



The Implications of The Role of Political Parties in Strengthening Democracy in Indonesian Legislative Elections

Afrizal ^{1*}, Tamaulina Br. Sembiring ²

^{1,2} Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, Indonesia

Author correspondence: afrijalpengacara@gmail.com

Abstract, Rapid developments in information technology have opened up opportunities for new threats to national security, one of which is hacking of information systems. Cyber attacks not only cause economic losses and disrupt public services, but also pose a serious threat to Indonesia's digital sovereignty. In this context, state intelligence has a strategic role as the front line in detecting, analyzing, and countering various forms of threats to the country's strategic information systems. However, strengthening the function of state intelligence in dealing with hacking crimes still faces various obstacles, ranging from regulatory aspects that are not yet adaptive, weak inter-agency coordination, to limitations in technology and human resources. This study aims to examine the extent of the effectiveness of strengthening state intelligence in countering information system hacking, as well as to formulate the urgency of updating national legal policies that support the formation of a strong, integrated, and professional cyber intelligence system. Using a normative legal research method supported by a conceptual and case approach, this study concludes that strengthening state intelligence requires regulatory reform, institutional integration, and investment in technology and human resources in order to maintain national sovereignty in the digital age.

Keywords: Cyber Security, Digital Sovereignty, Hacking, Legal Policy, State Intelligence

1. BACKGROUND

Democracy is a system of government that places the people as the highest authority. This principle is explicitly stated in Article 1 paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which states that sovereignty is in the hands of the people and is exercised in accordance with the Constitution. In the Indonesian context, democracy is not only understood as a normative concept, but also as a mechanism that is realized through the implementation of general elections (pemilu) that are conducted directly, publicly, freely, confidentially, honestly, and fairly. Elections are the main means for the people to exercise their political rights and test the quality of the democratic system. In Indonesian constitutional practice, the existence of political parties is a key prerequisite for democratic elections. This is based on the fact that Indonesia's legislative election system uses political parties as the only gateway for citizens to run for legislative office. Thus, the role of political parties is crucial in providing space for political participation, recruiting candidates for public office, and ensuring that the interests of the people are represented in representative institutions.

Political parties are conceptually viewed as pillars of democracy because they have fundamental functions, namely as a means of political education, articulation and aggregation of interests, political recruitment, and control over the running of government. These functions emphasize that a healthy democracy can only be realized if political parties are able to carry

out their roles effectively and responsibly. In the context of legislative elections, political parties do not merely compete for seats in parliament, but also play a role in maintaining the legitimacy of democracy through fair and inclusive political representation mechanisms. However, in empirical reality, the role of political parties in Indonesia still faces various serious challenges. One of the main problems is the oligarchic tendency within parties, where decision-making processes are dominated by a small number of elites. This results in the recruitment of legislative candidates prioritizing personal connections, financial capital, and the interests of elites over the quality, integrity, and capacity of candidates. As a result, the resulting parliament does not fully reflect the representation of the people, but rather the representation of the interests of certain political elites.

In addition, money politics has become an increasingly entrenched phenomenon in the conduct of legislative elections in Indonesia. Money politics not only undermines the principles of fairness and honesty in elections, but also weakens the position of the people as holders of sovereignty. When the people's votes are exchanged for material rewards, the essence of democracy as a mechanism for rational political participation is transformed into a short-term transaction. This certainly has a negative impact on the quality of democracy, because the people no longer vote based on the candidates' programs or visions, but rather on pragmatic factors.

Another noteworthy phenomenon is the decline in public trust in political parties. National surveys show that political parties are often perceived as corrupt, elitist institutions that are far removed from the aspirations of the people. This low level of public trust has led to political apathy, marked by an increase in the number of people who do not vote (golput) and a decline in active participation in formal political activities. If left unchecked, public apathy can erode the legitimacy of elections as an instrument of democracy and weaken the role of political parties as pillars of democracy. The role of political parties has a direct implication on the stagnation of democratic strengthening in Indonesia. Democracy, which should be a space for public participation and control, has instead been manipulated into an arena for narrow competition among elites. In fact, if political parties are able to carry out their political recruitment functions transparently, prioritize political education for the public, and facilitate the representation of marginalized groups, then legislative elections can become an effective instrument in strengthening the quality of substantive democracy.

Therefore, it is important to analyze the implications of political parties' roles in strengthening democracy in legislative elections in Indonesia. First, to assess the extent to which political parties are able to carry out their democratic functions in accordance with the

mandate of the constitution and party laws. Second, to identify issues that hinder the role of political parties in strengthening democracy. Third, to provide recommendations for improving the party system and the implementation of legislative elections to be more democratic, inclusive, and oriented towards the interests of the people. This study is ultimately expected to contribute academically to enriching the literature on democracy and political parties in Indonesia, as well as providing practical contributions to improving the national political system. By understanding the implications of the role of political parties in legislative elections, the direction for strengthening democracy in Indonesia can be formulated more accurately, so that the ideal of realizing a clean, representative government based on people's sovereignty can be achieved.

2. THEORETICAL STUDY

A theoretical study of the implications of the role of political parties in strengthening democracy in legislative elections in Indonesia can be examined through the theories of democracy, political parties, and political representation. The theory of democracy provides the initial foundation for understanding the relationship between the people, the state, and political parties. Abraham Lincoln, in his classic definition, described democracy as government of the people, by the people, and for the people. This view was later enriched by Robert A. Dahl with the concept of *polyarchy*, which emphasizes the importance of broad public participation and open political competition as characteristics of a modern democratic system. In this framework, democracy is not merely an electoral procedure, but also encompasses the substance of freedom, equality, and meaningful public participation.

Political parties in modern democratic systems cannot be separated from the dynamics of elections. Maurice Duverger viewed parties as organized groups that aim to seize political power in order to realize common interests. Meanwhile, Giovanni Sartori saw parties as instruments for articulating and aggregating the interests of society, as well as a means of political recruitment that serves to create qualified representatives of the people. In the Indonesian context, the function of political parties has been legally formulated in Law Number 2 of 2011 concerning Political Parties, which, among other things, emphasizes the importance of political education, leadership recruitment, channeling public aspirations, and maintaining the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Thus, normatively, political parties are seen as the main pillars in strengthening democracy.

However, the role of political parties does not always run according to theoretical ideals. The phenomena of oligarchy, political pragmatism, and weak cadre development often

prevent parties from optimally performing their democratic functions. Slater refers to post-Soeharto democracy in Indonesia as "oligarchic democracy," because the party system is largely controlled by elites with limited interests. This has implications for weak political representation in the legislature and an increase in money politics in every legislative election. Politics is also an important theory that is relevant for understanding the relationship between political parties and the strengthening of democracy. Meaningful representation is not limited to the presence of representatives in parliament, but also how these representatives truly fight for the aspirations of the people. In this case, political parties play an important role, because the mechanism for nominating legislative members is entirely in the hands of the parties. If recruitment emphasizes pragmatic factors such as financial resources and proximity to the elite, then the resulting political representation will be far from substantive democratic values.

By combining democratic theory, political party theory, and political representation theory, it can be understood that the implications of the role of political parties in legislative elections for strengthening democracy are very significant. Political parties that perform their functions ideally will expand public participation, provide representative representatives, and maintain the legitimacy of democracy. Conversely, if parties are trapped in oligarchic practices, money politics, and weak cadre development, legislative elections can actually become an instrument that weakens democracy. Therefore, evaluating the role of political parties in legislative elections is an important step in efforts to strengthen Indonesian democracy based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a normative legal research method. Normative or doctrinal legal research is research that focuses on positive legal norms, legal principles, and legal doctrines relevant to the issues being studied. Normative research was chosen because the issue raised relates to the existence and implications of the role of political parties in strengthening democracy through legislative elections, which is essentially a matter regulated within the framework of Indonesian positive law.

The approaches used in this normative legal research are *the statute approach*, *the conceptual approach*, and *the case approach*. The statute approach was conducted by examining Law No. 2 of 2011 on Political Parties and Law No. 7 of 2017 on General Elections, as well as other laws and regulations related to democracy and the party system in Indonesia. The conceptual approach is used to understand the basic concepts of democracy, political parties, and legislative elections as put forward by legal and political experts. Meanwhile, the

case approach is carried out by examining court decisions or specific political practices related to the role of political parties in legislative elections.

The legal sources used in this study consist of primary legal sources, secondary legal sources, and tertiary legal sources. Primary legal sources include applicable laws and regulations, such as laws, government regulations, and Constitutional Court decisions related to political parties and elections. Secondary legal sources include legal literature, books, scientific articles, journals, and relevant previous research results. Tertiary legal materials include legal dictionaries, encyclopedias, and indexes that can help clarify the understanding of primary and secondary legal materials.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The role of political parties in Indonesia's democratic system has enormous implications, particularly in the context of legislative elections. The Indonesian Constitution clearly states that sovereignty resides with the people and is exercised in accordance with the 1945 Constitution. To realize the principle of people's sovereignty, political parties act as intermediaries between the people and the state, particularly the legislative body, which functions as the representative of the people's voice in parliament. Without political parties, the representative democratic system would be difficult to implement, as the people need a formal platform to channel their political aspirations.

Normatively, the role of political parties has been confirmed in Law Number 2 of 2011 concerning Political Parties, which states that political parties function as a means of political education, creating a climate conducive to national unity, channeling political aspirations, political participation of citizens, and political recruitment in filling political positions through democratic mechanisms.¹ Therefore, legislative elections as the main means of democracy cannot be separated from the existence of political parties, because it is only through political parties that a person can run for legislative office.

The implications of the role of political parties in legislative elections can be seen from several aspects. Political parties have implications for the quality of political recruitment. The recruitment process carried out by political parties determines the future face of parliament, whether it will be filled with individuals who have integrity, capability, and a commitment to the people, or whether it will be dominated by individuals who only care about the interests of their own groups. Good recruitment will produce representatives who function as controllers of government policy and conveyors of the people's aspirations, while pragmatic recruitment will only weaken democracy.

The implications of political parties are evident in political education for the public. Through campaigning, socialization, and other political activities, political parties play a role in shaping public political awareness. If this function is carried out correctly, the public will become more critical and rational in making their choices, thereby improving the quality of democracy. However, when this function is replaced by money politics, identity politics, and political pragmatism, democracy will actually deteriorate.

Political parties have implications for the stability of the democratic system itself. A healthy democracy can only function if political parties operate transparently, accountably, and in the interests of the people. Oligarchy within parties, weak cadre development, and the dominance of political elites often pose serious obstacles. This phenomenon can be seen in various cases of legislative seat contests that prioritize capital over political ideas. This certainly weakens substantive democracy because the people are not truly represented by individuals who are capable of fighting for their interests.

The role of political parties in legislative elections also has implications for the legitimacy of the government system. The legislature produced through elections serves as the representative of the people, as well as a partner of the government in carrying out legislative, budgetary, and oversight functions. If political parties fail to send qualified representatives of the people, then the checks and balances function in the government system becomes weak, which in turn can reduce the quality of democracy.

The implementation of legislative elections in Indonesia is still marred by various problems. The practice of money politics, weak internal party democratization, lack of transparency, and the emergence of political dynasties show that political parties are not yet fully capable of functioning as ideal pillars of democracy. Nevertheless, legislative elections remain an important instrument that allows the people to channel their political aspirations peacefully and constitutionally. In other words, despite their weaknesses, the role of political parties in legislative elections continues to have positive implications for the sustainability of democracy in Indonesia.

Considering the above description, it can be concluded that the role of political parties in legislative elections has dual implications. On the one hand, it can strengthen democracy through good political recruitment, sound political education, and increased government legitimacy. However, on the other hand, if these functions are distorted by oligarchy, pragmatism, and money politics, democracy will actually be weakened. Therefore, internal reform of political parties, public oversight, and strict law enforcement against deviant political

practices are essential conditions for political parties to truly have a positive impact on strengthening democracy in Indonesia.

5. CLOSING

The role of political parties in legislative elections in Indonesia has fundamental implications for the strengthening of democracy. As a main pillar of democracy, political parties not only serve as a channel for the aspirations of the people, but also as instruments of political representation, political education, and national leadership recruitment. Legislative elections provide space for the people to constitutionally exercise their sovereignty through political parties, enabling democracy to function both procedurally and substantively. However, this role has dual implications. On the one hand, political parties can strengthen democracy by presenting qualified representatives of the people, increasing public political awareness through political education, and maintaining a balance of power through their oversight function. On the other hand, the practice of money politics, internal party oligarchy, weak regeneration, and elite domination actually weaken the quality of democracy. Thus, the success of Indonesian democracy is largely determined by the extent to which political parties are able to carry out their functions consistently, transparently, and accountably. Therefore, internal party reform, strict law enforcement against deviant political practices, and active civil society participation in monitoring the electoral process are necessary. Only in this way can political parties truly have a positive impact on strengthening democracy in Indonesia's legislative elections, while also making Indonesian democracy more mature, participatory, and substantive.

REFERENCES

- Asshiddiqie, Jimly. *Pengantar Ilmu Hukum Tata Negara*. Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2010.
- Budiardjo, Miriam. *Dasar-Dasar Ilmu Politik*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2008.
- Dahl, Robert A. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971.
- Diamond, Larry. *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999. <https://doi.org/10.56021/9780801860140>
- Duverger, Maurice. *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*. London: Methuen, 1954.

- Horowitz, Donald L. *Constitutional Change and Democracy in Indonesia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139225724>
- Huda, Ni'matul. *Hukum Tata Negara Indonesia*. Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2015.
- Lincoln, Abraham. Dikutip dalam Shapiro, Ian. *The State of Democratic Theory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Mietzner, Marcus. *Military Politics, Islam, and the State in Indonesia: From Turbulent Transition to Democratic Consolidation*. Singapore: ISEAS, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1355/9789812308450>
- Muhtadi, Burhanuddin. *Perang Bintang: Konstelasi dan Konflik Partai Politik di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Gramedia, 2020.
- Muhtadi, Burhanuddin. *Perang Dagang dan Politik Uang dalam Pemilu*. Jakarta: LP3ES, 2019.
- Mujani, Saiful. *Partisipasi, Demokrasi, dan Perilaku Pemilih Indonesia*. Jakarta: Pustaka LP3ES, 2017.
- Sartori, Giovanni. *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
- Slater, Dan. *Demokrasi Oligarkis: Indonesia Setelah Soeharto*. Jakarta: Obor, 2018.
- Undang-Undang Nomor 2 Tahun 2011 tentang Perubahan atas Undang-Undang Nomor 2 Tahun 2008 tentang Partai Politik.
- Yuda, Hanta. *Presidensialisme Setengah Hati: Dari Dilema ke Kompromi*. Jakarta: Gramedia, 2010.