The Role of Political Party Elites in Reconciling Identity Political Conflicts After the 2019 Presidential Election: A Consensus Perspective

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Abstract:

The research aims to analyze the role of political party elites in reconciling identity political conflicts after the 2019 presidential election carried out by political party elites from the perspective of Ralf Dahrendorf's social conflict theory. The research approach used is qualitative with descriptive methods. The data was collected using documentation, namely journal articles and news articles about reconciliation after the 2019 presidential election—news articles taken from kompas and detik.com. The analysis used is content analysis. The findings from this research are that the consensus agreed upon by the political party elites that intersect has a significant influence on society, which previously experienced polarization due to the strengthening use of identity politics in the 2019 presidential election. This research is useful in the realm of political sociology and also social development. Based on the research findings, this research is novel in the perspective that conflicts that occur between groups can be negotiated and made mutual agreements for the progress of a larger organization.

Keywords: identity politics; political Sociology; Presidential Election; reconciliation; social conflict.

INTRODUCTION

The 2019 presidential election is quite special because, for the first time in history, the presidential election was held simultaneously with the legislative election. The 2019 presidential election was attended by two pairs of candidates for president and vice president. Pair number 01 is Jokowi Widodo and Ma'ruf Amin. Meanwhile, pair number 02 is Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno. The victory of Joko Widodo and Ma'ruf Amin as President and Vice President in the 2019 Presidential Election (Pilpres) still leaves deep concerns about the sustainability of democracy in Indonesia. Tensions occurred in the capital after the official decision from the General Election Commission (KPU) because it was deemed that the couple Joko Widodo and Ma'ruf Amin had committed fraud, which led to a lawsuit from the couple Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno to the Constitutional Court (MK). Apart from that, before the 2019 Presidential Election, the campaign process also indicated that there was a strengthening of the use of identities such as religion as a political propaganda tool. Therefore, for the sake of the sustainability of democracy as well as social and political stability at various levels, consensus by the opposing Political Party Elites is considered necessary for the reconciliation process.

Many parties regret the process of implementing the Simultaneous Elections, especially during the 2019 Presidential Election. The reason is that from the various conditions of the political situation that occurred during the campaign, the visible symptom was the strengthening of identity exploitation as propaganda. Identity politics is considered to be strengthened when narratives circulate that carry the

concept of populism, and uniquely, this is linked to religious identity, which populist politicians always use to narrate that certain religious identities are marginalized. One of the parameters that can explain the conflict and polarization caused by identity politics can be seen in the division of society into opposing groups. One example is the clash between the #2019ChangePresident movement and the movement using #DiaSibukKerja T-shirts at the Car Free Day location (Indrawan et al., 2022).

Political parties are an important instrument for building democracy. Schattschneider said that political parties created democracy, and modern democracy cannot be separated from parties (Cross & Katz, 2013). Apart from that, "...Political Parties act as channels for public officials to be able to hold certain public positions through social mechanisms in the form of elections carried out by the community..." (Ekawati et al., 2020). This is different from Mills, who sees the role of elites in policy because of the highest position of individuals in institutions, while Putnam divides them into two categories, namely elites who have direct influence in the policy-making process and elites whose influence is indirect in the policy-making process (Budiardjo, 2008).

Based on the description in the previous paragraph, it can be seen that Political Parties are one of the important instruments in democracy; Political Parties are the ones that can take part in the election process, which is held to ensure that the circulation of the Elite in government is maintained. Meanwhile, elites in political parties have a significant role in determining political party policies, especially in the 2019 presidential election. Dahrendorf said that society is divided into two faces, namely conflict and consensus, which are mutually necessary (Ritzer & Goodman., 2008). so that consensus will be present in a society that is in conflict due to Identity Politics during the 2019 Presidential Election. Dahrendorf also differentiates the concepts of power and authority; power is the ability possessed by a person if, in social relations, he has an upper-class position; he can do something of his own free will without thinking about groups that are in the lower classes. Meanwhile, authority is the possibility to command a certain group of people who must be obeyed willingly (Dahrendorf, 1986).

From there, we can see that authority is a right possessed by individuals or groups who have power. In this case, we can see that the group that has the authority to arrange cabinet seats is Jokowi as the winner in the 2019 presidential election, and the decision to invite Prabowo's coalition to join the cabinet as the group that has power over the coalition group and its sympathizers can be seen as a sufficient step. Effective in preventing prolonged conflict because in several regions such as Aceh, West Sumatra, North Sulawesi and Bali, the votes for the two presidential candidates are very far apart at 80-90%.

This situation is considered quite extreme, considering that polarization is clearly visible in several regions. Political Party Elite Consensus will reduce hostility at the grassroots level. The reconciliation process must be started by the 2019 presidential election contestants, namely the Jokowi-Ma'ruf Amin and Prabowo-Sandi pairs. They, as contestants and elite political parties, are considered symbols of struggle and struggle during the 2019 presidential election, which can be an attraction to mobilize all successful teams and sympathizers so that they can then carry out reconciliation on all fronts.

Some research that has been conducted tends to focus on general reconciliation processes. There has yet to be any research that specifically discusses the relationship between the consensus agreed upon by Political Party Elites and the reconciliation process that exists in society. Previous research by Ardipandanto (2020) paid attention to reconciliation efforts after identity politics during the 2019 presidential election, where there must be involvement of various elements from both the government and figures. Indrawan (2022) pays attention to Political Reconciliation because political polarization after the 2019 Presidential Election has the potential for division or disintegration of the nation. The results of his research show that Political Reconciliation efforts must be carried out top-down and button-up simultaneously so that the reconciliation process can run effectively and must be constructed from social culture. Fernandes (2018) paid attention to the level of effectiveness of Identity Politics on the level of election in the 2019 Presidential Election. The results of his research showed that electorally Identity Politics did not have a big effect on the 2019 Presidential Election. Because after the 212 action was held, it had no significant effect on Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto. Joko Widodo's vote did not decline after the 212 action was held, nor did Prabowo Subianto's vote experience stagnation. In previous research, substantively there needs to be a sufficiently in-depth analysis of how the consensus built and agreed upon by the Party Elite influences the reconciliation process in society. So, this research was conducted to explore the role of Political Party Elites in the conflict reconciliation process that occurred after the strengthening of identity politics resulting from election contestation in 2019.

METHOD

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods. Descriptive qualitative research methods can also be used to provide descriptions of existing phenomena. These phenomena are in the form of forms, activities, characteristics, changes, relationships, similarities and differences between one phenomenon and another (Syaodih Sukmadinata, 2007). The phenomenon that researchers are studying is conflict reconciliation, especially after the conflict that occurred during the 2019 presidential election. Data collection techniques using documentation. Documentation in this research is in the form of journal articles and news articles discussing conflict reconciliation after the 2019 presidential election. The data analysis technique used is *content analysis,* namely analyzing the content of news articles and journals related to conflict reconciliation after the 2019 presidential election. The news articles selected were based on media brands trusted by Indonesian citizens in 2023 collected by databooks.katadata.co.id (Annur, 2023). Media brands taken by researchers include Kompas and Detik.com. The reason the researcher chose these two media brands was because the two news media brands were credible media.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dynamics of Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto's Reconciliation After the 2019 Presidential Election

The presidential election is a very important moment for a country's democracy. However, presidential elections can also be a source of social conflict, as happened in Indonesia in 2019. In the 2019 presidential election, Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto competed fiercely for the presidential seat. Both candidates have a strong support base, each from different support groups. One of the factors causing social polarization after the 2019 presidential election is the use of identity politics. Both candidates, Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto, are using identity politics to gain voter support. Joko Widodo uses religious identity politics by portraying himself as a figure close to Muslims. Meanwhile, Prabowo Subianto uses anti-establishment identity politics by portraying himself as a figure who can fight oligarchic domination.

This use of identity politics further sharpens the differences between the two supporting camps. Joko Widodo's supporters accused Prabowo's supporters of being radical and intolerant. Meanwhile, Prabowo's supporters accused Joko Widodo's supporters of being corrupt and not siding with the people. Social polarization after the 2019 presidential election occurred not only among the public but also among the political elite. The two candidates, Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto were also unable to build good communication after the presidential election. In the end, reconciliation between Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto was the only way to reduce the social polarization that occurred.

The religious identity politics used by Joko Widodo's party, which portrays his party as someone close to Muslims, has created polarization among supporting groups. Even though it aims to gain support, identity politics (Muhtadi, 2019) has also become a source of conflict, with Joko Widodo supporters accusing Prabowo supporters of being radical and intolerant.

The social polarization that arises from identity politics shows that Indonesian society is still vulnerable to divisions based on identity factors (Al-Farisi, 2020; Rahman, 2020). In this context, the role of political leaders to build mutual understanding and reduce tensions between groups is very important. When identity politics is used as a campaign strategy, there needs to be a deep understanding of the long-term consequences (Fatimah, 2018). Political leaders must have a responsibility to build inclusive narratives and promote unity, even amidst political differences (Haynes, 2020; Syam et al., 2020).

It is important to note that identity politics is not a tool that should deepen divisions but should be a means of gathering support among various groups in society (Al-Farisi, 2020). Reconciliation should not only be an attempt to deal with post-election conflict but also an opportunity to build a more solid foundation for an inclusive and democratic society (Damarjati, 2019; Rahman, 2018; Vrsanka et al., 2017).

Joko Widodo's party invites reconciliation with Prabowo Subianto's party. However, from Prabowo Subianto's side, namely the National Winning Body (BPN), some agreed and there were those who disagreed. The BPN party who responded in agreement was Andre Rosiade (Damarjati, 2019), while the person who responded disagreed was Anzar Simanjuntak (Erwanti, 2019). In the affirmative response, it was stated that Prabowo and Jokowi were committed to remaining friends, whatever the outcome of the 2019 presidential election, and considered that Indonesian society was mature in democracy. Then, in a response that disagreed, it was stated that there was no need for reconciliation because there was no

conflict between the Prabowo and Jokowi camps. The conflict that occurred between supporters of the two sides was just a normal conflict in every competition.

If the intention of reconciliation is to be realized, then the following four things conveyed by Ubedilah Badrun can be taken into consideration. First, reconciliation must prioritize national interests, not group interests, and must be carried out by each party without any coercion. Second, there must be a national figure who is not involved in this political contestation but is ready to become a mediator. Third, universities can become mediators in the reconciliation process if there are no national figures available or willing. Fourth, reconciliation must represent the interests of the conflicting parties, even though it still prioritizes national interests above it. The reconciliation that occurs must also evaluate the current political system (Indrawan et al., 2022).

This reconciliation process certainly has inhibiting and supporting factors. Based on reports from *Detik news* (TimDetik.com, 2019) the inhibiting factors for Jokowi and Prabowo are quite sharp differences in political choices. Jokowi is a moderate nationalist, while Prabowo is a hardline nationalist. The 2019 presidential election was very heated and caused polarization in society. This could become an obstacle to reconciliation between Jokowi and Prabowo. Both parties have quite fanatical supporters. Pressure from supporters can be an obstacle to reconciliation. Meanwhile, the driving factor is that both parties have a strong desire to make peace so reconciliation can occur. The community supports reconciliation, then this will be a strength for both parties to make it happen. National figures can play an important role in encouraging reconciliation between Jokowi and Prabowo.

Reconciliation between Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto has several important implications. First, this reconciliation shows that both candidates are committed to maintaining national unity and integrity. Second, this reconciliation can be an example for other political elites to resolve conflicts peacefully. The reconciliation between Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto is an effort to reduce the social polarization that has occurred. However, this reconciliation will not be a permanent success if it is not accompanied by other efforts to build a more inclusive and tolerant society.

Jokowi's call for reconciliation with Prabowo was a form of building a better Indonesia for everyone, regardless of differences in political choices, maintaining national unity and integrity (Kharina & Krisiandi, 2019). Even though there are parties who agree and disagree, this reconciliation bore fruit. The result is that Prabowo Subianto becomes defense minister for the 2019-2024 period. Until now, the defense minister has never been reshuffle. Reconciliation has the implication of building or rebuilding relationships that are no longer haunted by past conflicts and hatred (Hayner, 2005). The role played by political party elites, especially Joko Widodo (Jokowi) and Prabowo Subianto, in reconciliation efforts to defuse identity political conflicts after the 2019 Presidential Election. Based on Ralf Dahrendorf's consensus perspective, the findings of this research provide an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of post-election identity political conflict reconciliation. 2019 president initiated by political party elites.

Reconciliation initiated at the political or national level by political leaders is able to reduce hostility among ordinary people naturally. The reconciliation process at the personal level generally occurs when peace has been successfully achieved at the top level. If leaders continue to compete, conflict in society is likely to continue (Indrawan et al., 2022). Calls for peace from the elite can heal the wounds that emerged as a result of defeat in the general election process. Because Indonesia's political culture is plural and inclusive, the process of individual reconciliation tends to occur more easily, allowing the national spirit to return to unity relatively quickly. After the 2019 presidential election, even though Joko Widodo and Prabowo had reconciled. But we need to remember that reconciliation should not only be a closing book on past conflicts but also open a new page in Indonesia's democratic journey. By analyzing post-reconciliation developments, several aspects can be identified that may have an impact on the political atmosphere and the results of the next presidential election.

Reconciliation does not only concern Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto but also teaches valuable lessons about the importance of inclusivity and diversity in politics. This can motivate candidates and political parties to pay more attention to the diverse aspirations of Indonesian society and encourage them to formulate platforms that encompass the needs of all levels of society. This positive influence can also spill over into voting behavior. Societies that witness successful reconciliation between top political figures may be more likely to prioritize the values of unity and cooperation in their political choices. Moreover, if reconciliation is accompanied by concrete efforts to build a more inclusive and tolerant society, this can create a more harmonious political climate.

It is also important to monitor whether this reconciliation is merely situational, i.e., occurring solely for specific political interests, or whether it is a genuine effort to create sustainable change. If reconciliation is only symbolic and not followed by concrete steps to address the root causes of political conflict, its long-term impact may be limited. In this context, the Indonesian people need to continue to criticize and monitor the actions of their political leaders. Active participation of the public in the democratic process, including providing feedback on reconciliation efforts, can help ensure that the desire to build unity does not just become empty rhetoric but is also translated into real policies and actions. Its impact on the next presidential election depends largely on the extent to which this reconciliation can be followed by concrete action to build a more inclusive society and strengthen democratic values. The Indonesian people, with their intelligence, will have an important role in shaping the political direction their country takes in the future.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen from a sociological perspective that the 2019 presidential election created strong social polarization in Indonesian society. Issues of identity, both religious and political, are the main factor that strengthens the division between supporters of Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto. The attitudes and actions of political figures, including Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto, can be analyzed from a sociological perspective to understand power dynamics, distribution of resources, and interactions between political elites. Reconciliation between Joko Widodo and Prabowo can be understood as an effort to re-construct an inclusive national identity. Sociological analysis will highlight how this reconciliation shapes identity narratives that support social unity.

Reconciliation Analysis in Ralf Dahrendorf's Consensus Perspective

Ralf Dahrendorf is the main figure who believes that society has two faces, namely conflict and consensus. Sociology must be divided into two parts, namely conflict and consensus theory. Conflict theory must examine the interests and use of violence that bind society together through pressure, while consensus theory must be able to test the value of integration that exists in society. Dahrendorf is of the view that society is formed inseparable from conflict and consensus which are mutually necessary (Ritzer, 2012).

Dahrendorf focused his attention on the broader social structure. The essence of the idea is that various positions in society have different levels of authority. Authority does not reside within the individual but rather resides in an individual's position in a societal structure (Philipus & Aini, 2006). The authority that resides in the individual's position in the structure of society is key in Dahrendorf's analysis. Authority indirectly states that there is subordination and superordination; those in positions of authority are expected to control subordinates (Dahrendorf, 1986).

Authority in every association is always dichotomous, because there are only two conflict groups who hold authority or are dominant and subordinate groups who want change (Ritzer, 2012). In this case, the group that has authority and is dominant is the presidential candidate pair Jokowi and Ma'ruf Amin. As the presidential and vice presidential candidate pair who won the 2019 presidential election, they have the authority to build a cabinet to maintain the stability of the government that will be in place. Of course, the group in a subordinate position is the presidential and vice presidential candidates Prabowo and Sandiaga Uno, who wanted a change in leadership in the government but suffered defeat in the 2019 presidential election.

Then Dahrendorf explained about groups, conflict, and change. Dahrendorf divided groups into three types. The first is the pseudo group (*almost group*) is a number of position holders with the same interests (Ritzer, 2012). In this research, the Political Elites have the same goal of becoming the dominant group in government. The second is interest groups, namely groups formed from broader quasi-groups. This interest group is created from a broader pseudo-group. This interest group has a clear structure, organization, program, goals and members. These interest groups are the real source of conflict in society. The third is conflict groups that arise as a result of various interest groups; in this case, conflict groups are people who bind themselves to one group during the 2019 presidential election. There are two types of conflict. First is ideological conflict, which is manifested in the form of conflict between the value systems adopted and the ideologies of various social units. This model of conflict is clearly seen in conflicts over differences in religion, belief and ethnicity. The second is political conflict, which occurs in the form of conflict in the distribution of power status and limited economic resources in society (Indrawan et al., 2022).

Dahrendorf views conflict as the result of structural inequality and disagreement in society (Sukidin & Suharso, 2015). In this research, the reconciliation between Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto, the sharp differences in political choices and the polarization of society after the 2019 presidential election can be interpreted as structural conflict. According to Dahrendorf, the consensus is an effort to reach a mutual agreement between conflicting parties (Ritzer & Goodman., 2008). The reconciliation between Jokowi and Prabowo can be seen as an attempt to reach a consensus to defuse the identity political conflict that emerged after the presidential election. Apart from that, it can also be said that from Dahrendorf's perspective, reconciliation can be considered as an effort to reconstruct inclusive national identity. An agreement between Jokowi and Prabowo could help reduce polarization and rebuild consensus in society. According to Priscilla Hayner (2005) in order for a reconciliation process to occur, a group (a country, for example) absolutely must first know and understand the truth of what happened in the past.

Through Dahrendorf's perspective, it can be identified that the identity political conflict after the 2019 presidential election emerged from differences in political views, especially regarding identity issues such as religion and populism. The reconciliation between Jokowi and Prabowo can be seen as concrete steps towards achieving consensus. Jokowi's call for reconciliation reflects efforts to reach an agreement amidst political tensions. In the context of consensus, the role of political figures such as Jokowi and Prabowo becomes important. Sociological analysis can highlight their role in shaping reconciliation narratives that support social unity. From the perspective of political party elites, Jokowi, as the leader of the party that won the election, has a central role in reconciliation after the 2019 Presidential Election. His pragmatic leadership style and orientation towards achieving consensus are a strong basis for building reconciliation. One key element is the communication strategy used by Jokowi. Jokowi not only approaches identity political conflicts as a political challenge, but also as an opportunity to build mutual agreement. Through his speeches and statements, Jokowi openly invites all parties to unite their vision and mission in building a better Indonesia. Negotiations between political party elites not only resolve political differences but also extend to issues that create identity political conflicts. Concrete agreements regarding policies, assignment of key positions, and voting for parties are an important part of building national agreements. Understanding Dahrendorf's consensus perspective helps explain how this process can be interpreted as a concrete step towards consensus in the midst of sharp political conflict.

The research results show that reconciliation between Jokowi and Prabowo, as political party elites, can be interpreted as a key role in reshaping an inclusive national identity. Political parties as representatives of social groups have had a significant impact on the narrative of national identity after the 2019 presidential election. The ideal reconciliation process, according to Bar-Tal (2009), is to start the reconciliation process when the conflicting parties begin to change their beliefs, attitudes, goals, and motivations. , and his emotions towards the conflict, and also what the future relationship will be between the two conflicting parties. Bar-Tal also said that the belief in a common goal in a society, which underlies the emergence of conflict, must be changed.

Through a series of agreements and compromises, political party elites succeeded in building a narrative that was able to unite various political identities in Indonesia. Reconciliation is not only a solution to identity political conflicts but also a concrete step in the reconstruction of national identity that recognizes and respects the diversity of society. The importance of Ralf Dahrendorf's consensus perspective in understanding identity political conflict and reconciliation becomes clear through the results of this research. This perspective helps provide in-depth insight into how consensus in the midst of political conflict can be achieved through the role of political party elites. In the context of political party elites, this approach guides understanding of the complex dynamics of national identity politics.

Dahrendorf saw conflict as the result of structural inequalities and disagreements in society. In the context of this research, political inequality and disagreement on identity issues can be identified as the root of political conflict after the 2019 Presidential Election. Reconciliation between political party elites, therefore, can be interpreted as concrete steps towards achieving consensus, creating common ground in the middle. Structural disagreement. Both conflict and consensus are a prerequisite for each other. Conflict during the 2019 presidential election, where identity is the main issue, is very worrying because it has the potential to damage the value of integration in society. The consensus built by the Political Party Elite, in this case, Jokowi and Prabowo as an interest group, as explained above, has a significant effect on the reconciliation process that exists in society.

CONCLUSION

This research produces an in-depth understanding of the role of political party elites, especially Jokowi and Prabowo, in reconciliation after the 2019 presidential election. By referring to Ralf Dahrendorf's consensus perspective, this research provides a holistic view of the dynamics of identity politics in Indonesia. Jokowi's pragmatic leadership style, Prabowo's approach as an opposition agent, negotiations between political parties, and the influence of reconciliation on national identity are key elements in this research. The research results highlight the importance of a consensus perspective in guiding reconciliation and achieving consensus amidst identity political conflict.

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