

**ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM IN INDONESIA'S**

**DEMOCRACY POST SOEHARTO'S ERA**

**BANI CAHYA ARISTYA**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the case study is based on my original work except for quotations and citations that have been duly acknowledged. I also declare it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Tun Abdul Razak (UNIRAZAK) or other institution.



SIGNATURE :

NAME : BANI CAHYA ARISTYA

DATE : JUNE 28, 2022

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Abstract of the project paper submitted to the Senate of Universiti Tun Abdul Razak in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Public Policy.

**Assessing the Impact of Multi-Party System in Indonesia's Democracy  
Post Soeharto's Era**

**By  
Bani Cahya Aristya**

**June 2022**

This research investigates the effects of multi-party system in Indonesia, both the system that resulted from the fusion political parties and the current system that the country currently implements. For some people, the prevailing state of Indonesia's democracy has been under scrutiny, and it can be seen through the dynamics around the elections and synergy between the government as well as the political parties. The concerns are also considerably negative behavior among the government officials that involve political parties, and this cannot be separated with the party-system that Indonesia currently implements. This study uses qualitative approach, literature analysis method and the interview method are being used to gather information about the political environment that the multi-party system causes. Moreover, the change to more opened democracy which has fifteen or more political parties in 1999 from the more simplified version of multi-party system during the Soeharto's era does not necessarily elicit an ideal democracy because simply there is not a single perfect system and both systems in the Soeharto and current era definitely have their own characteristics.

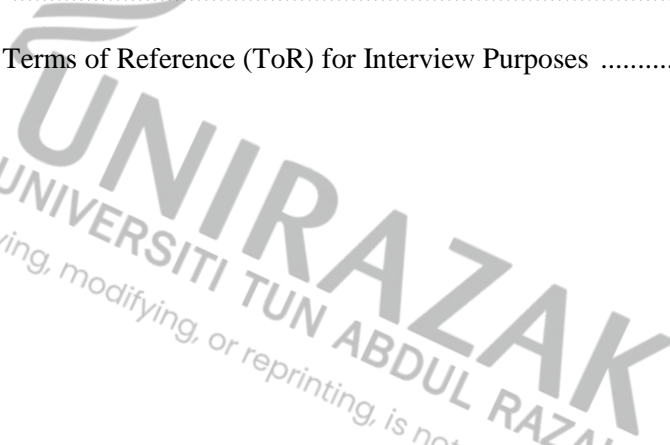
**Key Terms:** Multi-Party System, Democracy, Cartelization, Old Order, New Order, Reformation, Interview, Floating Mass, Transactional

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

The aim of this research is to examine the influences that the multi-party system in Indonesia has to its own democracy. The study will identify what are the impact of two different type of multi-party system that happens both in the era of when Soeharto becomes the president and the era after he step down in 1998. Thus, this chapter establishes the study by introducing the history as well as the background of the problem. In the beginning, the problem statement underlines the flaws on multi-party system in Indonesia which arguably has been far from perfect and leads to many losses financially as well as mentally. Furthermore, it also states the research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, research design and the research scope.

The multi-party system is deemed to have “advantages” for a country which have heterogonous community structures (Widayati & Winanto, 2018). Thus, when the system is implemented precariously where there is a significant number of political parties such as 48 parties in 1999 election, it demonstrates a multi-party system that has “more” democracy on paper compared to the system that is implemented during Soeharto’s regime which only has 3 political parties. Nevertheless, the present of multi-party system alone does not always lead to “more democracy” (Malachova, 2012). Other than the fact that nothing is perfect about any instances of multi-party system, it definitely has both positive and negative impacts on the democracy of a nation, especially Indonesia, and it is only the matter of weighing which system has more influences.

Therefore, this research attempts to answer the main research questions: What are the negative or positive impacts of transforming from the simplified version of multi-party system during Soeharto era that only has three political parties and plunging into more diverse era that is having

fifteen or more political parties? How will it affect the democracy in Indonesia? Based on the continuation of these impacts, the research statement for this study is: the current multi-party system in Indonesia is not intermittently leading to “more” democracy and political environment that promotes competitiveness, fairness, honesty and diversity of thought or ideologies.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Ultimately, the multi-party system of Post-Soeharto era, which has numerous number of political parties has been far from perfect, and it has created a political atmosphere that is simply more expensive and transactional. Hence, the Indonesian government should consider to follow the Soeharto or *New Order's* era footsteps by simplifying and reducing the number of political parties that participates in general elections. Also, the problems in the Post-Soeharto era could be seen from the various dimensions in terms of cost, transactions and corruption as discussed in the below.

### **1.2.1 Cost**

In the month of May 2022, the People’s Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR) have just announced that they agree to the election’s budget that was proposed by the General Elections Commission of Indonesia (KPU), and it was all over the news in Indonesia. One of the reasons why the Indonesia’s current multi-party system should be analyzed and thought over is that the election part of it is considerably expensive to do. According to the Ministry of Finance, the budget for implementation in the General Election Commission (KPU) is at IDR 25.59 trillion, the supervision budget at IDR 4.85 trillion and the security budget is allocated 3.29 trillion (Ministry of Finance, 2019). Therefore, the money that were about to be spent by the Indonesian government is reaching approximately, 228 million USD. The cost for the future 2024

Indonesia Election is seventy-six trillion Rupiah, which equals to approximately around 5 billion USD and almost triple of what the 2019 Indonesian election cost, so it is going to be the most expensive election that Indonesia has ever had (Tribaskoro, 2022). Moreover, this massive number of budgets looks even more expensive when we compare it to other countries. If we assume that the number of voters will 200 million people in 2024, then the cost per voter for Indonesia is 25.8 USD, while United States is at 8.1 USD per voter and India is 3.3 USD per voter (Tribaskoro, 2022). One of the implications of this budget to the number of political parties competing in the election is located in the logistic aspect of it. Arief Budiman who was the head of the General Elections Commission of Indonesia (KPU) once stated that political parties are “facilitated” by the government to have mass media campaign as well as traditional advertising campaign such as billboard or banner (Farisa, 2018). Therefore, reducing the number of political parties would be logical in a way that it would automatically reduce the cost of logistic in an election.

### **1.2.2 Transactional**

In Indonesia, after presidents got elected, there have always been a term that was very popular circulating around the media called *Bagi-Bagi Kursi* or Giving Out the Chairs. In order to learn what does *Bagi-Bagi Kursi* mean, one has to know that the candidate selection for the ministerial position is president’s prerogative right (Marbun, 2014). Thus, the “giving out” part of the terminology above means to give these positions out to certain people based on their political affiliation or support during the election. Furthermore, 23 out of 38 ministers that was handpicked by President Jokowi in his second term as a president are either affiliated with the political parties that backed the president during the election or they were part of the success team of Jokowi (Teresia, 2020). Nevertheless, such transactional behavior is not new Indonesia even though it is fair that some people were not satisfied about it.

### 1.2.3 Corruption

The motivation behind this research is to assess the notion that the political system of Post-Soeharto Era is ironically more corrupt and out of control. The irony comes from the idea that the *New Order* was said to be full of corruption, collusion and nepotism especially within the ruling party of that era, and yet, in 21<sup>st</sup> century, we actually see corruptions cases that are more systematic; such as the corruption case related to “the multi-million-dollar procurement” of electronic IDs (e-KTP), and spread throughout the participants of general elections (Batu, 2017). Fundamentally, the implementation of multi-party systems in Indonesia “should be a way of democracy that results in good governance,” and if it only produces “a pragmatic government”, “the existence of political parties” and “the holding of elections” will only “weakens” the national stability (Wadjdi et.al, 2020).

### 1.3 Research Objectives

Considering the problem statement on the section 1.2 above, this research aims to:

- Examine the relationship between the types of multi-party system in Indonesia to the democratic processes in both Soeharto and Post-Soeharto Era.
- Analyze the impact of having too many parties in general elections, and what it means to the structure of the government post presidential elections that have coalition’s system.
- Figure out the best suitable solutions to the party system in Indonesia, and how the solution would help minimizing the negative impacts raised from having numerous political parties.

## 1.4 Research Scope

The scope of this research would be in Indonesia, as it also will focus on the outcomes and political atmosphere differences between of the three political parties' election where it clearly has a more simplified multi-party system (1977-1997), and the elections of the *Reformation Era* (1999-Present). The figures below show how different the competition was:



Figure 1 - The political parties of 1977's election left to right; *United Development Party (PPP)*; *Party of Functional Groups (Golkar)* and *Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI)*. Source: *Sumber Belajar Kemendikbud (2019)*



Figure 2 – The participants of 1999's elections in Indonesia Source: *Komisi Independen Pemilihan Kabupaten Aceh Jaya (2019)*

## 1.5 Research Questions

The answers to questions below are gotten from several interviews that has been conducted and a lot of literatures such as academic journal and credible articles online, which its criteria are going to be talked about in the methodology chapter.

- What are the negatives sides of waiving a simplified of multi-party system (3 parties) to a more than ten political parties?
- Has the notion of having more than three political parties been successfully worked in Indonesia in the post Soeharto era?
- Why and how is the simplified version of multi-party system or other party systems more suitable for Indonesia?
- How has it affected the presidential election and the synergy between the head of the state and political parties?

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

- The research would help the Indonesian government to look at other possible and effective solution to the problems that arise from having to many participants in general elections
- This research would hopefully help inform governments efforts formulate policies in order to strengthen the multi-party system in Indonesia
- Ultimately, this research hopes to combat a more systematic, massive and spread-out corruption collusion and nepotism (*Korupsi Kolusi & Nepotisme or KKN*) that Indonesians wanted to get out of from the *New Order's Era* in the first place.

## **1.7 Empirical Research**

The research aims to figure out the impacts that the multi-party system has on Indonesia's democracy post-Soeharto era. Therefore, this research will look at the problems that have been happening in relations to the democratic practices in Indonesia. For example, governmental corruption can also be the parameter as it mostly involves politician from several parties. Hence, the study attempts to examine the change since the Soeharto era.

## **1.8 Methodology**

This research focuses on finding what would be the better version of multi-party system to in Indonesia by revisiting the overall impacts of such system in the past as well as the present. Indeed, the impact would be seen after the election, and another underlying of this research is that "competitiveness may disappear once the parties leave the hurly-burly of the election and enter a new arena of interaction" (Ambardi, 2008). The researchers that talked about the flaws of the current system mainly used qualitative approach. Such approach is needed because people's view on two different eras that happen in Indonesia would be relative for some people and vary. Thus, the qualitative method for this research hopes to shed some lights and discover some new thoughts on subject matter. Moreover, this study will use the same approach because the data mostly are non-numerical and the researcher will highly be relying on the historical accounts, government acts or laws, news and the academic journals with the similar topic. Also, it uses the qualitative approach to analyze the negative impacts of too many parties participating in the elections, and eventually, offering solutions.

The methodology that this qualitative research employs is the semi-structured interviews. The interviewees would be politicians, academicians, historians or lecturers with the political science

background and political experience from Indonesia and initially, other countries that have similar multi-party system to the Indonesia's current system. Furthermore, the questions will be designed to know the sources' perspective and their recommendation on multi-party system in Indonesia, and it will be in the form of unstructured interview. Ultimately, in order for the conversation not to go off the rail, the intent of this interview would to know where the interviewee thinks that the Indonesia's current multi-party system has more flaws than the goods, and would they consider going back to simplified version, which only has three parties participating.

### **1.9 Theoretical & Conceptual Framework**

The notion of this research is that the current multi-party system in Indonesia is worse than the one where the Indonesian government took the initiative to simplify the number of the political parties back in the year of 1972. According to Adlin, who is a lecturer at University of Riau, the era after Soeharto's offers a political system that is democratic, so it would create a multi-party system without a dominant political party which is similar to the party system before Soeharto's era (Adlin, 2013). Nevertheless, some would argue that the old system has its many negatives, so this research would basically try to examine whether the current system has already fixed the problems. The concept of this study would be clear that the number of parties would be independent variable which can be categorized into two groups; the simplified system with only three parties participating and the current system, which has ten or more parties. Furthermore, the impacts of the number of parties on the Indonesia's political spectrum & dynamics would be the dependent variables, and these variables will be indirectly connected by the states of general elections that happens every five year.



## 1.10 Outline of Chapters

This research is structured as follows:

Chapter 1: A brief discussion of the topic

Chapter 2: This chapter provides the literature review. It gives the definition and information about the multi-party system and its impacts, cartelization and party coalitions based on other literatures.

Chapter 3: Methodology. This chapter is a review of methodology used in the research.

Chapter 4: Politics in Indonesia. This chapter is the context chapter which provides information about the politics in Indonesia after its independence and the problems that directly involve political parties in Indonesia.

Chapter 5: Empirical Findings & Analysis. This chapter presents the outcomes of the interview conducted.

Chapter 6: Conclusion. This chapter concludes the findings of the research, and it also propose recommendation for the political party system in Indonesia.

## 1.11 Conclusion

Chapter 1 of this research focuses on the motivation and background of doing the study. The flaws that has occurred from the current multi-party system indicates that it is still far from perfect. These flaws are visible to the public eyes, and affected the country's well-being, at least, financially. Therefore, the main notion of research is to compare the impacts of multi-party system that happens both in Soeharto's era as well as the era after. In addition to that, this chapter also highlights the significance and objectives of the research, which one of them is basically to be a helpful reference for the policy maker to formulate policies regarding the political party system in Indonesia. Moreover, the following chapter explores the literature review with regard to the topic in general and the impacts of multi-party system in particular.

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## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

Indonesia has adopted democracy since the nation's independence in 1945, and it was also marked by the appearance of 28 political parties afterwards. These parties then were competing in the general election in 1955, and they were simplified later in 1973 into three parties because Soeharto's administration believed that it was necessary to create a "political stability" in Indonesia (Putra, 2019). Furthermore, after a long period of *Guided Democracy* (1965-1998) in a New Order Era led by Soeharto, Indonesia has chosen to bring back the democracy that has been missing for more than 30 years, which has been reflected by the 48 political parties that were participating in 1999 elections. Furthermore, it can be said that the drastic changes in 1999 elections have made some impacts on the quality of Indonesian's democracy. Ultimately, this chapter reviews the interconnection between the multi-party system, the presidential government system, the state of Indonesia's democracy and what happens during as well as when the competition ends.

"if, and only if, it does not permit contested elections. What matters is, of course, the real, not the legal ruling. Whatever the legal ruling, competition ends, and noncompetition begins, whenever contestants and opponents are deprived of equal rights, impeded, menaced, frightened, and eventually punished for daring to speak up" (Sartori, 1976 as cited in, Ambardi, 2008).

## 2.2 Theoretical Foundation

### 2.2.1 Party Theory – Multi-Party System

Multi-party system is one of types of party systems in the world. Heywood believes that political party system is a “network of relationships and interactions between political parties within an ongoing political system” (Heywood, 2002, as cited in Suwito & Rohmah, 2021). Thus, in order to better understand the political party system, the suitable keywords would be “the number of growing or existing political parties” that are competing for power the in the “medium of elections” (Heywood, 2002, as cited in Suwito & Rohmah, 2021). Furthermore, the parameter for the number of political parties was first introduced by a French political scientist named Maurice Duveger in 1954, and he basically differentiated the type of political system into three systems which are; a single party system, a two-party system as well as a multi-party system, and it is based on the quantity of political parties that are competing in the election.

Hence from the theory that Duveger popularized, and the actual number of political parties in Indonesia, we can simply state that Indonesia adopts a multi-party system because it has more than two political parties (Duveger, as cited in Suwito & Rohmah, 2021). In addition to that, it was also supported by our constitution that the pair of President and Vice President is proposed by a political party or coalition of political party. Therefore, those who have the right to “nominate pairs of candidates for president and vice president are political parties or a combination of political parties”, which means that there at the very least three political parties (Suwito & Rohmah, 2021).

### 2.2.2 The Combination with The Presidential Govt. System.

The presidential government system is a system in which the president is the head of the state and is elected directly by the people. Other than Indonesia, such system can also be found in the United States, Argentina, Brazil and Philippine (World Population Review, n.d.). Furthermore, according to Widayati and Winanto who are a lecturer at Universitas Islam Sultan Agung, Semarang, there are several characteristics of government in the Presidential Government System, which are (Widayati & Winanto, 2018):

1. Presidents are not dependent on Parliament; they are responsible to the people and the voters.
2. President has the prerogative rights to appoint his/her assistants (ministers)
3. Presidents are elected for a fixed term.

Furthermore, when a country combines the presidential government system with a multi-party system, it contributes certain practices, such as:

1. President would be proposed by political parties or joint political parties (coalition) for elections
2. Political parties that are losing in the general election is less likely to play role as the opposition
3. The president and the supporting parties are difficult to have majority in the parliament.

### **2.2.3 Democracy**

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary online, democracy is “a form of government in which people choose leaders by voting” (Merriam-Webster). However, it has not been as simple as the online dictionary describes it because as Larry Diamond describes it in 2004, it constitutes four aspects which are (Diamond, 2004 as cited in Nwogu, 2015):

1. Free & Fair Elections
2. Active Participation of the People
3. Protection of Human Rights
4. Equality Under the Law

Thus, considering these four key elements, one would argue that in an ideal democracy, a country should have several characteristics such as having very few of corruption cases as the study proves that well-established democracies show “lower levels of corruption than authoritarian regimes or young democracies” (Kubbe & Engelbert, 2018).

### **2.2.4 Parliamentary Thresholds**

The present era or the reform era is marked by the emergence of new political parties. Thus, the government of Indonesia has actually tried to simplify the number of political parties through a system called Parliamentary Thresholds. This system is technically the minimum share of votes that the political parties are required to have before they any representation in legislature bodies such as People’s Representative Council (DPR), which in the case of the most recent law is “4%” of the total vote (Kusnandar, 2022). Consequently, such system is

often considered to be the barrier for small and new political parties to emerge (Kusnandar, 2022).

## **2.3 Previous Works**

There have been several works regarding the multi-party system Indonesia such as its impacts to the democracy in Indonesia during Soekarno's era or the *Old Order* era to the notion if a multi-party system actually leads to more democracy. Furthermore, this section talks about these other papers that are crucial in the process of creating this research.

### **2.3.1 Multi-party system's Incompatibility**

The first one is an academic journal for legal construction and development in comparative study, which initiated by Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang, titled, *The Problems in Multiparty System in the Indonesian Presidential Government System*, written by two lecturers at the mentioned initiator. It basically discusses the idea that the presidential system is "incompatible" with a multi-party system because of many reasons such as "government instability" and president not getting "parliamentary support" (Widayati & Winanto, 2018). In addition to that, another reason is that, some of these political parties that support the president during election, want to its party "cadres" to be able to sit in the "ranks of ministers or other government positions" (Widayati & Winanto, 2018). Furthermore, the paper also calls for solutions that might help the multi-system party to be more effective in Indonesia. These solutions are the "simplification of political parties" and "permanent political party coalitions" (Widayati & Winanto, 2018). The idea of simplification of political also comes with reasons. One of them is that after elected, the president "will be able to form his own cabinet" without having to form coalition and "unload" the cabinet (Widayati &

Winanto, 2018). Also, the permanent political party coalition works in a way that there will be both sides of group, the supporter of the government and outside of the government (Widayati & Winanto, 2018). The motivation behind that is to have the political process that is “more efficient” and the president will be able to “focus on managing the government without being disturbed by political party negotiation matters” (Widayat & Winanto, 2018).

### **2.3.2 Multi-party system in Old Order Period**

The second research paper is from the Indonesian Constitutional Law Journal Volume 5 Nomor 1 (2021), titled the *Democratic Practices in Indonesia' Multi-Party Election System during the Old Order Period*. It was during Soekarno's term as the first president of Indonesia, that 1955 Indonesia's first general election were also held. Therefore, this paper uses qualitative method to figure out the characteristics of the “practices of democracy” and “the multi-party election system” in the old order of the Republic of Indonesia (Suwito, 2021). Furthermore, the results were firstly, the democratic system provides the “widest possible space for the people to play an active role” in the “implementation” of the governing bodies through the representatives (Suwito, 2021). Secondly, people were quickly “confronted” in democratic practices such as legislative elections although the situation and condition of the country was politically unstable (Suwito, 2021). Hence, it was visible in term of “domestic security” that the party system that has a very high number of political parties was not ideal for the country that just got their independence ten year prior (Suwito, 2021).



### **2.3.3 More Democracy?**

The third, another paper was called *Does a Multi-Party System Lead to “More” Democracy?*, which was written by Anastasija Malachova. This paper discusses the concept of liberal democracy. Thus, the meaning of the said concept is “a system of government that includes broad rights of political participation, liberal rights, as well as social and economic rights” (Zagorski, 2009 as cited in, Malachova, 2010). In addition to that, the writer was also trying to include the definition multi-party system, by quoting that other than the fact the system would involve two or more parties, “multipartism has several different types such as polarized, moderate, segmented or atomized”, so it simply means that every different multi-party system has different levels of “fragmentation” and “competition/cooperation patterns” (Ware, as cited in, Malachova, 2010). Moreover, after observing the case of corruption in Russia, there are three other factors that contributes to the question whether multi-party system leads to more democracy. These other factors are accountability, party competition and electoral system (Malachova, 2010).

### **2.3.4 Cartelized Party System**

The fourth previous work that has been done in relations to the multi-party system is called *The Making of the Indonesian Multiparty System: A Cartelized Party System and its Origins*, which was written by Kuskridho Ambardi, MA. Additionally, in 2008, the paper was presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of the Ohio State University. Basically, this study is exploring the “party interaction” and “the nature of the Indonesian party system” post-Soeharto’s era (Ambardi, 2008). It then traverses the competitive nature in the election period, but it has gone back to normal once the election ended. Thus, the primary finding of this study is that party

competition simply “ended after the election” and later was followed by “the creation of cartel”, which is the main concept of the study (Ambardi, 2008). Lastly, the paper goes through several aspects which are:

1. The Structure of Party Competition
2. The Fading of Competition, the Emergence of a Cartel
3. The Oversized Coalition
4. The Ideological Migration
5. Political Money

Moreover, even though the writer admits that the study has not found a way to minimize the power of the cartel and “rebuild party competition”, the author has found “a way through which improvement can be made by cutting parties’ dependence on rent-seeking activities” (Ambardi, 2008). Hence, in order to cut parties’ dependence on rent-seeking activities, two possible ways are:

1. Improving “the regulatory regime on party finance and to enforce punishments for any violations” (Ambardi, 2008).
2. Enhancing the state subsidies program for political parties, for example; a subsidy for paying “airtime” for advertisements in the mass media (Ambardi, 2008).

### 2.3.5 A Review of the Multi-Party System in Other Countries

The main reason why the study is reviewing the multi-party system in other countries is because it would provide answers whether the characteristics of multi-party system in Indonesia happens elsewhere. Therefore, the situation in France shows the resemblance with Indonesia in a way there are only several relevant parties that dominates the election and the notion of split can be translated into the notion of easily switching sides in Indonesia's political spectrum. Around the world, there are numerous countries that adopts multi-party system as their foundation of political activities. Nevertheless, this research exhibits, specifically, the multi-party system in France in order to provide a broader picture of the system in other country. According to a textbook, titled *The Government and Politics of France*, written by Andrew Knapp and Vincent Wright, there are four respects in relation to the multi-party system in France (Knapp & Wright, 2006).

1. In the 1997 France's Parliamentary Election, there were five "relevant" parties which are Communists, Socialists, Union for French Democracy (UDF), Rally for the Republic (RPR) and National Rally (FN) (Knapp & Wright, 2006). Later, the number of relevant political parties or parties that have at least 5% of total votes were reduced to three, which are Socialists, Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) and FN (Knapp & Wright, 2006).
2. The relevant parties "have remained outside the blocs of Left and Right" (Knapp & Wright, 2006). Therefore, it creates a situation where the votes are not fully concentrated only to parties under the umbrella of those two blocs.

3. The system provides some room for “new entrants” (Knapp & Wright, 2006). It exhibits the emergence of new parties in the French political spectrum.
4. The French party system “leaves some room for existing parties to split” (Knapp & Wright, 2006). It is a situation where a figure leaves a specific party, and creates a new one. The example of this would be when the National Rally or *Front National* (FN) “suffered the departure” of Mégret and form the Mouvement National Républicain (Knapp & Wright, 2006).

#### **2.4 Proposed Conceptual Framework**

This paper will look at the impacts of having numerous political parties in the general election to the quality of democracy of post Soeharto’s era. The clearest difference between the current era and the previous era was the number of political parties participating in the election. The difference in number of political parties between the two eras produces distinguished as well as relatively similar consequences in regards to its impact on Indonesia’s democracy. Therefore, considering some other differences, this research argues that in Indonesia’s attempt to have a “more” democracy after the fall of Soeharto, there has been obstacles that are obtained from party-system in the current era. Nevertheless, these obstacles cannot exclusively be found in Indonesia because the multi-party system in France and Russia has shown similar traits. Moreover, the impacts can be categorized as fundamental problems in democratic countries such as a more wide-spread corruption, cartelization, switching sides and few relevant parties that are competing in the elections. The main question that will be answered by the research is whether the *Reform Era*’s multi-party has led to a betterment in terms of political interaction and positive boost in Indonesia’s democracy.

## 2.5 Conclusion

Other than Indonesia, multiparty systems also exist in a country such as France (Encyclopedia). In 2017 French legislative elections, there were eleven parties competing for seats of the 15<sup>th</sup> national assembly, and each party has their own trademark; which are their basic ideologies and political positions (Curtis, 2017). In addition to that, its ideology is ranging from the communism to national conservatism. On the other hand, after the resignation of Soeharto in 1998, numerous analysts have “emphasized and often lamented the lack of ideological competition in Indonesians politics” (Warburton, 2020). It is also known that there had always been a divide between the Islamic parties and the Pluralist parties before the reform in 1998 but, nowadays, parties and politicians “routinely collaborate across the ideological divide” because their only main goals are simply entering the government and “gain access to the state’s patronage resources” (Warburton, 2020). Hence, we could see that political parties change side to the bigger coalition that wins the election, and we could see that the coalition become oversized. Therefore, if the government does not have that much oppositions, it would not be beneficial for the healthiness of Indonesia’s democracy since there would not be another set of eyes.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

The main focus of this study is to get the impacts of multi-party system in Indonesia during two different eras. These two periods are marked by its characteristics in the number of political parties that are participating in election. Therefore, this research is heavily relying on the written documents and an in-depth interview, which are going to be about the differences between in the two systematically different eras. Furthermore, it will cover the notion that corruption has actually gone more rampant since the fall of Soeharto. Rather than simple Indonesian Corruption Eradication Commission's (*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi* or KPK) numerical statistics, the research will instead bring about the facts about the affiliations of these corruptor in terms of political parties. Secondly, the research also talks about the behavior as well as the interaction between these political parties during and after the New Order Era. These interactions include the favoritism of certain individual to have a strategic position in the government, which implies the transactional impact of multi-party system. Last but not least, it will cover the idea of cartelization that happens post general election, which orchestrated by the political parties. Moreover, the cartelization is an act of giving up the "ideological and pragmatic differences" in order to survive as a political party (Ambardi, 2008).

### **3.2 Research Design**

Since the research is mostly done opinion and analysis based, it would be best to describe the method of this research as qualitative. Furthermore, the research relies heavily on written documents & in-depth semi-structured interviews. The flexibility of qualitative research design benefits the research in a way that it is trying to gain knowledge of a specific era in the past. In addition to that, these written documents such as academic journals that are found online are also integral because it gives the information about the academicians' point of view on the subject matters, which dated even way before the Soeharto era. Last but not least, the party interactions such as rent-seeking activities are the main focus of the research, so it can be plainly understood by the readers if using narrative approach.

### **3.3 Key Informant Interviewees**

The individuals that will be interviewed will have to have certain criteria in order to get a deeper understanding of the multi-party's mechanism in Indonesia. Therefore, the criteria can be divided into three categories, which are;

- **Those who experience the Soeharto or New Order Era**

The Soeharto era began in 1966, and it ends in 1998 following his resignation. Furthermore, the interviewees should include the people, that experienced the Soeharto era and was able to sense the political atmosphere back then. Hence, these people would have to be at their twenties year of age during the New Order era. Then, one will be able to see differences between the Soeharto era and the Reform era. Nevertheless, the comparisons that

the interviewees are going to suggest will be backed up by the data in which the researcher will try to find.

- **Lecturer/Academicians**

The political science lecturer from well-known universities in Indonesia would remain the key informants of this interview process. It would also be beneficial for the research because the research would obtain opinions about the effectiveness of simplified multi-party system, that have only three political parties from an academic standpoint. Another reason is that the interview with academicians would generate the potentially missing knowledge or academic terminologies that are necessary for the multi-party system topic.

- **Politicians**

Last but not least, politicians are deemed to be the perfect people to be interviewed because this research are also talking about the dynamics and interactions between political parties in Indonesia. Because of that these politicians are in the era where there are more than of fifteen political parties, it would be advantageous to know their opinion about simplifying these political parties into three parties. Moreover, it could also shed some light to how polarized these political parties are, and whether it is only about winning the elections.



### 3.4 Data Collection Method

The research will use interviews, documents and records as its data collection methods. These platforms would be the tools to obtain information about the political parties' activities from time to time. The primary sources will be the online newspaper that tell the stories of these parties' activities. Nevertheless, the sources of the news will be chosen carefully, and currently, only *Kompas*, *Tempo* & *Jakarta Post* remain to be the researcher's picks than other magazines because of the credibility factor. On the other hand, where the interviews are going to take place will not be usual because during the conduct of this research, the covid-19 pandemic has hit a new phase. Hence, it was not possible to meet face to face due to the Government's movement control order the even exists until now. Moreover, online platforms would be crucial for the interviews to be done. These platforms are; *Whatsapp*, *E-mail*, *Zoom*, *Google Meet* or *Skype*. Nevertheless, it does not single out the possibility of having a phone interview, and in-person interview if the interviewee agrees to do so. In addition to that, the interviews will be recorded, and the informants will be asked for permission to include their name in this research paper.

### 3.5 Interviews

The interview is done by sending out "introductory letter" to the possible interviewees. The letter will provide two main reasons why the researcher is reaching them out. Firstly, the interview is meant to talk about the dynamics of during and post Soeharto era considering the differences in multi-party system. Secondly, another reason would be that the research will be part of requirements for the degree Master of Public Policy in Universiti Tun Abdul Razak, Malaysia, so interviews are necessary for the completion of this research. Furthermore, the key informant of this interview process is a political-science lecturer because one would use

terminology that is beneficial for the process of creating this research paper. However, it does not put aside other interviewees that are going to be equally important. In addition to that, the conversation is likely going to be comparisons between Soeharto era and the reform era, but one might not give the further details on the evidence that the interviewees are saying. Hence, the researcher is going to filter these statements by doing fact check and further explaining the new findings obtained from the interviewees. Another question would be to ask the interviewees' opinions about the effectiveness of simplified multi-party system, which has only three political parties in Soeharto era. Consequently, the question is meant to get the big picture of how changing the system in 1999 election has impacted Indonesia's democracy.

#### **Examples of Interview Questions:**

1. What is your opinion about the multi-party system in Indonesia?
2. What do you think about the impacts of this party system in Indonesia's democracy?
3. What are the negative and positive impacts of leaving the system where Indonesia has only three political parties?
4. How the changes to 48 political parties in 1999 has transformed the dynamics and synergy between the executives and the political parties?
5. Was the simplified version of a multi-party system (3 parties only) more sufficient compared to today's system?
6. Is the current multi-party system effective?
7. If not, should Indonesia reconsider to go back to the New Order Era, the simplification of political parties, or should Indonesia follow one-party system such as China or two-party system such as the United States?

Nevertheless, the questions above are integral to help spark discussions, which means that they are not exhaustive. Also, further questions and clarifications could possibly emerge from the initial discussion with the interviewees.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the main focus of this research, which are the impacts of multi-party system Indonesia will be acquired by using qualitative design. Furthermore, written documents and in-depth interviews are remained to be the integral factors of the research. Then, the interviewees will be filtered by three criteria, which are; whether the person experienced the new order as an adult, academicians/lecturers and the politicians. Moreover, because this research is focusing on the political parties' activities to basically prove the impacts of the current multi-party system, it will also rely on numerous credible news sources such as *Kompas*, *Republika* and *Tempo*. Lastly, the interviews will be done through online platforms such *Google Meet* or *Zoom Meeting*, and in this phase, the research is basically trying to get the information about all the ups and downs of multi-party system in Indonesia, and the potential cures for the system.

## CHAPTER 4: POLITICS IN INDONESIA

### 4.1 The History

The first president of Indonesia is Soekarno, who is the proclama-tor of Indonesia's Independence in 1945, ruled for 21 years. During his reign, as a newly born country, Indonesia was not in ideal situation which there was lots controversies, political turmoil, civil wars and the famous one was 1965 Indonesian coup d'état that involves Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) and these are all in the school's history books. This era then was called the *Orde Lama* or the *Old Order* by the later regime. Furthermore, Soeharto came into power 1968 and was in charge for 31 years, which makes him the longest serving president of Indonesia. The term, *Orde Baru* or the *New Order*, is very popular in Indonesia to characterize the era when Soeharto was the president, and the label itself was initially mentioned during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Army Conference of 1966, where the main topic of these army generals as well as well-known educated public figures were to "fix" the policy and the government implementation of the Soekarno era or the *Old Order* (Sitompul, 2018). In Indonesia, during the *New Order* or the Soeharto era, especially from 1977 to 1997, there was the number of the political parties that participated in the general elections, they were *Golongan Karya (GOLKAR)*, *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP)* and *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (PDI)*, which was a drastic change from the political system during Soekarno era. Nevertheless, in 2019 elections, the amount of political parties is approximately six times more than that, which is around twenty political parties, and also Indonesia has reached that point when there were forty-eight parties involved in 1999 elections right after the fall of Soeharto. The very high amount of political parties seems to reflect how diverse Indonesia's population is, and these parties have been the means for people and community groups with the same goals. Moreover, it can be acknowledged that Indonesia "adheres to a multi-party system", which can be seen in Article 6A Paragraph (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945, which states that "the

candidate pairs of President and Vice President are proposed by political parties or joint political parties participating in general elections before the election” (Widayati & Winanto, 2018). Thus, the words “joint” in the above statement basically states that there has to be at least two parties participating in the election. Furthermore, even though the multi-party system represents what a democracy actually is by showing that basically any groups can freely create a political party, and it represent the changes from the new order era to a reformation era that those college’s students demanded through a long and bloody demonstration in 1998, it has actually come with several problems, which can be felt until now.

#### **4.2 Simplification of Political Parties (*Fusi Partai Politik*)**

The fusion of political parties started in the new order era through the passage of Law Number: 3/1975 which includes the party of functional groups (*Golongan Karya* or GOLKAR), Development Unity Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* or PPP) as a fusion of Islamic political parties and Indonesian Democratic Party (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* or PDI), which is a fusion of national political parties (Indonesia, 1975). Even though the simplification of political parties in Indonesia also happened in the Soekarno’s era or the *Old Order* era, the changes into only three political parties is inarguably the most significant. Furthermore, there are several reasons why the new order government went to such drastic switch. According to Okto Dellon Sunuraz Putra, in the *Study Source of Kemendikud* (Ministry of Education and Culture), such policy of Soeharto’s regime was to create the “stability” in the Indonesia’s political spectrum (Putra, 2019). The fusion of political parties was assumed to be the main requirement for the nation’s economic development because it was popular opinion that the failures in the Old Order era was caused by the many political parties, which as Putra points out that it leads to too many ideologies as well as the interests of each parties (Putra, 2019). More importantly, this simplification was not solely focused on synchronizing the ideology but the program as well, so that these three parties can work as a

team for a better Indonesia (Putra, 2019). Moreover, the results were that GOLKAR, which was considered the government-backed party, dominated Indonesian politics, and won every election held during the *New Order Era*.

### 4.3 1999 Election Forward

The third president of Indonesia, B.J Habibie has been known by many people to be the father of democracy in Indonesia. He made some bold changes toward political openness and decentralization (Matthews, 2014). Furthermore, this transition from the New Order Era to Reformation Era has evolved laws regarding the election especially, Law Number: 2/1999 regarding political parties. In short, with the introduce of a new law, 171 political parties were formed from many different fundamentals, which only 48 of them get to continue to the election that began in June 7<sup>th</sup> the year of 1999 (Indonesia, 1999). Compared to 1999, the number of political parties that participated in 2019 election is not as much, which are 18 political parties, excluding the 4 Aceh local parties. Therefore, the changes in number of participants throughout the years after the country's independence can be summarized as:

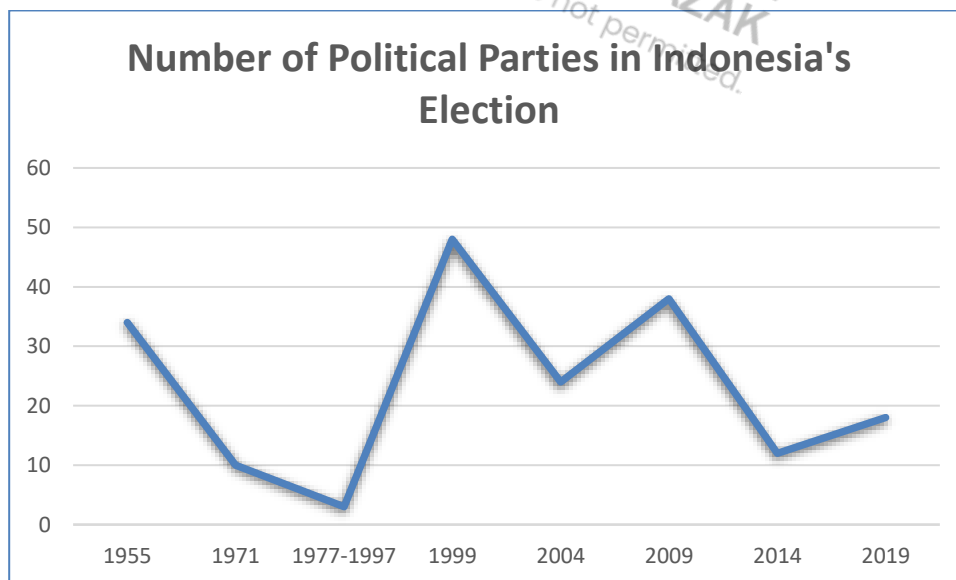


Figure 3 – Number of Political Parties in Indonesian Elections Data Source: *kompas.com* (Saptohutomo, 2022)

#### 4.4 Balance of Power

The fall of Soeharto marked the beginning of a new era, where GOLKAR is no longer the majority in the parliament, and it creates a balance in terms of policy-making process. Hence, the structures of the parliaments are simply varied, which consequently consist of oppositions as well as supporters. Ultimately, the presidential system of government does not perfectly match the multi-party system because there will simply always be a possibility that the “elected president” to not get parliamentary support (Widayati & Winanto, 2018). Hence, the elected president will have problems to deliver his/her promises during the campaign, as the bureaucracy is very complex and has to get all of the supports his/her can get, especially in the legislative sides. On the other hand, it could actually be the other way around. When the elected president does not have political oppositions, there would potentially be an abuse of power because no one would not dare to oppose the ruling president. Obviously, any party systems will have its ups and downs, but multi-party systems are usually “applied in countries with many and heterogeneous populations” as the community groups’ interests “can be accommodated” by their chosen political party (Widayati & Winanto, 2018). In the case of multi-party system, other than Indonesia, lots of countries have actually adopted it, such as India and France, and sometimes, the impacts of the multi-party system are, indeed, relative depending on in which position, they are about to speak, the winner or the loser of election. Additionally, the success of such a system can only be felt by the country’s own people, so the research will hopefully be the answer to the commotions that happen during and after the election in Indonesia.

## 4.5 Corruption in Indonesia

There was a viral statement made by the Minister of Political, Legal, and Security Affairs, Mahfud MD in 2017 regarding the corruption in Indonesia. He said that basically the corruption in the reform era is more “widespread” and “crazier” than the *New Order* era (Voice of Indonesia, 2021). The notion of more widespread corruption was translated into more detailed manner by saying that nowadays, the People’s Representative Council (DPR), the Supreme Court Judges, Constitutional Court, governors, regional heads, Regional People’s Representative Council (DPRD), they are “all corrupt individually” while they would not dare to do so in the *New Order* era as the corruption in that era was more “coordinated” (Voice of Indonesia, 2021). Furthermore, the following sub-chapter explores the cases, which the political parties are associated with corruption cases.

### 4.5.1 Corruption Involving Political Parties

According to the Corruption Eradication Commission (*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi* or KPK), as mentioned in the *Republika*, accumulating for, 36% of corruption cases have involved the political parties (Adiyudha & Puspita, 2020). Hence, this chapter will explore on how corruption has been close to each other with political parties by providing case which involve, not the members but the higher-ups of these political parties. First, the former Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) chairman, Luthfi Hasan Ishaq. Such a high rank in a political party, he was sentenced to 16 years in Prison and fined Rp. 1 Billion, which equals to 84.000 USD during that time for his role in “beef importation quota fixing” in 2013 when he was a legislator (The Jakarta Post, 2013). The ex-chairman accepted bribes from a private company to “smoothen” the way for the company to gain more beef import quota (Alfiyah, 2013). Second, the former Indonesian Religious Affairs Minister Suryadharma Ali, who was also the chairman of an Islamic political party, the United



Development Party (PPP), was sentenced to six years in jail by the Jakarta Corruption Court (Tipikor) because of “self-enrichment by deliberately mishandling state funds that were allocated to the hajj pilgrimage program” covering the financial years 2010 to 2013 (Indonesia Investments, 2016). Third, Setya Novanto, who was the former House of Representatives speaker and the former Golkar Party Chairman was sentenced to 15 year in prison and declared guilty of rigging the Rp. 5.9 Trillion or equals to 424 Million USD during that time, electronic ID project, “which caused Rp. 2.3 Trillion in state losses” (Kahfi, 2018). Fourth, the former Chairman of the Democratic Party, Anas Urbaningrum was found guilty of “sustained corruption and repeated money laundering” and sentenced to 8 years in prison (Indonesia Investments, 2014). Lastly, the former Deputy Chairman of Gerindra party as well as Maritime and Fisheries minister, Edhy Prabowo, was sentenced from the previous nine years in jail, which reduced to five recently because he was guilty of “accepting bribes in a corruption scandal involving the export of lobster larvae” (Suhenda, 2022). Furthermore, other than these big names above, there were many other regions heads, which were associated with political parties, were guilty of corruption, and they have been sentenced for prison (Agustina & Sutarih, 2019).

## 4.6 Conclusion

After the long rule of Soeharto (1967-1998), who was considered “authoritarian”, Indonesia entered the reformation period, which are meant to simply give people more power in the political process (Indonesia Investments, n.d.). Nevertheless, these changes also come with concerns regarding the political development and the democracy in Indonesia. The first concern is that the elected president will not be able to freely do their campaign promises and his or her strategy after all because of the situation that if his or her supporting parties are not doing well in the parliamentary elections, the president would have a hard time going forward. Another situation is that, as pointed out in Chapter 1.2.2, the transactional aspect of post-election would be unavoidable, so the President would likely to obey the unwritten rules and ultimately have limited options. The second concern would be about the corruption. The examples shown in Chapter 4.5.1 indicate that even people in the higher ups of Indonesia’s political parties doing corruption.

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## CHAPTER 5: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Introduction

The interview process of this research has not been very smooth, but the author was very fortunate to be able to interview the key informants. All the interviewees were reached and mediated through family and friends, and official introductory letters from Universiti Tun Abdul Razak was the first thing for them to see. In addition to that, list of questions was also provided for the interviewee to see in the form of Terms of Reference or ToR, which also contains the background and the purpose of interview. Furthermore, 4 out of the 7 possible interviewees agreed to have an interview in a different space of time, and 3 people were interviewed online and the other one was face to face. Other than thanking them for making time, the interviewer also asked them whether it is okay to record the meeting in order to mitigate the mistakes of misquoting. Nevertheless, because there was one interview that had technical issues in regard to the recording aspect of it, the author decides to not include their name, position in the government as well as the exact political party affiliation. Moreover, there are 4 key informants that were interviewed, so the next several chapters exhibits the summary of these interviews, and they are going to explore further on the impacts of multi-party system in both *New Order* and *Reform* era that were said by the interviewee.

### 5.2 Interview 1 – Key Informant A

The Key Informant A was once a ministerial special staff and is a senior politician in one of the political parties that experienced the impacts of having *Fusi Partai Politik* and the era afterwards. The notion of authoritarian government during the *New Order* era was really felt, and it was as far as the intervention of another party's businesses. According to Key Informant A,

since simplification of political parties was established in 1973, there were many of internal conflicts inside the body of Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), and the government intervention was worsening the situation (Key Informant A, personal communication, 11 May 2022). In order to overcome these situations, the daughter of the first president Soekarno, Megawati Sukarnoputri was supported by the cadres to become the chairman of PDI, but the government in the *New Order* did not agree with the nomination of Megawati Sukarnoputri, and ultimately issue a prohibition of supporting her in *Kongres Luar Biasa* (KLB) or Extraordinary Congress in Surabaya, East Java in 1993 (Key Informant A, personal communication, 11 May 2022). The result of the extraordinary congress did not suit the wills of its participants as they crowned Megawati Sukarnoputri to be the Central Executive Board (DPP) Chairman for 1993-1998 period (Key Informant A, personal communication, 11 May 2022). Moreover, another intervention by the Soeharto's government was that they named Suryadi to be the Central Executive Board (DPP) Chairman in 1996, which eventually led to bloody accident called *Kudatuli* or the Twenty Seventh July Riot (Key Informant A, personal communication, 11 May 2022). Furthermore, when it comes to the transactional aspect of the *Reform* era, it happens all the time "consciously or unconsciously", so in the case of, the choosing of ministerial positions, as long as the, the person from the political party is qualified, it rather will not be viewed as unusual (Key Informant A, personal communication, 11 May 2022).

### **5.3 Interview 2 – Key Informant B**

The second interview involves one of the ministers during the fourth president of Indonesia, Abdurrahman Wahid's administration (1999-2001) and he is one of the well-known political observers in the country. According to Key Informant B, the difference of both types of multi-party system, the simplified version and the current era's version, is in the context of political architectures during those era (Key Informant B, personal communication, 9 April 2022). The *New Order* era system was authoritarian and adopted "top-down" approach, and the *Reform Era*

is more “bottom-up” (Key Informant B, personal communication, 9 April 2022). Nevertheless, the high number of political parties during the current era does not perfectly fit the “ideal democracy process” as he thought that there should be one dominant party while never in the Indonesia’s elections history, a party get 50% or more votes (Key Informant B, personal communication, 9 April 2022). Hence, it creates a situation when party coalition is only based on the “conveniences” or “must-do” rather than the resemblance in visions of these political parties (Key Informant B, personal communication, 9 April 2022). In addition to that, the situation has led to cartelization, where the political parties are joining the coalition of government supporter, and the rest going to the oppositions, which their roles have remained questionable because they have not had alternative programs and are easily “switching sides” (Key Informant B, personal communication, 9 April 2022). When it comes to the *New Order* era, it was all about political manipulation it was believed that Golkar, which was government-backed party was about political manipulation, and one of the ways was through a policy called *Massa Mengambang* or *Floating Mass* (Key Informant B, personal communication, 9 April 2022).

### 5.3.1 Floating Mass

In the long-serving rulers’ government around the world, certainly, one would have a political instrument that makes him/her rules for a long period of time. Furthermore, in the *New Order* era, there was a political instrument named *Floating Mass*. It is a concept that applies to the social aspect of the people, which is a control on mass organizations (Zenius, n.d.). Furthermore, it works in a way that, for example; if several farmers want to take part in farmer-related organization, they have to join the one that is created or approved by the government (Zenius, n.d.). In addition to that, the examples of this policy are the birth of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) and the Employee Corps’ of the Republic of Indonesia (KORPRI), which exists until now (Zenius, n.d.). Therefore, this situation worked in the favour of Golkar Party because they labelled them as non-

political party as they were able to reach many components of the people and yet, the other two parties were not able to reach the mass bases that Golkar could reach through the *Floating Mass* (Key Infomant B, personal communication, 9 April 2022).

#### 5.4 Interview 3 – Key Informant C

The third interviewee or Key Informant C was one of the politicians from West Papua, and he was the member of People’s Representative Council during 2004-2009 period. According to Key Informant C, Indonesia was not “ready” for the transition from three political parties to forty eight political parties in 1999 election, and many people though everything was going to be well, but actually there are some problems coming around (Key Informant C, personal communication, 12 May 2022). One of the problems were that switching sides that has happened many times during the *Reform* era, and there was even a suggestion by the head of Golkar Party to create a permanent inter-party coalitions such as *Koalisi Kerakyaktan vs Koalisi Kebangsaan* during the beginning of sixth president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono era (Key Informant C, personal communication, 12 May 2022). Furthermore, the coalitions that happen during the current era are also believed to be momentary because if they are close with the ruling party or the government, they are able to get financial support (Key Informant C, personal communication, 12 May 2022). Hence, Indonesia enters the “Free Market of Politics”, so these political parties becomes more “pragmatic” and less prioritizing the well-being of Indonesian people (Key Informant C, personal communication, 12 May 2022). As to the transactional aspects of choosing the ministerial position, it does not only happen in the *Reform* era, and during the *New Order* era, most ministerial positions are filled by the “technocrats” which were affiliated to Golkar Party (Key Informant C, personal communication, 12 May 2022).

### 5.5 Interview 4 – Key Informant D

The fourth interview involves one of the current members of the Regional People's Representative Council, and he was from one of the political parties that was born right after Soeharto fell in 1998. According to Key Informant D, the main benefit of having many political parties in 1999 from only three political parties is that more people were accommodated in terms of the creations of political party (Key Informant D, personal communication, 5 June 2022). On the other hand, one of the weaknesses of current multi-party system that has lots of political parties are that because there are too many interests, the decision-making process takes a lot longer (Key Informant D, personal communication, 5 June 2022). In addition to that, the comparison between the corruption that happens during the current era and the previous era was that before the people that are doing corruption are more concentrated, while now the corruption is more "widespread" (Key Informant D, personal communication, 5 June 2022). Furthermore, the transactional aspect between the executives and political parties, in Indonesia, is often called *Politik Balas Budi* or *Return the Favour Politics*, but it is not as simple as returning the favour, and in term of ministerial positions, the president is obviously asking to the political parties, that supported him during the elections, the competent ones to fill the cabinets (Key Informant D, personal communication, 5 June 2022). It is also the right decisions to return the favour because the elected president will arguably have several problems during his period if these political parties that supported him/her are not accommodated (Key Informant D, personal communication, 5 June 2022). Also, in relation to whether the cost of election is affected the total of political parties is that it would not be that significant since it might only affect the cost of printed papers and the number of voting places remain the same or even more (Key Informant D, personal communication, 5 June 2022).

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

### 6.1 Conclusion

Ultimately, both circumstance of the number of political parties that are adopted during the *New Order* era and the *Reform* era have the positive and negatives impacts on Indonesia's democracy. The idea that the *Reform* was going to lead "more" democracy should be viewed in several aspects. In terms of the placement of the ministers in cabinet, the current era also exhibits the similar behaviour by picking the ones that are from political parties during the election while the *New Order* era picked, mostly, picked the "technocrats" that are from the ruling party during that time. Hence, it brings us to the idea that the multi-party system in Indonesia would not be far from the transactional aspect of the politics, and "Returning the Favour Politic" has become common practices in Indonesia. Furthermore, the current system would also negatively affect the future of Indonesia's political process, some of these political actors are "selling" themselves in order to get close to the ruling government to simply reap benefits (Key Informant C, personal communication, 12 May 2022). Therefore, nowadays, we rarely see the political parties that promotes their vision or ideas, and rather focusing first on the well-being of political parties instead of the Indonesian people. On the other hand, the multi-party system during Soeharto era or the *New Order* era simply does not exhibit one of the four aspects of democracy proposed by Larry Diamond as pointed in chapter 2.2.3, which is "free & fair elections", and through *Floating Mass*, it created a situation which the ruling party during that period, Golkar Party, won before the match even started. It resulted in putting Golkar as a single force in *New Order*'s political ground that the government could basically "carry out the construction" with stability (Sudjito, 2013). In addition to that, the government intervention in the political parties during Soeharto's regime that was mentioned by the Key Participant A is not the only flaw of the *New Order* era. According to Gatot Sudjito, who was serving as a member of the Surabaya Regional People's Representative



Council from Golkar Party, in his study about politic configuration from the year 1971 to 2009 in Indonesia, *New Order's* government utilised the power of Golkar Party to create some policies that harmed the other parties (Sudjito, 2013). Moreover, some of the policies that are related to unfairness of the *New Order's* Era are:

1. The simplification of political parties that was mentioned in chapter 4.2 in this study made Golkar the only party that was not created from the fusion of political parties. Because the other parties PPP and PDI are resulted from the mixing of several political parties, there were lots conflict in their parties, internally. Hence, this situation simply made them “not ready” to compete with Golkar (Sudjito, 2013).

2. The issuance of some election policies that required “civil servant” to be committee of elections generated elections that were not competitive because of the Golkar’s influence on the government during this era (Sudjito, 2013).

Furthermore, the policies above shows that every era has their own challenges. The current era or the *Reform* era is also inseparable from deficiencies. The solutions that were proposed by Widayati & Winanto in chapter 2.3.1 are simplifying the number of political parties and having a permanent coalition in Indonesia (Widayati & Winanto, 2018). The idea of reducing the amount of political parties has been optimized by the implementation of thresholds that political parties have to achieve in order to exist in parliament. On the other hand, the notion of having a permanent coalition in Indonesia is not considered to be ideal for Indonesia and it would be “impossible” for Indonesia to have a permanent coalition (Key Informant D, personal communication, 5 June 2022). The reason is that, the coalition also happens during the election of head of regions, not just in presidential elections, so some political parties might have a coalition in Jakarta, but they are facing off at each other in other region (Key Informant D, personal communication, 5 June

2022). In addition to that, for political parties, different regions means different strength, playing field, advantages and most importantly, different mass bases, so it difficult to apply a permanent coalition system in Indonesia (Key Informant D, personal communication, 5 June 2022). Therefore, as long as winning the elections is above all for these political parties, Indonesia will still feel the negative impacts of the multi-party system such as being too transactional.



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## APPENDIX A

### Terms of Reference (ToR) for Interview Purposes

#### ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM IN INDONESIA'S DEMOCRACY POST SOEHARTO'S ERA

(ToR)

##### Background

Indonesia has passed the *New Order* era, which only had three political parties participating in the election (Golkar, PDI & PPP). Next, the *Reform* era, there were 48 political parties participating in the 1999 Election. Even though they both can still be categorized as multi-party system, the different in the number of political parties is totally significant.

##### Motivation

Generally, the writer is trying to get the information regarding the negative or positive impacts of the returning to more than three political parties in the 1999 election, in relation to Indonesia's democracy process, and the political interaction during Soeharto era as well as the current era.

##### Questions

1. What are the negative and positive impacts of leaving a system in which only had three political parties participating in the elections?
2. In your opinion, how the change to 48 parties in the 1999 election has changed the dynamics or the synergy that happened between the President and the political parties?
3. In your opinion, has the current multi-party system in Indonesia been effective?
4. If not, should Indonesia think about going the era where only three political parties participating in election, or should Indonesia even switch the system into one-party system (China) or two-party system (the United State

**APPROVAL PAGE**

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**NAME OF AUTHOR**                   **: BANI CAHYA ARISTYA**

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The undersigned certify that the above candidate has fulfilled the condition of the project paper prepared in partial fulfilment for the degree of Master of Public Policy.

**APPROVED BY:**

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Prof. Dr. Nik Rosnah Wan Abdullah  
Supervisor  
Date:

**ENDORSED BY:**

---

Jenny Maria Gryzelius  
Dean  
Tun Abdul Razak School of Government (TARSOG)  
Date:

