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The Impact of The Parliamentary Threshold Policy On Small Parties: The Failure of The Partai Persatuan Pembangunan To Meet The Parliamentary Threshold In The 2024 Election

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Abstract: The implementation of the parliamentary threshold policy poses significant challenges for small parties or new parties to gain representation in the legislature. This case study examines the impact of the parliamentary threshold policy on small parties, focusing on the failure of the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP) to meet the parliamentary threshold in the 2024 elections. The research highlights that small parties face difficulties in reaching the threshold, which results in their failure to gain seats in parliament. This situation affects political pluralism by limiting the diversity of political views represented in the legislature, potentially reducing inclusive and fair representation for different groups of voters. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of a mature political system in addressing the challenges of democracy, accommodating diverse political views, including from small parties, to ensure fair and inclusive representation for all citizens. In this research, the method used is normative qualitative, which describes information obtained from legal standards, theories, and legal principles and rules related to the core of the problem by collecting data through interviews. Parliamentary thresholds in fact put pressure on small parties to remain in parliament as the threshold numbers get higher. Thresholds that aim to simplify parties turn out to be a barrier to the represented and the represented, as well as political dissatisfaction and undermine the legitimacy of the political system.

Keyword: Parliamentary Threshold, Political Party, Electoral.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a democratic country, the presence of General Elections (elections) is the application of the meaning of democracy itself. General elections are a political party that has always been a hot topic of public discussion because it is a change of leaders and government to welcome change. General elections are also one of the means of channeling the fundamental rights of citizens. Political parties have a role as a forum for selecting prospective leaders in their own way but still follow the applicable rules set out in the law. The role of political parties itself becomes a liaison with the governing party and the

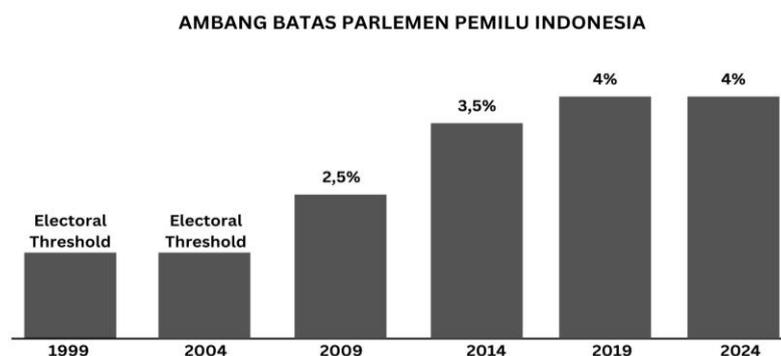
governed, as well as accommodating information from the community to the government or vice versa.

The history of Indonesia's journey in implementing legislative elections (DPR) from 1955 to the 2019 elections has adopted a proportional election system involving many political parties as contestants. This has resulted in challenges in decision-making in the legislature (DPR) due to the diversity of election participants. In the 2004 elections, the concept of limiting political parties as election participants, known as the electoral threshold, emerged to overcome this problem. The electoral threshold concept was later changed to a parliamentary threshold that was applied in the 2009, 2014 and 2019 elections.

A parliamentary threshold is the minimum vote requirement needed by a political party in order to gain seats in parliament or other legislative bodies. This policy has a significant impact, especially for smaller parties who often struggle to get fair and effective political representation. Essentially, this policy was established to determine who the representatives of each party are who can represent their party and the people they lead. The simplicity of Indonesia's multiparty system supported by the Parliamentary Threshold policy will also encourage effectiveness in parliament (Hasibuan, 2020).

According to Law No. 7/2017 on General Elections in Indonesia, a parliamentary threshold has been set. In accordance with this provision, the parliamentary threshold is 4% of the total valid national votes or at least 25% of the total valid votes in a province. However, in order to achieve this result, there were many changes that occurred during the course of the elections. The parliamentary threshold in the 2009 elections was set at 2.5% based on Article 202 of Law Number 10/2008 on the General Election of Members of the DPR, DPD and DPRD.

In the 2014 legislative elections, the threshold was raised to 3.5% in accordance with the provisions of Article 208 of Law Number 8/2012 on the General Election of Members of the DPR, DPD and DPRD. Then, for the 2019 legislative elections, the threshold was agreed to be increased to 4% based on Article 414 of Law Number 7/2017 on General Elections (Mumin, 2020). Thus, in the 2024 elections, it has been determined that the parties that qualify for parliament are parties that have a Parliamentary Threshold above 4% and Partai Persatuan Pembangunan is not one of them.

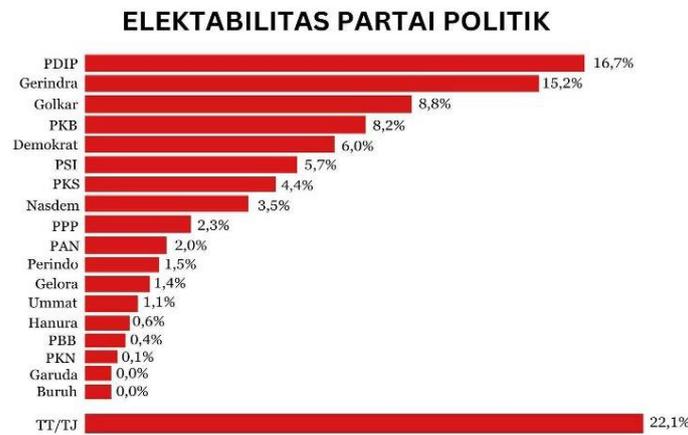


Source: (Mumin, 2020)

Figure 1. 1999-2024 parliamentary thresholds

Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP) is a political party that was officially established on January 5, 1973 in Indonesia. Before having the name of the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP was a joint party of four Islamic parties, namely the Islamic Tarbiyah Islamiyah Union Party, the Indonesian Islamic Union Party, the Nahdlatul Ulama Party, and the Indonesian Muslim Party. In the 2019 elections, Partai Persatuan Pembangunan managed to reach the parliamentary threshold with a total of 6,323,147 votes (4.52%) with a total of 19 seats.

Along with political developments, the findings of the Vox Populi Research Center survey (May, 2023) show that there is a decline experienced by the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan. So that hard work is needed to increase the electability by PPP itself because it is at 2.3% and makes PPP ranked ninth. If the PPP wants to experience safe electability to still qualify for the upcoming 2024 legislative elections, it must be at 4% because that figure is the threshold for the Parliamentary Threshold (PT) in parliament (Rizkyan A. , 2022)



Source: (Sofjan, 2024)

Figure 2. Results from the Vox Populi Research Center Survey

However, the decline in PPP's electability is very worrying to be able to pass the threshold in the 2024 elections. This is due to internal factors such as corruption cases committed by Romahurmuzyi in 2019 and Suryadharma Ali in 2014, who at the time served as chairman of the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan. Likewise, external problems such as lack of publicity efforts, uneven persuasive approaches, and failure to build political reputation management.

In many cases, parliamentary thresholds aim to reduce political fragmentation and increase government stability by limiting the number of parties represented in parliament. However, on the other hand, they can also act as a barrier for smaller parties to gain equal access to the political process.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative research methods with normative type. Due to the parliamentary threshold regulated in Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, namely Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections (Elections), Article 202 of Law No. 10 of 2008 concerning General Elections for Members of the DPR, DPD and DPRD, Article 208 of Law No. 8 of 2012 concerning General Elections for Members of the DPR, DPD and DPRD.

This research was conducted with in-depth interviews, which are interview techniques that are conducted flexibly and openly. This interview was conducted repeatedly with the same informants with questions in the form of Open-Ended questions, namely questions about the facts of events or activities and opinions of related sources. Researchers selectively chose informants based on certain characteristics that are in accordance with the research, namely coming from Election and Democracy Researchers and Cadres of Partai Persatuan Pembangunan. In addition, secondary information from various sources such as books, journal articles and online media was also analyzed. Data collection through documentation techniques refers to retrieving information from documents or records of events that have occurred. Data sources can be in the form of images, monumental works, and writings. The

data analysis used is qualitative, qualitative methods support in obtaining results through interviews as conducted in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP) is a political party that was officially established on January 5, 1973 in Indonesia. Before having the name of the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP was a joint party of four Islamic parties, namely the Islamic Tarbiyah Islamiyah Union Party, the Indonesian Islamic Union Party, the Nahdlatul Ulama Party, and the Indonesian Muslim Party. This party was declared by K.H. Idham Chalid, H.Mohammad Syafaat Mintaredja, S.H, H.Anwar Tjokroaminoto, H.Rusli Halil, and H.Masykur (Al Ghifari, 2017). PPP is a party that uses the principles of Islam and uses the ka'bah as its symbol. However, changes in the dynamics of national politics led PPP to apply the Pancasila principle as a consequence of the new order government policy. This was due to the obligation for political parties to make Pancasila the only principle and PPP became one of the parties that experienced the problem of reducing electability.

In the 2019 elections, Partai Persatuan Pembangunan managed to reach the parliamentary threshold with a total of 6,323,147 votes (4.52%) with a total of 19 seats. The 2019 elections were attended by 16 political parties but only 9 parties met the parliamentary threshold. Parties that are unable to meet the parliamentary threshold are considered to have failed to place their cadres in RI. Partai Persatuan Pembangunan ranked 9th among the 16 parties that participated in the 2019 elections (Farisa, 2022).

Along with political developments, the findings of the Vox Populi Research Center survey (May, 2023) show that there is a decline experienced by the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan. So that hard work is needed to increase the electability by the PPP itself because it is at 2.3% and makes PPP ranked ninth. If the PPP wants to experience a safe electability to still qualify for the upcoming 2024 elections, it must be at 4% because that figure is the threshold for the Parliamentary Threshold (PT) in parliament (Rizkyan A. , 2022)

Indonesia as a democratic country that adheres to open proportionality, in determining the people's representatives who can be elected by the people, of course, there are several rules that must be followed, such as the parliamentary threshold to determine which parties are entitled to seats in parliament. Parliamentary threshold is the threshold number of votes or percentage of votes required for a political party to gain representation in parliament or the legislature. This threshold is set as a requirement to measure the level of popularity or support that is significant enough for a political party to be given seats in parliament.

The purpose of the parliamentary threshold is to control the number of political parties that get representation in parliament so that there are not too many that result in excessive political fragmentation and complicate the decision-making process. In other words, the threshold is intended to reduce political fragmentation and strengthen political stability by allowing larger and stronger parties to control the decision-making process in parliament. However, on the other hand, the implementation of parliamentary thresholds can also present challenges in terms of democratic representation. A threshold that is too high may prevent small or minority parties from gaining fair representation, thus fueling political discontent and undermining the legitimacy of the political system.

The parliamentary threshold is regulated in Law Number 7/2017 on General Elections (Election Law). In the 2024 elections, the parliamentary threshold falls at 4%. The Parliamentary Threshold has been implemented since 2009, in 2004 the threshold was not yet applied because it was still in the implementation of the electoral threshold, which is the vote requirement that must be obtained by political parties in order to become election participants in the following years.

In 2009, the electoral law was changed from the electoral threshold to the parliamentary threshold, but there was never a rational reason as to where the parliamentary threshold was determined, and in every change of this law there was always a debate between large parties and small parties. Where large parties want an increase in the parliamentary threshold to minimize parties entering parliament, while small parties want the parliamentary threshold to fall so that they can survive.

Basically, the establishment of the parliamentary threshold was first enacted in Germany to prevent small parties from entering parliament, so winning is used to slow down political parties in parliament. Unlike in Indonesia, the decision on the size of the parliamentary threshold always has consequences that must be accepted, such as wasted votes due to the implementation of a towering threshold that cannot be achieved by small parties. In this case, the threshold clearly disrupts the proportionality of the election results where Indonesia uses an open proportional election system.

“proportionality aims to balance the number of votes obtained by a party with the number of seats obtained. If a party gets 10% of the votes, then the seats obtained must also be 10%. If a party gets 10% of the votes but the seats obtained are 12%, it can be referred to as over representative and will have an impact on electoral disproportionality. Electoral disproportionality is a mismatch between the percentage of votes obtained by a political party and the percentage of seats given to that party in a legislative body, such as parliament.” (Interview with Heroik Pratama Election and Democracy Researcher, Mei 1, 2024) (Pratama, 2024)

The 2024 elections have proven how difficult it is for small parties to meet the parliamentary threshold. The PPP's failure is also a major phenomenon because as a major party in the reform era, it is now a party that has failed to pass the parliament for the first time. The Parliamentary Threshold is very oppressive to small parties, as they try to compete with large parties that have a high percentage that is quite stable. The 2024 elections have thrown away 17,304,303 votes obtained by small parties that are basically also struggling to get into parliament. The implementation of a fairly high threshold of 4% has made many people's voices unrepresented.

The Parliamentary Threshold is divided into two, namely the legal threshold where the provisions of the minimum vote acquisition requirements that must be obtained by the party are recorded in the law even though there is quite a fierce debate from large parties and small parties. Then there is the effective threshold or disguised threshold, where this is not listed in the law but applies because of the district magnitude or the amount of seat allocation in each electoral district. District magnitude is a concept used in proportional elections to indicate the number of seats contested in a district.

In proportional general elections, a country or region is divided into several electoral districts, and each electoral district has a number of seats to be filled by competing political parties or candidates. District magnitude affects political representation in the legislature. The larger the district magnitude, the more seats available in a district, and this tends to result in more proportional representation for different political parties. Conversely, small district magnitudes can lead to disproportionality in political representation, where small or minority parties may not get fair representation in the legislature.

“If the parliamentary threshold aims to simplify the parties, but the fact states that the amount of Parliamentary Threshold which always increases from 2.5% to 3.5% and rises again to 4% affects the number of parties in parliament which also increases. As in 2019 there were 16 election participants, in 2024 there will be 18 election participants. This means that the increase in the parliamentary threshold is not significant in accordance with its aim to simplify political parties in Indonesia.” (Interview with Heroik Pratama Election and Democracy Researcher, Mei 1, 2024) (Pratama, 2024)

Parliamentary thresholds can limit political pluralism and the right to be elected equally, especially for small or new parties. Too high a threshold can prevent small or minority parties from gaining fair representation, thus fueling political discontent and undermining the legitimacy of the political system.

Partai Persatuan Pembangunan is having difficulty gaining votes in the 2024 elections. In the decision issued by the Indonesian KPU, PPP as a party that after the reformation has a fairly dominant position in every election has not been able to maintain its electability to re-occupy the Senayan bench. The total votes obtained by PPP in the 2024 elections reached 5,878,777 votes, which is equivalent to 3.87 percent of the total national votes (Taufani, 2024). As such, PPP has not managed to reach the 4 percent parliamentary threshold required to convert votes into seats in the DPR.

With its dwindling vote share in the 2019 General Election, PPP is increasingly marginalized and categorized as a bottom-tier political party as it only slightly exceeds the parliamentary threshold of 4 percent. PPP cannot “capitalize on the power of Islamic politics”, instead it is stuck being a “middle player”. The key to the problem lies in PPP's regeneration in producing qualified party leaders or parliamentarians.



Source: (Kusnandar, 2022)

Figure 3. Partai Persatuan Pembangunan Party's gain in the General Election

In the 2019 elections, PPP ranked last in terms of seats and votes because it was the lowest compared to other political parties. This factor is due to the increasing number of election participants, the increase in election participants will automatically increase the pattern of competition and allow PPP votes to be taken by other political parties. If the threshold is at 1%, then PPP is entitled to 12 seats. With the distribution of electoral districts in Aceh I, West Java IX, West Java XI, Central Java II, Central Java III, East Java III, East Java VIII, East Java XI, Banten I, NTB II, South Sulawesi I, South Sulawesi II.

In the parliamentary threshold, there are lower, apert, and optimal thresholds. Appert threshold can be said that if a political party passes the threshold, it can get at least 2 seats. However, if it passes the lower threshold, it only gets the last seat and PPP falls into the lower threshold category. So, PPP's failure occurred due to two factors, namely because the number of election participants continues to increase, the second is because the threshold has increased.

The impact of this threshold was that 5,878,777 PPP votes were wasted. Likewise, cadres who managed to get high votes in various electoral districts. Such as Achmad Baidowi, a cadre from the electoral district of East Java XI. He is one of the consequences of the implementation of the threshold who did not get a seat in parliament. So, it can be seen that the implementation of the threshold has an impact on the aspect of political representation of citizens, one of the reasons why Indonesia uses open proportionality so that

there is direct representation between individual legislators and the voters because voters choose candidates they trust regardless of the party from which they come. Voters give their mandate to their candidates but it is wasted because of the implementation of thresholds that are not calculated rationally, transparently and accountably.

The wasted votes show that there are many people who are not represented by their choices. These votes could have resulted in the representatives they wanted to be in parliament. Likewise, the party will not have representation in parliament, so their views and interests will not be represented politically. The very real possibility of a large number of wasted votes is unequal access to representation and political decision-making, and increased dissatisfaction and distrust of the democratic process.

Table 1. votes were wasted due to parliamentary threshold of 4% (Pratama, 2024)

Political Party	Election Votes	Electoral Seat	Election Votes
PDI-P	25.387.279	110	
GOLKAR	23.208.654	102	
GERINDRA	20.071.708	86	
PKB	16.115.655	68	
NASDEM	14.660.516	69	
PKS	12.781.353	53	134.492.328 (CONVERTED)
DEMOKRAT	11.283.160	44	
PAN	10.984.003	48	
PPP	5.878.777	0	
PSI	4.260.169	0	
PERINDO	1.955.154	0	
GELORA	1.281.991	0	
HANURA	1.094.588	0	
BURUH	972.91	0	
UMMAT	642.545	0	
PBB	484.486	0	17.304.303
GARUDA	406.883	0	(WASTED)
PKN	326.8	0	
JUMLAH	151.796.631		

If the threshold is not agreed with a high limit of 4%, it will certainly minimize the wasted votes. In the implementation of the electoral threshold, the wasted votes were only 3,788,070, in contrast to the 2024 elections where the 4% threshold has wasted 17,304,303 votes and also in the 2019 elections with the same threshold level has wasted 13,595,842 votes. Votes cast for parties that fail to reach the parliamentary threshold are considered wasted as they do not contribute to government formation or political representation.

Table 2. Comparison of disproportionality of six elections (Pratama, 2024)

	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019	2024
PT	0	0	2,5%	3,5%	4%	4%
Peserta Pemilu	48	24	38	12	16	18
Partai DPR	23	15	9	10	9	8
Jumlah Suara	105.553.708	113.490.795	104.048.118	124.885.737	139.972.260	151.796.631
Suara Terkonversi	101.765.638	105.923.510	85.000.637	121.920.762	126.376.418	134.492.328
Suara Terbuang	3.788.070	7.567.285	19.047.481	2.964.975	13.595.842	17.304.303

It can be seen from the table above that the parliamentary threshold really wastes a lot of people's votes. In fact, when the threshold was first implemented in 2009, 19,047,481 votes were wasted, making it the most wasted vote in all of Indonesia's elections to date.

In this case, all strategies and monitoring of political dynamics have been carried out by Partai Persatuan Pembangunan. As is known, the PPP is an Islamic party that is indeed believed in the principles of the party. However, the running of political dynamics opens the eyes of voters to choose parties rationally so that Partai Persatuan Pembangunan must also try to do marketing to continue to exist in the midst of the diversity of existing parties.

Partai Persatuan Pembangunan has tried its best by recruiting popular artists and figures in the success of its campaign in order to achieve the expected votes. Like the BAPPILU occupied by Sandiaga Uno, it is unable to become vote gathers, namely individuals who trigger votes to get votes.

“If in the party it is difficult to see from someone's figure that it can increase electoral or electability because the party is a struggle of the people's voice, if the people's voice is not heard then the people will not make their choice for the party because the people are ordinal collectives, especially due to the age factor of sandiaga who is still very young in PPP.” (Interview with Mazhab HM, Chairman of the Depok City PPP DPC, April 3, 2024)

With the existence of this 4% threshold, they were unable to achieve it even though it was only slightly less. The presence of popular artists and figures in the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan was not able to get the votes as agreed when faced with a threshold of 4%.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of parliamentary threshold policies can pose serious challenges for small or new parties in gaining representation in the legislature. The failure of small parties to meet the threshold can reduce the diversity of political views represented in the legislature, and therefore can reduce more inclusive and fair representation for different groups of voters.

There is a need for an in-depth evaluation of parliamentary threshold policies to ensure that they do not hinder political participation and democratic aspirations. Expanding political participation, especially from minority groups or small parties, is important to strengthen the legitimacy and sustainability of the political system as a whole. Partai Persatuan Pembangunan has fallen victim to this high threshold. Where they became a party that existed in the reform era, they had to be occupied as a party that was not elected to parliament because of the threshold itself. Partai Persatuan Pembangunan faced difficulties in reaching the threshold, which resulted in their failure to gain seats in parliament.

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