, a theoretical

framework was created based on the data, in order to be the basis for a data retrieval and analysis. The results were in the form of analytical materials and adjusted to the existing frame of thought as a result of the literature review conducted at the beginning. After the analysis process was completed, the conclusion was drawn. In this study, the researchers used books and journals as for the literature review step.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In article 32 of law No. 2 of 2011 on the amendment to Law No. 2 of 2008 about the settlement of political party conflicts, the mechanism of internal conflict resolution of the political party in the internal party through a party court or similar institution is governed by the party's Article of Association. This conflict must be solved in the maximum period of 60 days and the decision will be bound by the institution as the final result. In the next article, it is explained that when the party court cannot solve the problem, the conflict can be continued to the state court and to the highest level of the Supreme Court.

Methods to solve the internal party's problem

One of the Indonesian people's points of view is based on the value stated in Pancasila. Pancasila, as their guidance of life, has many values that can be adopted in various activities, such as for the party as well. One of the values adopted by the party in Indonesia is deliberation.

According to the second AD/ART (Article of Association and Bylaws) of the party, the article was published on deliberation. This deliberation mechanism is usually interpreted in various forms, ranging from national deliberations, work meetings, and so on. In the Golkar party, the conflict resolutions based on AD/ART are divided into three ways; the first is critical deliberation that is in the form of extraordinary deliberation, then arbitrage and judiciary, while PKS only knows one mechanism in their AD/ART, or the deliberation itself. This deliberation is governed by Majelis Syuro and held with the help of the entire members of the party.

Therefore, it can be emphasized that there are three conflict resolutions used by Golkar based on the theory of conflict resolution, namely negotiation, arbitration, and litigation. Meanwhile, PKS prioritizes negotiation as the resolution.

The mechanisms of problem-solving done by

Golkar and PKS are related to the ideology that is used as the parties' basis. Both of them prioritize the principle of deliberation as a form of the implementation of Pancasila ideology, but Golkar tends to hold nationalists and democratically and do not prioritize the religious value, but rather prioritizing the principle of meritocracy through the competition path in both inside and outside the court. PKS, as a party based on the basic principle of Islam, implements the Islamic values, for example Al-Hiwar, as the concept of Islam [29].

3.1. The Role of Party Court in Managing Conflict

In the institutional structure of the PKS, there are at least four main institutions located in the central management of the Prosperous Justice Party, such as Majelis Syuro, Dewan Syariah Pusat, Dewan Pimpinan Pusat and Majelis Pertimbangan Pusat. PKS organizational structures can be described as follows:



Figure 1. Dewan Syariah Pusat (The Central Shariah Board) of PKS' position in the organizational structure

The Central Shariah Board provides a conflict resolution for PKS according to the Article Of Association of PKS. Central Shariah Board, an institution formed by Dewan Syuro as the highest institution in the PKS management structure, has the authority to handle the problems related to the fatwa and fasts, internal problems in the organization, society, and so on. The problems will then become Dewan Syuro's responsibility. Hence, if referring to PKS' Article of Association, it can be assessed that the Shariah Board implements the mandate of the establishment of a party court.

When referring to the PKS organizational structure, the Shariah Board's position is aligning with the position of the PKS Central Board which means that the chairman of the PKS Shariah board has an equal position with PKS president, as well as the central consideration. In other words, it is similar to the Trias Politika concept. Nevertheless, the Shariah Board implements an Islamic concept, such as the Council of Shura and Muslih (mediator) [30]. Meanwhile, it is different from the position of party

court in Golkar’s organization structure. In the online news of April 2018, Airlangga Hartarto, the general chairman of Golkar, appointed seven leaders of the Golkar party court (Coil, 2018). Hence, it can be concluded that the court position of Golkar party is under the supervision of the chairman. As a result, the existence of the Golkar party court will be as follows:

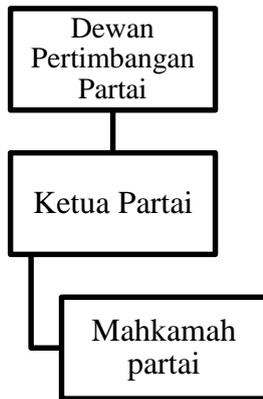


Figure 2. Mahkamah Partai Golkar’s position in its organizational structure

Based on its organizational structure, when compared with the concept of Trias Politika, it can be seen that Golkar does not use the concept appropriately, compared with the judiciary in the internal party that has a position, even though it is weak enough under the executive. Several previous researches related to the court of the party revealed two main problems that led to the ineffectiveness of the party court. The first is the weak conflict resolution in the institution party/party court [31]; the second was the party cadres’ distrust toward the main intervention of the Minister of Law and Human Rights, and it is certainly related to political interests [32]. If the intervention is left unresolved, it will incriminate our law system, since the court will not solve the internal conflicts of the party unless through an internal mechanism [33].

Based on the two problems above, it can be concluded that Golkar’s party court has a weak position in the structure of the party. Hence, it can be an obstacle for the party to move forward. The position of the institution that played a role of judicial in this party was under the executive who was the object of the law of the party court. Thus, bias is very likely to happen in the party. PKS tends to have a stronger institutional structure compared to Golkar. The position of the Central Shariah Board that has similar tasks to the party court is equal to the Central Board’s Director who acts as the daily implementer in order to create a more

extensive space for the Central Shariah Board, and to make decisions in the internal party as the party executive. The highest institution that is above the Central Sharia Council and the director resulted in a more accountable decision.

The second problem is to intervene with other parties in the conflict resolution process, as well as convincing the party cadres against the party court’s role. The party cadres tend to be difficult to accept the party court’s decisions and give an intervention on the party’s conflict resolution. Golkar had experienced this kind of situation in the conflict resolution effort between Aburizal Bakrie and Agung Laksono, even though it was disputed by the two camps and the senior in Golkar, namely Akbar Tanjung [34]. Meanwhile, PKS tends to have more resilience in the face of external interventions, and this condition is influenced by the number of people who have strong influences in PKS. Besides, the existence of Majelis Syura is placed in the highest position of the organisation, and at least 35 members are also able to create internal stability in PKS.

3.2. Does ideology play a role in political party internal stability?

Based on the explanation on how political parties make decisions based on their ideology, it can be concluded that unstable conditions in the political parties are the result of the implementation of the ideology. In the decision-making process, the party which has a religious base of Islam is more likely to have strong legitimacy because of the position of the majelis syura in the organization and institutions and implemented by the members. Even though it is often considered undemocratic, making decisions without involving many party cadres tends to minimize the possibility of internal fragmentation. However, is it true that the ideology does play a role in the party?

According to Firyal, who played a role in solving the internal conflict, it is not a matter of the party’s ideology, since the conflicts are based on the interests of the party elites [35]. Based on this condition, it is very natural if the method of conflict resolution, carried out by the PKS, by adopting the value of the Islamic value is considered better than the other party, in this case Golkar, but the matter is not due to the adopted ideology. The resolution for the internal problems is depending on the number of party’s members. Golkar, which has many influential figures, often takes advantage of elites. Hence, the party court should be strengthened by adding many

members in order to prevent external political intervention.

Conflict, especially internal conflict, is inevitable, but it can be prevented, and if it already happened, it can be controlled if an institution has an appropriate resolution for solving the conflict. The conflicts can be worse if the resolution does not run properly. There are several methods related to conflict management but the implementation will be very relative. Internal conflicts that happen between the party members are not caused by the ideology, but by party elites. However, the ideology obviously will affect the organisation decision-making process, such as PKS that implements islamic values as a foundation on their organization; while Golkar uses more secular values in running the organization. The Islamic ideology is appropriately used as the system in managing those internal conflicts, due to the number of members involved in the conflict management, and due to the position of the party court in the organization.

Golkar has to adopt this system to resolve the internal conflicts, since it can be done without changing the basis of value or ideology of the organization, but rather strengthening the internal judicial system of the party with two main aspects. First, by recruiting more people in the court party. The number of people involved in the internal judicial process will make the party more easily intervened by the other parties. Second, by changing the position of the party court to a stronger position, since it can make the decision-making process become more objective and convincing.

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