THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE PARTAI KEADILAN SEJAHTERA: INCLUSIVITY IN INDONESIA'S MULTICULTURAL POLITICS

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Abstract

This study analyzes the transformation of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) into an inclusive Islamic political party within Indonesia's multicultural political landscape. Through an open political approach toward various groups, including non-Muslims, PKS demonstrates a significant strategic shift in its efforts to expand its mass base amid a plural society. Nonetheless, differences in perspectives within PKS have given rise to two main factions: the conservative Justice faction, which resists political compromise and emphasizes PKS's identity as a dakwah-oriented party, and the more progressive Prosperity faction, which promotes party openness, supports pluralism, and encourages electoral modernization. This study applies Oliver Roy's theory of political pragmatism in Islam, which posits a shift from an exclusive ideological orientation toward an inclusive and pragmatic political strategy. In this context, Islamism no longer focuses solely on rigid religious identity but transforms into a more pluralistic political movement that adapts to the parliamentary democratic system, emphasizing electoral strategies to broaden public support. The research employs a qualitative approach based on literature review and

thematic interpretation. Findings indicate that PKS's strategy reflects patterns of ideological adaptation by contextualizing Islamic values into universal issues, such as social justice, equality, anti-corruption, education, and welfare. The manifestation of this inclusive strategy is evident through the recruitment of members and the nomination of non-Muslim candidates, as well as the opening of political participation across religious lines. This adaptation does not aim to diminish PKS's Islamic identity but rather reframes the party's ideological message to align with the pluralistic, democratic, and pragmatic realities of Indonesian politics.

Keywords: *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Transformation, Post-Islamism, Inclusivity, Multicultural Politics*

Abstrak

Studi ini menganalisis transformasi PKS menjadi partai politik Islam yang inklusif dalam lanskap politik multikultural Indonesia. Melalui pendekatan politik yang terbuka terhadap berbagai kalangan, termasuk non-Muslim, PKS menunjukkan pergeseran strategi signifikan dalam upaya memperluas basis massanya di tengah masyarakat yang majemuk. Meskipun demikian, perbedaan pandangan dalam internal PKS telah memunculkan dua faksi utama: faksi Keadilan yang konservatif, menolak kompromi politik dan menekankan identitas PKS sebagai partai dakwah. Sementara, faksi Sejahtera yang lebih progresif, mendorong keterbukaan partai, mendukung pluralisme, dan mendorong modernisasi elektoral. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori pragmatisme politik islam dari Oliver Roy, bahwa terjadi pergeseran dari ideologi eksklusif menuju strategi politik yang inklusif dan pragmatis. Dalam konteks ini, Islamisme tidak lagi berfokus pada identitas keagamaan yang kaku, tetapi bertransformasi menjadi gerakan politik yang lebih pluralistik dan adaptif terhadap sistem demokrasi parlementer, dengan penekanan pada strategi elektoral untuk memperluas dukungan publik. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis studi pustaka dan interpretasi tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan, bahwa strategi PKS memperlihatkan pola adaptasi ideologis melalui kontekstualisasi nilai-nilai Islam ke dalam isu-isu universal, seperti keadilan sosial, kesetaraan, anti korupsi, pendidikan, dan kesejahteraan. Manifestasi dari strategi inklusif tersebut tampak melalui rekrutmen anggota dan pencalonan figur non-Muslim, serta pembukaan ruang partisipasi politik lintas agama. Adaptasi tersebut bukan bertujuan mengikis identitas keislaman PKS, melainkan membingkai ulang pesan ideologis partai, agar selaras dengan realitas politik Indonesia yang plural, demokrtais, dan pragmatis.

Kata kunci: Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Transformasi, Post-Islamisme, Inklusivitas, Politik Multikultural

A. Introduction

The Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS) is one of Indonesia's Islamic political parties that has undergone significant internal dynamics and transformation

within the national political system (Siregar et al., 2024; Arantika et al., 2025). Since its establishment as the Justice Party (PK) in 1999 and its transformation into PKS in 2002, the party has been known for its ideologically exclusive orientation—characterized by a strong Islamic identity and a closed attitude toward groups or parties with differing views (Basyir, 2014). Along with the development of Indonesia's post-reform political landscape, PKS began to adapt by adopting a more inclusive political approach toward all segments of society (Park, 2023). Its recruitment and leadership processes now include individuals from diverse ideological backgrounds, including non-Muslims (Hakim et al., 2024). According to Nashir (2013), this transformation positions PKS as a prototype of future political parties due to its ability to adapt to the democratic and pluralistic dynamics of Indonesian politics.

Departing from this context, this study argues that the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) is an Islamic political party that has successfully maintained public trust, particularly throughout the legislative elections from 2004 to 2024. This success cannot be separated from the party's inclusive political strategy, which includes recruiting cadres across religious lines and nominating non-Muslim figures for legislative positions. PKS also projects a universal political image by promoting public issues such as social justice, anti-corruption, quality education, and economic welfare—issues that transcend religious and ethnic identities. This transformation reflects PKS's strategic effort to strengthen its image through the slogan "PKS for All," symbolizing its aspiration to become an Islamic party accepted by all Indonesian citizens regardless of religious background. Such a strategy represents a form of political pragmatism that emphasizes moderation and ideological adaptation. This approach aligns with Roy's (1994) theory of Islamic political pragmatism, which posits that Islamic parties adjust their ideological and political strategies to remain relevant and competitive within a pluralistic, democratic, and pragmatic political environment such as Indonesia.

In the post-reform era, the performance of Islam-oriented political parties has become a central focus in the study of Indonesian democracy (Nurjaman, 2023). The increase in PKS's electoral support during the 2004 general election,

as noted by Muhtadi (2012), resulted from a shift of votes from other Islamic parties such as PAN and PPP, which experienced electoral stagnation and struggled to expand their mass base. The limited appeal of Islamic parties to voters led to a decline in their electability after the reform period, prompting internal reforms and political reorientation efforts (Nurdin, 2019). The inability of some Islamic parties to formulate programs that resonated with public interests even triggered the emergence of new Islamic parties and further deepened the fragmentation of Islamic politics in Indonesia (Romli, 2013).

Furthermore, PKS reflects the dialectic between two dominant tendencies within Southeast Asian Muslim societies: democratization and radicalization. Bruinessen (2002) describes PKS as a political force with a dual character— although not entirely democratic, it has made a significant contribution to the democratization process in Indonesia. Machmudi (2008) adds that the emergence of PKS and the Tarbiyah movement as its ideological foundation marks a new phase in modern Islamic politics in Indonesia. This movement not only serves as a medium for the expression of political Islam but also plays a pivotal role in bridging Islamic values with the secular democratic system through the contextualization of da'wah concepts within the framework of nationalism.

Noor (2007) later introduced the concept of "moderate fundamentalism" to describe the ideological character of PKS, which combines fundamentalist Islamic principles with a moderate political approach. PKS continues to adhere to the view that Islam is a comprehensive teaching, with the Qur'an and the Sunnah as its primary sources of law (Nashir, 2013). However, in its political practice, the party presents a moderate and participatory face of Islam. This characteristic distinguishes PKS from more extreme fundamentalist groups such as Laskar Jihad, FPI, or MMI (Machmudi, 2008).

Nevertheless, previous studies have not extensively examined how the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) has undergone internal dynamics in its efforts to become an inclusive party within Indonesia's democratic system. Most research on PKS remains focused on the party's dilemma as a socio-political entity—

between advocating for the implementation of Islamic law and expanding its electoral appeal (Muhtadi, 2012). Other studies have traced the historical origins of PKS to the Tarbiyah movement (Machmudi, 2006; Damanik, 2002), examined the influence of Islamist ideologies from the Middle East, including the Muslim Brotherhood (Rahmat, 2008; Nurdin, 2019), compared PKS with PAS in Malaysia or the AKP in Turkey (Nurdin, 2009; Hidayat, 2012), explored the significance of ideology in PKS's political actions (Permata, 2008), analyzed trends of internal division and factionalism within PKS (Munandar, 2011), and studied PKS's participation in Indonesia's electoral democracy (Hasan, 2012). Therefore, this article seeks to fill the academic gap in studies of PKS by analyzing its inclusivity as an Islamic party within the framework of Indonesian politics—a topic that has thus far received limited scholarly attention.

B. Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach based on a library research design using thematic interpretation techniques, aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of the internal dynamics and transformation of the PKS within the context of contemporary Islamic politics in Indonesia. This approach integrates literature analysis with Oliver Roy's theoretical framework, particularly the concept of post-Islamism, which elucidates the processes of rationalization, adaptation, and the weakening of Islamic political ideologization within democratic and multicultural societies (Roy, 1994).

Data were collected through document analysis, including journal articles, dissertations, conference proceedings, and other relevant academic publications. These sources were selected based on their relevance to the research topic, namely the transformation of PKS from an ideologically driven Islamic party into a more inclusive and pragmatic Islamic party within Indonesia's democratic setting, covering the period from the 1999 to the 2024 general elections (Sugiyono, 2022).

The primary data sources focus on peer-reviewed journal articles retrieved from the Scopus database, using the following keywords: *"transformation of Islamic politics," "post-Islamism," "Islamic party inclusivity,"* and *"Prosperous Justice Party."*

The search was concentrated on Asia—particularly Indonesia—as the locus of contemporary Islamic political development and post-Islamist transformation. To ensure the validity and credibility of the sources, only journals ranked in Quartile 1 and 2 (Q1–Q2) were included.

The thematic interpretation method was employed to uncover the underlying meanings behind the political and ideological dynamics of PKS as reflected in the literature. Through this method, the researcher traced recurring patterns and themes within academic texts to identify key ideas related to de-ideologization, institutional adaptation, and inclusive strategies adopted by PKS in responding to Indonesia's multicultural political reality. This interpretive approach is grounded in the perspective of Bogdan dan Biklen (1982), which asserts that qualitative research seeks to understand the meaning of social actions from the actors' perspectives and within their contextual settings.

Data analysis followed three stages adapted from Miles et al. (2014): Data Reduction, the process of filtering and simplifying information from various literature sources to identify central ideas relevant to PKS's transformation within Oliver Roy's post-Islamism framework. This stage organized data into key categories such as *ideologization*, *political pragmatism*, and *inclusivity.* Data Display, presenting analytical findings descriptively and systematically to illustrate the relationship between Roy's theory of post-Islamism and PKS's political practices in Indonesia. Conclusion Drawing and Verification, formulating final interpretations on how PKS underwent processes of de-ideologization and transformation toward becoming an inclusive Islamic party within Indonesia's democratic and pluralistic political context.

In conclusion, this research not only examines PKS's transformation from an institutional and strategic perspective but also situates it within the post-Islamism theoretical paradigm as conceptualized by Oliver Roy—namely, the shift from ideological politics to rational, adaptive politics oriented toward public interests in a multicultural society.

C. Results and Discussion

Results

a. The Partai Keadilan Sejahtera in Indonesian Politics, 1999–2024

After the 1998 Reform era, the national leaders of the Tarbiyah movement conducted a survey among their network regarding the initiative to form a political party. The results were highly supportive, and the Justice Party (PK), which was formed at that time, began to be officially declared, specifically in Jakarta in July 1998. As stated by (Damanik, 2003; Permata, 2008), the decision to form a political party was a natural step for the Tarbiyah movement. In the 1999 general election, PK—with its strong Islamist appeal, focus on Islamization in society, and emphasis on the purification of Islam, continued to dominate its campaign narrative with such themes. However, PK only managed to secure 7 out of 462 seats in parliament, obtaining a total of 1,436,565 votes, which amounted to just 1.36% of the total vote. In the 1999 election, PK failed to pass the electoral threshold of 2.5%, which meant the party was not eligible to compete in the next election (Permata, 2008).

Although it did not pass the threshold, its emergence on the Indonesian political stage has sparked real reactions. Some believe that PK represents a new generation and a new hope for Muslim political interests that have long been marginalized under a secular state's repression. However, others argue that PK has shown worrying signs of the return of inclusive yet chauvinistic Islamism, which in turn may prompt the regime and military to adopt repressive measures against the Muslim community (Angretnowati & Karolus, 2022).

In an effort to enable PK (Justice Party) to participate in the next general election, internal dynamics emerged within the party, resulting in a name change to the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in 2002. All assets, organizational structures, and functionaries of PK were transferred to PKS (Purwosusanto, 2023). While retaining nearly all of PK's organizational structure, PKS then began shifting its rhetoric from Islamism to more general public issues, such as anti-corruption, law enforcement, and concern for the underprivileged. PKS not only spoke about its policies but also demonstrated them through concrete actions. From that point on, local media began routinely reporting on how PKS representatives, both in national and regional

parliaments, took initiative, especially during disasters, by sending volunteers and medical teams to the frontlines (Purwosusanto, 2023).

In the early phase of its expansion, PKS heavily relied on da'wah (Islamic outreach) channels dominated by leaders inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. PKS championed an Islamist vision aimed at garnering popular support, particularly to establish an Islamic system based on Sharia (Machmudi, 2006). The party's stronghold was in urban lower-middle-class electoral districts, especially in Jakarta and surrounding cities such as Bogor and Depok, where its membership has steadily increased since its founding. Between 1999 and 2008, the party recorded a tenfold growth in membership, from approximately 6,000 to 70,000 cadres. The party's core base consisted of the urban lower-middle class, particularly in Greater Jakarta (including Depok, Bogor, and Bekasi), as well as other major cities, This base also expanded through campus da'wah networks, such as KAMMI (Indonesian Muslim Student Action Union), and urban mass activities, especially in Depok and Bogor, which have served as centers of PKS growth since its establishment (Bubalo et al., 2012).

In recent years, PKS has made significant breakthroughs beyond its traditional urban electoral bases into regions such as Central Java, East Java, and West Sumatra. This strategy had a positive impact in the 2004 General Election, enabling PKS to increase its vote share substantially by securing 45 out of 550 seats in parliament and garnering 8,325,020 votes, representing 7.34% of the total (Muhaimin, 2024). The party's vote acquisition in the 2004 election marked a remarkable improvement compared to the 1999 election, when PKS, still operating under the name Justice Party (Partai Keadilan or PK), managed to win only 7 out of 462 seats and received just 1,436,565 votes, accounting for only 1.36% of the total. Notably, PKS succeeded in winning the majority vote in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta, a key area in Indonesia's political landscape.

Nevertheless, the success achieved by PKS has once again sparked controversy (Permata, 2008). On one hand, this success demonstrates PKS's seriousness in responding to democratic dynamics and helps dispel the perception that the majority of Indonesian Muslims would reject the presence of PKS. However, for its critics, this

success rekindles suspicion regarding the true motives behind PKS's agenda. These critics argue that although PKS has adopted new political slogans, structurally it remains similar to its predecessor, the Justice Party (PK), in terms of its membership and organization (Nurussa'adah & Sumartias, 2017). This reinforces the ongoing argument that the democratic orientation offered by PKS is merely a tactic to conceal its actual Islamist agenda (Permata, 2008). One commentator even expressed his fear by stating that a vote for PKS is more or less equivalent to a bullet for Jamaah Islamiyah (Dhume, 2005; Permata, 2008; Hidayat 2012).

In the 1999 general election, PKS, which positioned itself as a *dakwah* (proselytizing) party, attracted support from sympathizers on university campuses, including activists and graduates of the Tarbiyah movement. As a result, PKS began to expand its reach into various segments of society, which later came to be identified as the young, urban, and educated population, as well as the middle-class Muslim student and youth demographic (Hasan, 2009; Hamayotsu, 2011). A study by (Anawati & Al-Hamdi, 2020), which examined the solidity of PKS through institutional consolidation to maintain stable electoral support in the 2014 legislative election, concluded that PKS was one of the parties that maintained strong ties with its support base. The party was founded on its ability to effectively communicate welfare issues to the public (Hamayotsu, 2011). However, despite having long projected itself as an Islamic party, PKS's integrity in the electoral process came under scrutiny following the beef import quota corruption scandal involving its then-president, Luthfi Hasan Ishaq. Nevertheless, PKS's strength remained intact in the election.

In the 2014 general election, PKS experienced a decline in its vote share, dropping by 1.09%. As a result, PKS secured only 40 out of 560 seats in parliament, receiving a total of 8,480,204 votes, which amounted to 6.79% of the total vote. This was a decrease compared to the previous election in 2009, when PKS managed to obtain 7.88% of the vote. However, the party's institutional consolidation during the 2014 legislative election successfully mitigated its negative public image and did not significantly affect its vote share, as PKS is a cadre-based party with strong

characteristics, supported by a solid ideological foundation, capable leadership, and militant cadres (Anawati & Al-Hamdi, 2020).

In the 2019 general election, PKS (Prosperous Justice Party) once again recorded a significant increase in its vote share. In that election, PKS succeeded in securing 50 out of 575 seats in parliament and obtained a total of 11,493,663 votes, with a percentage increase of 8.21% (Anawati & Al-Hamdi, 2020). This rise in support for PKS in the 2019 election was closely linked to the party's successful political campaign, which effectively promoted its flagship programs, such as the implementation of lifetime driving licenses, exemption from motor vehicle taxes, and the protection of religious leaders and symbols (Trianggorowati & Al-Hamdi, 2020). In addition, PKS legislative candidates actively engaged in community outreach through various activities, emphasizing promotional strategies via public events, particularly flash mobs held on roadsides, driven by the loyalty of PKS cadres and supporters who served as both mobilizers and vote collectors during the 2019 election. This upward trend in PKS's vote share continued into the 2024 general election, where the party remained committed to expanding its mass base. This commitment was reflected in the party's success in securing 53 out of 580 seats in parliament, with a total of 12,781,241 votes, raising its vote percentage to 8.42%.

Based on the national vote gains of PKS mentioned above, it can be observed that the political dynamics of PKS as an inclusive party within Indonesian democracy, from the 1999 General Election to the 2024 General Election, show a trend of increasing electability. In its efforts to gain more votes in the 2029 General Election, PKS is likely to experience a fairly dynamic growth, even if the percentage remains relatively small. This is due to PKS having adopted a more inclusive political approach for all groups, which strengthens its existence as an Islamic political party in the upcoming elections.

b. **PKS Inclusiveness in Indonesian Politics**

The strategy undertaken by PKS to shift from an exclusive to a more inclusive Islamic political party has not been an easy process. PKS has undergone a long internal dynamic that eventually led to the emergence of two factions within the party: the *Justice Faction* and the *Prosperity Faction* (Rusli et al., 2021), The Justice

Faction, supported by prominent PKS figures such as Hidayat Nurwahid and Rahmat Abdullah, backed Amien Rais in the 2004 presidential election. At the same time, the Prosperity Faction, supported by other PKS cadres including Anis Matta and Fahri Hamzah, took a different stance from the Justice Faction and instead supported Wiranto in the same 2004 presidential election (Akmar, 2019). The values upheld by the Prosperity Faction also differed from those of the Justice Faction, as the traditional values that had shaped the party and its institutional structure conflicted with the new values preferred by members of the Prosperity Faction.

The strategies formulated by these two factions also differed. The *Justice* faction, which upheld the belief that PKS is an Islamic party, adopted a strategy that emphasized *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) and development in accordance with Islamic teachings (Rusli et al., 2021). At the same time, the *Prosperity* faction devised a plan focused on how the party could win elections. Therefore, in 2008, members of the Prosperity faction supported the idea of transforming PKS into a more inclusive party that recognizes and respects diversity (Akmar, 2019). This aligns with the research of Arief Munandar, who examined "the dynamics of PKS cadres' habitus in the Indonesian political arena after the 2004 elections." Munandar identified patterns of internal groupings/factionalization within PKS and illustrated how these factions operate within the party's internal dynamics. The study concluded that PKS should democratize its organizational structure, reduce the influence of oligarchy, and eliminate the sacred status of the organization in order to strengthen its position within the Indonesian political landscape. (Munandar, 2011).

At the national level, the only representative from the Sejahtera faction who held a significant legislative role at the time was Fahri Hamzah, who served as Deputy Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) from 2014 to 2019. The dispute between Fahri Hamzah and the Central Executive Board (DPP) leadership of PKS was also related to his position as Deputy Speaker of the DPR RI. The PKS central leadership viewed Fahri Hamzah's role as Deputy Speaker as problematic, as he had become a prominent authoritative figure for the Sejahtera faction after Anis Matta was no longer serving as the party leader (Akmar, 2019).

The *Justice Faction* is closely associated with party members who continue to uphold the core values of PKS, as embraced during the era when the Justice Party (PK) was still active. This faction is represented by key PKS figures such as Sohibul Iman and Ustadz Salim Segaf Al-Jufri. In contrast, the *Prosperity Faction* consists of cadres who support a more contemporary vision of the party, advocating for a more open and moderate PKS. This faction includes figures such as Fahri Hamzah, who served as Deputy Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) from 2014 to 2019. One of the significant decisions made by the PKS leadership during that period was to dismiss Fahri Hamzah from party membership, citing his frequent expression of political views that diverged from the party leadership's direction while serving as Deputy Speaker. His statements were not well received by the party leadership at the time, which was led by Sohibul Iman and Ustadz Salim Segaf Al-Jufri (Akmar, 2019).

Other factors, such as socio-economic conditions, have also contributed to the emergence of various factional groups within PKS. The Justice Faction believes that Islam promotes a simple lifestyle. On the other hand, the Prosperity Faction argues that Islam does not prohibit individuals from becoming wealthy and is loyal to influential figures. The Prosperity group sees Anis Matta as a role model, recognizing his ability to maintain PKS's existence during the corruption scandal. Conversely, the Justice group tends to show greater loyalty to the party's official leadership (Munandar, 2011).

c. **Islamic Political Pragmatism**

From the above discussion, the researcher argues that many Islamic political parties have found that by adopting a more inclusive political approach, it not only helps the party gain broader and greater support but also enables the realization of the party's vision and mission in a more comprehensive manner for the wider society. There are at least three main factors that drive Islamic political parties to adopt a more inclusive political approach, namely: pressure from moderate voters, coalition participation in government, and electoral political pressure. The explanation of these three factors is as follows:

Discussion

1. De-ideologization

The inclusivity policy reflects PKS's ideological adaptation and inclusive political strategy to respond to Indonesia's socio-political realities, while simultaneously expanding the party's influence without abandoning its core ideological identity. This step marks PKS's internal adaptation from a party previously known for its exclusivity into an Islamic political party that tends to be more inclusive and accommodative at both the national and regional levels. From the perspective of Islamic political pragmatism proposed by Roy (1994), political parties are viewed as entities capable of adjusting their policies and behaviors to external dynamics in order to maintain their relevance and continuity.

In this context, PKS appears to be showing signs of adapting to Indonesia's pluralistic environment. One form of this adaptation is evident in changes to the party's political narrative, including the recruitment of cadres from non-Muslim backgrounds (Nurussa'adah, 2018; Wijayanti et al, 2023). In addition, PKS has nominated non-Muslim figures as members of the legislature and has shifted its political communication approach away from religious symbolism toward more inclusive, universal issues such as justice, welfare, education, and anti-corruption (Mujani, Liddle, & Ambardi, 2017). Substantively, these steps represent a form of inclusive adaptation of PKS's Islamic ideology in response to the reality of religious pluralism in Indonesia.

2. Post-Islamism

Political Islam must adapt to the modern socio-political context, characterized by democracy, pluralism, and civil rights. Rather than emphasizing the formalization of Sharia, post-Islamism highlights the universal ethical dimensions of Islam, such as justice, equality, and freedom, which can be articulated within the framework of modern democracy (Roy, 1994)). In this regard, political Islam shifts from an exclusive ideological agenda toward a more pragmatic strategy oriented around social and humanitarian issues (Bayat, 2007).

In the context of Indonesia's multicultural politics, this transformation is reflected in PKS, which, despite its ideological roots in transnational Islamic movements, has been able to adapt to the pluralistic dynamics of national politics. PKS seeks to present itself as an inclusive Islamic party, not only by emphasizing Islamic moral issues but also by articulating agendas of social justice, democracy, and community empowerment (Mulyawan et al., 2025). This transformation demonstrates that PKS does not merely adopt pragmatic electoral strategies but also internalizes post-Islamist discourse to respond to Indonesia's pluralistic, democratic, and pragmatic political realities.

3. **Coalition in government**

Islamic political parties that succeed in winning seats in government often face a complex and diverse political reality. In a multiparty political system, Islamic parties frequently form coalitions with other parties to establish an effective government. Therefore, to be more effective in governance, the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) adopts a more inclusive political approach, collaborating with various party groups and accommodating differing interests. These coalitions are typically aimed at developing a more inclusive strategy to unite various groups that share common interests in governance. This aligns with previous research, which found that coalition-building is a crucial factor with diverse objectives, where such coalitions tend to target centrist and pragmatic voters rather than relying solely on Islamic identity (Taufiqurrohman et al., 2020).

In regional elections, the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) has frequently formed coalitions with non-Islamic parties, including the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP), which comprises secular groups and many non-Muslim politicians. This trend continued through the most recent election in 2019. PKS has pursued such coalitions in an effort to respond to its exclusive image by forming pragmatic party alliances (Miichi, 2020). As (Zulkieflimansyah, 2005), argued, as a political party, PKS must be able to align its ideological framework with the political realities of democracy in Indonesia. PKS is not confronted with an authoritarian regime that it must resist, but rather faces access to government through democratic processes. This has been translated into the practical reality of negotiations as part of

government coalitions. In other words, the party must engage in the necessary compromises with other actors in the political system, including other political parties and the government. There are many examples that demonstrate the complexity inherent in PKS and its function as a political party, not merely a religious movement. At the same time, several violent acts committed by Muslim extremists have drawn attention and prompted warnings that Indonesia, and Southeast Asia more broadly, could potentially become a hub for global terrorism (Abuza, 2005).

4. **Pressure from Moderate Voters**

To gain broader support, PKS as an Islamic political party naturally seeks to reach a heterogeneous voter base, including non-Muslim voters and moderate Muslims. Under such pressure, PKS has been driven to shift from an exclusive (closed) political approach towards ideologically different groups, and has begun to adopt a more inclusive (open) political strategy for all segments of society, including non-Muslims, in order to attract the attention of moderate voters who often constitute the majority in general elections. This aligns with previous research showing that the demographic composition of a region triggers changes in the political narrative of Islamic parties, where Islamic political parties such as PPP and PKS have started to adopt pragmatic approaches: embracing the democratic system, reducing religious-ideological goals, and accepting values of tolerance and human rights (Utami et al., 2024; Fossati, 2019). This is part of an effort to appeal to moderate voters, who tend to support political parties that offer inclusive and pragmatic platforms (Fox & Menchik, 2023).

PKS has openly accommodated religious pluralism in Indonesian society and has sought to present a more moderate and open stance, particularly when it began to declare itself as an "inclusive party", a party open to all groups, both Muslims and non-Muslims (Miichi, 2020). In television advertisements, one can observe the presence of unveiled women, long-haired men (without beards), and non-Muslims. This indicates that the political pressure coming from moderate voters has driven PKS to embrace the pluralism within Indonesian society.

5. **Electoral Political Pressure**

Electoral pressure is also one of the factors driving changes within PKS, whereby the party has reformed itself from a previously exclusive organization into a more inclusive one, in response to political pressure and electoral competition. This illustrates how an Islamic party can adapt to the constantly changing dynamics of politics. In doing so, PKS, as an Islamic political party, remains competitive in pursuing its objectives. This is in line with (McCarthy, 2023), research, which argues that leadership or internal party pressure can drive ideological, strategic, and organizational change, prompting the party to adopt a more inclusive political approach. Such efforts are essential for increasing electoral appeal and gaining broader support across different segments of society, including non-Muslims (Wahyudi, 2022).

This aligns with the research of Noorhaidi Hasan, which highlights the involvement of PKS in Indonesia's electoral democracy and raises the question: can a political party with a strong religious ideology accept liberalization and implement democracy? Often, abandoning ideological purity becomes part of the political choice when entering the political arena (Hasan, 2009). This reflects an acceptance of the political system and politics based on the separation of powers. Identity and ideology are crucial to PKS's political mobilization, as its engagement requires interaction with other political actors through parliamentary politics and alliances. In doing so, besides attracting the sympathy of non-Islamist voters and expanding its constituency, PKS—as a contemporary party participating in a fair and competitive political system, is also obliged to do so (Basyir, 2014). In this context, it is interesting to examine the party's approach to maintaining its Islamist agenda and support base while joining a pragmatic ruling coalition with a clearly non-Islamist aristocracy (Hasan, 2009).

Thus, from the explanation above, it can be understood that it is important to comprehend how an Islamic political party can maintain its ideological roots while simultaneously responding to increasingly pluralistic and pragmatic political demands. PKS's engagement in pragmatic politics demonstrates strategic flexibility, although this may generate ideological dilemmas, as a contemporary Islamic party, PKS faces pressure to balance religious idealism with the realities of political power.

Participation in coalitions with non-Islamic political elites often requires compromises that may conflict with Islamist aspirations. Therefore, PKS must carefully manage its image and ideological orientation amid the dynamics of national politics. This approach reflects the party's effort to remain relevant, competitive, and influential within Indonesia's multicultural political landscape.

D. Conclusion

The PKS's strategy of adopting a more inclusive political approach reflects the dynamics of Islamic political pragmatism as described by Olivier Roy—namely, a process of de-ideologization in which Islamic parties adapt to modern political realities without abandoning their fundamental Islamic values. As a cadre-based party with a rigorous system of regeneration and strong ideological orientation, PKS now demonstrates a growing tendency to adjust to increasingly complex electoral and social demands. The shift from an exclusive model to an inclusive pattern marks the party's effort to remain relevant in Indonesia's electoral politics. In line with this transformation, PKS has internalized the logic of modern politics by prioritizing effectiveness and public acceptance over ideological dominance. The adjustment in its recruitment pattern, including openness toward non-Muslim figures and communities, serves as concrete evidence of this adaptive strategy. PKS seeks to broaden its social base through cadre development and engagement with diverse segments of society, rather than relying solely on popular figures. This approach reflects a balance between the idealism of _dakwah_ and political pragmatism. Thus, PKS's transformation demonstrates that an Islamic party can function as a modern political actor capable of negotiating Islamic values within a secular political arena without losing its moral legitimacy. The moderation and inclusivity it promotes are not merely electoral tactics, but rather ideological adaptations aimed at sustaining the existence of Islamic politics amid pluralism and dynamic social change. This study asserts that PKS's transformation is not a short-term tactical shift, but an ongoing process of ideological evolution toward a more pragmatic, moderate, and contextual form of political Islam. Therefore, this research is expected to pave the way for further

studies on PKS's transformation toward becoming a more inclusive party within the dynamics of Indonesian politics.

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