



OLIGARCHY AND DYNASTIC POLITICS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: Democracy gives everyone the freedom to choose and be chosen in elections. However, democracy also does not prohibit someone who has a family relationship with a public official from being elected in the election. This discourse gives birth to what is called oligarchy or dynasty in political life, especially in Indonesia. In this country, oligarchic politics and dynasty politics thrive along with the rapid development of its democratic life. Oligarchy and dynasty politics on the one hand are opposed by civil society, but on the other hand, candidates for public officials who are related to the incumbent are still elected by the people. That is why the debate about oligarchy and politics in Indonesia is very interesting to be used as a study. The purpose of this study is to analyze the idea of the development of oligarchy and dynasty politics in a democratic medium, such as in Indonesia. The main finding in this study concludes two things, which are changes to the electoral system and revamping the political and campaign financing system. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method based on Winters' oligarchy theory.

Abstrak: Demokrasi memberikan keleluasaan bagi setiap orang memilih dan dipilih dalam pemilu. Namun, demokrasi juga tidak melarang seseorang yang memiliki hubungan kerabat dengan pejabat publik untuk tidak dipilih dalam pemilu. Diskursus ini melahirkan apa yang disebut dengan oligarki atau dinasti dalam kehidupan politik, khususnya di Indonesia. Di negara ini, politik oligarki dan politik dinasti tumbuh subur seiring dengan pesatnya perkembangan kehidupan demokrasinya. Oligarki dan politik dinasti di satu sisi ditentang oleh masyarakat sipil, akan tetapi di sisi lain para calon pejabat publik yang notabene memiliki hubungan kekerabatan dengan petahana, tetap dipilih rakyat. Itu sebabnya perdebatan mengenai oligarki dan politik di Indonesia sangat menarik untuk dijadikan sebuah kajian. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis gagasan mengenai berkembangnya oligarki dan politik dinasti di dalam medium demokrasi, seperti halnya di Indonesia ini. Temuan utama dalam penelitian ini menyimpulkan dua hal, yaitu perubahan sistem pemilu dan pembenahan sistem pendanaan politik dan kampanye. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif berdasarkan teori oligarki Winters.

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INTRODUCTION

The practice of oligarchy or kinship, also known as dynastic politics, is allegedly increasingly dominating the Indonesian political system. Regional Head Elections (Pilkada) are a potential field of contestation for this servile practice among political elites. The threat of oligarchy in the Pilkada, of course, makes the elected regional leader pair will become the right hand of the political elite group to take advantage. This will injure the human rights of citizens and have an impact on the neglect of basic rights that should be obtained by the community. Poor health services, unequal access to education, and many land conflicts are mirrors of public services that are bleak because of oligarchy and dynastic politics.

Political elites are competing to disburse their funds to fund potential candidates who have a great opportunity to lead a region. The aim is none other than to strengthen and save their political position to increase their wealth. Besides of course "inviting" their relatives to be involved in the success of their power, including ensuring the continuity of "family" leadership in regional political constellations. Not to mention the condition of democracy in Indonesia itself, which is currently, especially after the February 2024 presidential election, is facing challenges from allegations of oligarchy and political dynasty leadership at the central level.

Democracies generally do not have dynastic politics, but historical evidence shows that dynastic politics are becoming more common in contemporary democracies. All citizens have the right to vote and hold office in democratic countries. Since the state belongs to the collective, it is not permissible for one group to control political life under the guise of the constitution. As long as he or she enjoys public trust, every citizen has the right to hold public office. Only moral considerations of decency and propriety are the basis for the supervision and restrictions that have been put in place so far. Realistically, dynastic politics grows and develops within the framework of our democratic state. In dynastic politics, the system is not based on ability and quality, but on personal closeness (Dewi, 2017).

The main problem of this study is that sustainability and future of Indonesian politics is threatened by emerging dynastic politics. Apart from depriving people of their freedom, it can also result in the emergence of incompetent leaders and neo-tyranny, which is tyranny taking on a new form. The emergence and spread of dynastic politics is bad for the economy as well as politics as it can dampen healthy commercial competition. Relatives of governments have been shown to assist economic policies in a number of countries, to the benefit of their families. Such a phenomenon will undoubtedly override the rights of citizens as it prevents others who are not relatives from holding public office in the area. So it is important for us to continue to push the ideas of oligarchy and dynastic politics ahead of the upcoming simultaneous elections on November 27, 2024, so that people understand the dangers if our local democracy is polluted by oligarchy. Previous studies have highlighted the impact of dynastic politics on democracy (Hadiz, 2005; Winters, 2011), but there have been few studies examining how oligarchy can survive in Indonesia's post-reform political system. Therefore, it is very important to study oligarchy and dynasty politics in Indonesia so that a way out and a solution can be found immediately.

A. Literature Review

The term oligarchy is understood as a form of power by a minority group. However, this definition is too partial to be understood, so Winters (2011) explains the phenomenon based on the context of how it is used and also what tools (power resources) are used. In reality, in some countries that recognize themselves as democracies, a paradoxical phenomenon often emerges where democratic institutions are not only trapped in oligarchic practices but become the root of the creation of oligarchy itself. Indonesia is no exception. Oligarchy is a political system in which the governing party consists of a group of people (the elite). They use all means to control and control the people. Aristotle said oligarchy is a system of government by a few rich people who are usually called aristocrats, aiming for their personal interests and without justice (Suteki, 2022).

In Winters' thinking material power has a linear line with politics. In his explanation, extreme material inequality produces the same political inequality. This condition is quite paradoxical, especially in a democracy that upholds equality and justice. In reality, the more unequal the distribution of wealth, the greater the influence and power of people with large amounts of property ownership on their political motives and goals. So what happens is exclusive power that only includes minorities with solid wealth. Because political power is considered to provide greater opportunities to those who have large material resource capacity. Wealth can be

referred to as a resource of power that is potent, flexible and multifunctional towards influencing political outcomes (Winters, 2011).

According to Winters, oligarchy theory focuses on the power of actors to use material resources in politics with concrete economic impacts. In simple terms, an oligarch can become an elite with his wealth resources but an elite is not necessarily an oligarch. Because elites are only measured by positions, conditions are different if an elite uses a strategic position to cultivate personal wealth, and at the same time can be called an oligarch (Winters, 2011).

This fact is also reinforced by Vedi R. Hadiz and Richard Robison, where the oligarchy did not fall after Soeharto stepped down. This is because oligarchs are able to transform according to the existing political context in a country. The end of the New Order became a new turning point for oligarchs to continue to dominate political economic power in Indonesia (Robinson & Hadiz, 2004). In their research, the two figures found that oligarchs used political parties as a component of democracy as an effort to win political contestation. Even the post-New Order decentralization policy was able to transform political economic power into relations that were also decentralized. The high cost of local political contestation opens opportunities for oligarchs to be involved either directly or indirectly (Winters, 2011).

Although they have some similarities with Winters, in terms of definition, Robison and Hadiz interpret oligarchy as a system of power relations that allows the concentration of wealth and power and collective protection efforts or simply oligarchy is defined as a system where all political power is centered on a handful of wealthy people who work together to formulate and make policies that provide financial group benefits. If Winters emphasizes more on actor behavior or agency, Robison and Hadiz emphasize oligarchy on power relations, wealth defense is collective (Robison & Hadiz, 2004).

In addition to Winters, Robison, and Hadiz, a study of oligarchy in Indonesia was also conducted by Boni Hargens (2019). Hargens in his dissertation discusses the oligarchic cartelization that occurs in Indonesian politics. By combining two major theories, namely the theory of oligarchy and also political cartels, according to Hargens, after the collapse of the Soeharto Government, Indonesia was not only controlled by oligarch political power but also political party cartels. So the theory built is more on how the party oligarchy is able to build a political cartel to control state resources for the benefit of the party and oligarchic hegemony (Hargens, 2019).

Some of the theses presented by Hargens complement Winters and Robison & Hadiz's thoughts on oligarchy in Indonesia. Basically, the form of political control that has occurred so far is not only an oligarchy, but an operating cartel. A handful of ruling elites control economic resources in relation to their oligarchic nature and co-opt the state to maintain the privileges they gain from collusive interpenetration with the state in relation to their cartelization. This oligarchic cartel controls the implementation of representative democracy by regulating policy-making at all levels and limiting party competition in elections to maintain the status quo. In his research, Hargens uses the example of the phenomenon of no newcomers in the House of Representatives because parliamentary seats are monopolized by major parties and the formation of a grand coalition supporting the Jokowi Government after the mainstream opposition party, Gerindra, finally joined the ruling coalition under President Jokowi's second term government (2019-2024) (Hargens, 2019). Therefore, this study will answer the question on how to reduce the practice of oligarchy and dynastic politics in the Indonesian political system.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is qualitative, which is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from the people observed. The descriptive research method was chosen to explain the problem in this study because this method is a research method that makes a description of events to describe systematically, factually and accurately about the facts, characteristics and relationships between the phenomena studied (Moen & Middelthon, 2015). Qualitative methods help the analysis process to find out oligarchy and dynastic politics in Indonesia.

Descriptive data analysis is the process of systematically compiling and describing data to provide a clear understanding of the basic essence of the data (La Kahija, 2017). This descriptive

analysis explains how oligarchy and dynastic politics have been running in Indonesia. Data collection in this research was conducted through literature studies sourced from books, journal articles, online news, and other documents related to the research title. The analytical technique used in this research is explanatory. Data processing is done by validating, which is ensuring the truth and relevance of the data. Then sorting, which is arranging the data to follow a certain order. After that, combining various data sources. After that, the data is grouped (classification), which is separating data based on certain characteristics. Then, analyzing, which includes collecting, managing, interpreting, and presenting data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Oligarchic Politics and Dynastic Politics Oligarchic politics actually flourished during the New Order (Orba) when concessions and policies were traded by a handful of elites. Vedi R Hadiz's research shows how before the 1980s, when the Soeharto family was not yet part of the economic players, oligarchs in the form of Soeharto cronies such as Liem Sioe Liong, Bob Hasan and others used to get monopolies and privileged access to licenses, supplies and credit. Of course, it got bigger when the Soeharto family joined the oligarchy (Hadiz, 2005).

However, after reformasi, still according to Vedi R Hadiz, the oligarchy spread. There was a decentralization of presidential power to institutions such as political parties and parliament. This also included the decentralization of central power to the regions. Authoritarian control during the Orba era was replaced by the use of money politics. In fact, at the beginning of reformasi, the aroma of political violence and intimidation was felt (Hadiz, 2005). Indeed, oligarchic politics is difficult to reach by law. It works in the space of closed dialogue between elites. It appears in negotiating public office positions. Not a few involve organizations and various political accesses. In the corridor of oligarchic politics, the affairs of the state are like the affairs of just a handful of people who color the media and power. This condition certainly undermines the capacity of democracy, because democracy worships competition. Fairness and public civilization values will disappear in oligarchic politics (Mihradi, 2020).

Hargens said that oligarchs are a two-faced central force in the knowledge that they work as oligarchs within party institutions, but in relation to the state, they act as cartels. Oligarchs also pursue multiple interests that include the interests of individual oligarchs as individual groups, the collective interests of oligarchs as oligarchic systems, and the institutional interests of oligarchic parties as cartel parties. The double face of oligarchy implies the multi-layered interests that they pursue both individually and collectively. So in this case, the oligarchic practice that occurs is not only acting as a single oligarch but carrying other interests as the individual originates. According to him, the main consequence of oligarchic cartelization has changed the nature of representative democracy into collusive democracy. In this case, Hargens interprets collusive democracy, namely cartelization, as a new trend that has become the *modus operandi* of party oligarchs in controlling the legal process at the parliamentary level (Hargens, 2019).

In this theory, the intended oligarchic position lies in political parties, where in a party there is certainly a ruling elite in motion together with organizations (parties) or even a combination that seeks to co-opt state-owned resources by cartel practices or by minimizing existing competition (Hargens, 2019). This is in line with Winters' thinking where he sees political parties as organizational or structural organs for oligarchs to operate. Simply put, party institutions, according to Winters, are nothing more than puppets in the hands of oligarchs in order to maintain political control of wealth defense strategies as their ultimate goal. This implies that oligarchs can live within and without party organizations (Hargens, 2019). Although in the process it is inseparable from the cartelization of oligarchs carried out by supporting parties.

The presence of this oligarchy starts from the sustainability of the chosen political system. In an indirect democracy system such as the one implemented in Indonesia, in which the scheme of organizing elections is preceded by legislative elections, political parties are an important element. Political parties have a strategic and vital role, namely being the party that is given political trust by the people through the representation mechanism in the parliament / DPR. By looking at the linear flow, political parties are right in the middle between citizens as constituents and the state as the highest executor of government. Political parties are the only institutions authorized to recruit these representatives.

If we look at the reality of political parties in Indonesia, it is clear that oligarchy as in Winters' interpretation is an acute disease. Almost all parties in Indonesia are actually controlled by a handful of elites who have strong capital and social capital. The oligarchic octopus in political parties strengthens the assumption that political parties fail to perform their function as democratization aggregators. The stalled recruitment and regeneration functions make political parties prefer to roll out the red carpet to power hunters with billions of rupiah. Political education presented to the public is summarized into campaign materials that are noisy, noisy with fake news, dropping opponents with slander or hoaxes. Even at the worst point, political parties make the community as their constituents considered as mere five-year political objects (Koho, 2021).

The General Chairperson as the main figure or party elite is decisive, these "strong people" appear as ideological or historical representations. In Indonesia today, parties are generally not ideological in nature, so figurality in most parties is due to the historical factors of party formation or a "historical moment" that causes a figure to surface and gain widespread support. Figures playing the role of the party's history cause respect, which in turn is often excessive so that their existence and the inner circle in it are very strong. Parties that are initiated, formed and run by a decisive figure, who usually later becomes the party leader, tend to be potentially oligarchic. The existence of this figure, on the one hand, can bring stability to the party. However, on the other hand, it also has great potential to present a centralized model of party management and governance (Koho, 2021).

Furthermore, party institutionalization in Indonesia is also not perfect. Party institutionalization itself in short is a condition when the system built by the party and all the rules of the game are respected and consistently implemented in addition to the development of attitudes and cultural patterns within the party. However, what is currently happening is that institutionalization is still running stagnant and even experiencing regression. Systems and rules are often interpreted and then adjusted for the benefit of the elite and their oligarchic network. In certain moments, the implementation of deliberation becomes pseudo. Party decisions are often taken unilaterally as a result of oligarchy. The more this condition occurs, the less political parties care about society. As a result, society also cares less about oligarchic practices.

The derivative of weak institutions is a moribund regeneration process. In the end, it allows "foreign figures" to be directly in the circle of power, whose work mostly tends to strengthen the oligarchy. The lack of clarity of regeneration also causes cadres to be more triggered to take refuge with certain patrons, thus smoothing the pattern of patron-client relationships. The figure of the party leader becomes so powerful, and in some parties becomes so absolute, because the internal rules of the game provide a loophole for that. This condition certainly encourages the expansion of engineering to create objective blind obedience (Koho, 2021).

External factors also influence the rules of the game related to parties and elections, which in general still provide loopholes for parties to build oligarchies within themselves. At least until now, the requirements for regeneration, party financial management that are able to neutralize the role of oligarchs have not been regulated in a firm and comprehensive manner. In addition, the oligarchy survives, even thrives, partly because of the presidential threshold system. The presidential threshold and regional head nomination requirements that provide opportunities for party elites to maneuver to build coalitions also contribute indirectly to the strengthening of elite power and cadre dependence on elite maneuvers. Furthermore, what provides comfort to the oligarchs is the lack of critical attitude of the community or civil society towards the internal conditions of the parties. As a result, parties do not feel disturbed, let alone triggered to improve themselves so that they can truly become democratic institutions capable of democratic behavior (Koho, 2021).

The institutionalization of political parties is also blocked because the principle of meritocracy is subordinated to blood relations and family relationships. To be sure, not a few cases of dynastic politics lead to corruption. Many corruption cases have been proven to involve kinship, such as in Banten, Kutai Kartanegara, Cimahi, and Klaten. The democratic mechanism of checks and balances becomes paralyzed when faced with dynastic politics. Of course, not all countries experience the same case, but for Indonesia, the experience of dynastic politics has threatened the democratic institutions that were bloodily fought for by the reform regime. In the end, comprehensive thinking and strong regulations are needed to at least limit money politics, oligarchy and dynasties from running rampant and destroying the democratic order. In fact, not

only regulation is needed, but also strong public education to build a culture of critical political literacy. This is not easy amid the Covid-19 pandemic which has begun to significantly affect economic growth. However, in the future, money politics, oligarchy and dynasty must be fought to be eliminated so that public resources, access to public space and public budgets are not misused for the benefit of a handful of elites or relatives. In addition, it is also necessary to revamp the electoral and party systems so that they are low-cost and ensure that qualified party cadres are prioritized to fill public positions. Not pragmatic groups armed with boat rental money become stowaways of democracy (Mihradi, 2020).

Thus, dynastic politics shows that strong authority can be built through close family ties. In particular, political power has become more than just a political phenomenon. It is a political culture that spreads throughout Indonesia. Ideas about political behavior, strategy and direction then develop into the political culture of Indonesian society. The portrait of Indonesian dynastic politics is seen as a process of political reproduction and competition to acquire and maintain power through ties of blood, marriage, or membership in an extended family group.

A different opinion says that dynastic politics is nothing to worry about as long as no regulations are violated. This is because every citizen has the fundamental right to elect and be elected in relation to human rights. In addition, Indonesia upholds the concept of the rule of law or the principle of checks and balances necessary to achieve democracy in the administration of its government affairs, as well as involving community participation as social control in determining prospective leaders, including regional leaders. However, it cannot be denied that candidates who are related to incumbents or important figures in their political parties will certainly have an advantage over their rivals. Therefore, subjective emotional ties are usually the foundation on which dynastic politics is built (Syakbani & Suprayitno, 2013).

In dynastic politics, a group of individuals with familial and kinship ties assist each other in taking turns holding positions of authority at different times. The fundamental idea in dynastic politics is the existence of blood ties through marriage, which facilitates the acquisition of power through the experience of the family that preceded it. Since this system necessitates hereditary positions, power struggles are very simple. Under these circumstances, it is contrary to democratic values. Although in practice this is done through direct elections, given the cross-generational nature of strategic political positions, it can have a beneficial impact. In the context of political recruitment, this is done behind closed doors and the position must be filled by relatives or family members (Windi, 2017).

Dynastic politics remains in Indonesia because it is rooted in heredity, where the lineage that grants power also sustains it through family members. Machiavelli believed that it was imperative for the ruling class to establish stability, practice strong politics, and maintain power for as long as possible. He claimed that it was morally right to use any means at hand to retain power in order to maintain political stability. The formation of political dynasties is a path to political stability because they can easily maintain power by appointing leaders whose descendants can carry out the directives of their ancestors (Surabaya, 2010).

There are several models of dynastic politics. First, the Alisan model. This is the renewal of power, or leadership, accumulated in a family and passed down from generation to generation. Second, political dynasties intersect with branches of power and rooms. For example, a brother can become mayor, a sister can become DPRD, and other family members can occupy strategic positions. Third, the supra-regional model of each region is run by the same family. This idea gave rise to many models of dynastic politics, which essentially have the same goal, namely political practices involving families and relatives. This model explains the state of dynastic politics based on descent and renewal of power over centuries of power (Suharto, 2017).

In addition to dynastic politics, there are other terms that can be used to characterize kinship in politics. Clan politics is one form of politics where families use the phrase "political oligarchy" to describe their attempts to gain power. The word "clan" generally refers to a tribe or group/family. This can mean that the phrase clan politics refers to kinship political efforts to achieve goals. In informal political, economic and social networks, this power is an opposition with others to encourage each other and strengthen family unity. While the terms dynastic politics and clan politics have different meanings, they often share similar ideas. Clan politics focuses more on the dynamics within the family that give rise to power than dynastic politics, which is characterized by direct descendants who can rule from generation to generation (Haryanto, 2014).

The formation of dynastic politics is caused by two factors. First, the gradual formation of political party cadres in an effort to find qualified candidates. This allows parties to nominate candidates who have relationships with incumbent officials. Second, a social context that upholds the status quo, particularly at the regional level, which favors the ascension of incumbents by providing support to family members or close relatives of regional heads.

These two overarching elements are the beginning of the pros and cons of development towards the phenomenon of political dynasties in Indonesia. People who oppose political dynasties want to limit the ability of relatives of the current elite to run for office. On the other hand, proponents of political dynasties argue that the cadre structure of political parties should be improved and enhanced, and restrictions on nominations are unnecessary. People's views on the rise of political dynasties cannot be separated from their relationship with the political culture that emerges in society. Political culture and the determination of power preferences are closely related to public acceptance and regime development (Dal Bó et al., 2009).

That is why the growth of political dynasties has always been a matter of pros and cons. Political dynasties are generally considered to have the capacity to lead to abuse of power. On the other hand, there is a growing consensus that prohibiting members of the ruling or incumbent family from participating in politics is a violation of citizens' constitutional rights and their human rights. This debate will certainly enrich the electoral repertoire in Indonesia, including discourses on democracy and power.

A. Oligarchy and Dynastic Politics in Indonesia

Since the end of the Old Order, dynastic politics has flourished in Indonesia, especially among the family of Soekarno, the first president of Indonesia. Sukarno's descendants, Megawati Sukarnoputri, Sukmawati, and Guruh Sukarno, all pursued careers in politics (Anggraini & Hardiyanto, 2020). The emergence of the siblings (KH Salahuddin Wahid) and biological descendants of KH Abdurrahman Wahid or Gusdur, namely Yenny Wahid into politics is another example of the phenomenon of dynastic politics in his family. Similarly, Puan Maharani's active participation in Indonesian politics until she was appointed Minister in the era of President Jokowi's administration and Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia showed the beginning of Megawati Soekarnoputri's political dynasty. The same thing happened to President SBY's family. SBY's family members involved in Indonesian politics include Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono (AHY), Eddie Baskoro, Hartanto Edhie Wibowo, Agus Hermanto, Sartono Hutomo, Dwi Astuti Wulandari, and Agung Budi Santosa (One, 2013).

Dynastic politics has evolved to this day. Political dynasties, which are seen by the general public as a virus that threatens democracy, initially hoped that Jokowi's election as president would cure the disease because he did not come from a wealthy political dynasty. However, this assumption was incorrect, as Jokowi was affected by the legacy of previous political elites who practiced dynastic politics and nepotism. Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Jokowi's son, after serving as Mayor of Solo is now Vice President Elect. Kaesang Pangarep became Chairman of the Indonesian Solidarity Party and Anwar Usman, who is President Jokowi's brother-in-law, once held the position of Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court. In addition, there is President Jokowi's son-in-law, Bobby Nasution, who is the Mayor of Medan (Sukmasari, 2024).

Dynastic politics thrives at the regional level. Based on research by Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) in 2010, several regional heads were elected who were related to the previous regional heads. For example, Kendal Regent Widya Kandi Susanti (wife of Kendal Regent Hendy Boedoro), Kutai Kartanegara Regent Rita Widyasari (daughter of former Kutai Kartanegara Regent Syaokani Hassan Rais), South Lampung Regent Rycko Mendoza (son of Lampung Governor Sjachruddin ZP), Pesawaran Regent Aries Sandi Dharma (son of Tulang Bawang Regent), Regent of Tabanan, Bali, Ni Putu Eka Wiryastuti (daughter of previous Regent), Regent of Kediri (wife of Regent Haryanti Sutrisno), Mayor of Cilegon Tubagus Iman Ariyadi, Regent of Bantul Yogyakarta Sri Suryawidati (wife of previous Regent Idham Samawi), and Regent of Indramayu Anna Sophanah (wife of previous Regent).

Other notable political dynasties include the Limpo siblings. Syahrul Yasin Limpo (SYL) is the former Governor of South Sulawesi and Minister of Agriculture. His siblings are Ikhsan Yasin Limpo (Regent of Gowa from 2005 to 2010), Haris Yasin Limpo (member of Makassar City DPRD from 2004 to 2009), and Tenri Olle (member of South Sulawesi DPRD from 2009-2014). In addition, there is Adnan Purichta, Syahrul Yasin Limpo's nephew (member of the South Sulawesi

DPRD for the 2009-2014 period and now the Regent of Gowa), Indira Thita Chunda, SYL's daughter (member of the House of Representatives for the 2009 to 2014 period), and finally his son, Kemal Redindo Syahrul Putra, also served as Acting Head of the South Sulawesi Food Security Service (Muin, 2024).

Next is Banten Province, which has been among the most effective in creating dynastic politics in Indonesia. The family that is most often elected in regional elections as well as the DPR or DPRD is the family of Ratu Atut Chosiyah, the former Governor of Banten. Tubagus Chasan, Ratu Atut's father, initiated the emergence of dynastic politics. Tubagus actively participated in the Golkar political party, which was later used as a platform by his descendants for politics. After serving as Banten's deputy governor in 2002, Ratu Atut went on to win regional elections in Banten in 2006 and 2011. Ratu Atut's family members, including her stepmother, her mother-in-law, her spouse, her brother, and her children, all followed in her political footsteps. Ratu Atut's husband, Hikmat Tommet, was elected to the House of Representatives from 2009 to 2014. Ratu Atut's first son, Andika Hazrumy, was appointed Deputy Governor of Banten from 2017 to 2022. Ratu Atut's second child, Andiara Aprilia, was elected to the Regional Representative Council (DPD) representing Banten province for the 2019-2024 term. Ratu Atut's son-in-law, Tanto W, was appointed Deputy Regent of Pandeglang for the 2015-2020 term. Ratu Atut's son-in-law, Ade Rossi Khaerunisa, was appointed to the Serang City DPRD. Ratu Atut's younger sister, Ratu Tatu Chasanah, was appointed Regent of Serang from 2015 to 2020. Ratu Atut's half-brother, Tubagus Haerul Jaman, is a member of the House of Representatives from 2019-2024. Ratu Ria Maryana, Ratu Atut's half-sister, is Deputy Chairperson of the Serang City DPRD and Chairperson of DPD Golkar for the 2020-2025 term (Zainal et al., 2018).

In addition to the family of Governor Ratu Atut, a number of relatives of Banten's regional heads were also caught building political dynasties. Former Member of the House of Representatives and Tangerang Regent Ahmed Zaki Iskandar is the son of former Tangerang Regent Ismet Iskandar. Then, Iman Aryadi, Mayor of Cilegon, whose father Aat Syafa'at was the Mayor of Cilegon before him. The daughter of Lebak Regent for the 2003-2013 period, Mulyadi Jayabaya, Iti Octavia Jayabaya is the Regent of Lebak and a member of the House of Representatives. Another daughter, Diana Jayabaya, is a member of the Banten Provincial DPRD; Mulyadi's sister, Mulyanah, is a member of the Lebak DPRD, his brother Agus R. Wisas is a member of the Banten DPRD; and the wife of former Pandeglang Regent Achmad Dimiyati Natakusumah, Irna Narulita, continues in her husband's footsteps as Regent of the same district.

The occurrence of political dynasties that received a lot of attention also occurred in Bangkalan Regency on Madura Island. Fuad Amin is a well-known person in Bangkalan and even throughout Madura. He is politically involved and comes from a family of religious leaders. Elected as Chairman of the Bangkalan Regency PPP DPC in 1996, his political career officially began. In this role, Fuad Amin continued the legacy of his father, Kyai Amin Imron. The well-known figure of Bangkalan PPP, Kyai Amin Imron, was a member of the House of Representatives during the New Order era. Fuat served as Regent of Bangkalan from 2003 to 2008. Fuad Amin left the PPP and joined the PKB when KH Abdurrahman Wahid extended an invitation for him to join the DPP PKB as a member of the Shuro Council. Throughout his political career, Fuad Amin was supported by a number of parties, including the TNI / Polri, FPAU, and the majority faction of parliamentarians.

Fuad Amin again campaigned for Bangkalan regent in the 2008 regional elections, and this time he won with an ideal majority of 80.79 percent of the vote. By enlisting his son Makmun Ibnu Fuad in the political contest, Fuad Amin established a political dynasty. Makmun had thus been a member of the Bangkalan Regency DPRD since the age of twenty-five. After retiring from the position of Bangkalan Regent, Fuad Amin nominated Makmun Ibnu Fuad to run in the Bangkalan Regency election. Fuad Ibnu Fuad broke all previous records by gaining 90%13 of the vote. As a highly respected figure in the Madurese community and society, Fuad Amin was not afraid of having to change his political ways. When PKB experienced a major conflict, Fuad Amin decided to move to Gerindra Party (Raditya & N., 2019).

In Indonesia, political dynasties have grown and changed since the end of the Old Order. However, since the introduction of regional autonomy in 2001 and the first direct regional elections in 2005, political dynasties have emerged at the local level. The development of different local political elites to co-opt these two processes is known as power reorganization. This process used to be considered a form of local democratization. Local elites took advantage of the

momentum of the transition from authoritarianism to democracy marked by the regional autonomy policy to seize full control in their respective regions in a competition to be the winner. Elites and create synergy, usually through marriage. The emergence of local kings in the regions as a result of regional autonomy is not surprising.

The term "local Cendanaization" refers to the growth of New Order local politics. The Cendana family, which dominated Indonesia's political economy for 32 years under President Soeharto, is often referred to as "Cendanaization". From young children to sons-in-law, nephews and other family members, they occupied important positions in the government, allowing the Cendana family dynasty to rule for thirty years. Today's elite families follow this trend, placing relatives in important positions in government to carry out dynastic politics (Ameliah, 2022).

Nepotism and the rise of dynastic politics in Indonesia are still emergencies in the country's political landscape, and the current laws are unable to periodically overthrow the country's political structure. Since the inception of nepotism, Indonesians have been vocally opposed to nepotism because political cheating has severely harmed the country's ability to recruit and elect people fairly, and only favors members of one's own family.

Nepotism impacts the lives of many people, the government does not take strict action against those who practice nepotism. Social inequalities among people can affect nepotism as only those who practice it can take advantage of nepotism and lead to an unbalanced hiring process in terms of money. Fewer jobs are available to those who rely on competition rather than kinship when recruiting, nepotism can lead to higher levels of unemployment in society, hence nepotists will increasingly rely on their families to elevate themselves into a job, without fair recruitment, there is a decrease in the number of individual actors who take nepotism seriously to fulfill their potential. The cause of the decline in the economic status of society and the state is that those who practice nepotism seek to make the most profit by placing their relatives in positions of power. This allows them to make huge profits and control the government system according to their interests (Ameliah, 2022).

Political dynasties also have significant social impacts, raising concerns about political inequality. The practice of manipulating others to gain the favor of family members is one of the negative impacts of political dynasties on the democratic system. Another negative impact is the proliferation of governmental regeneration, which is detrimental to governments that begin with a family tree that lacks a strong sense of leadership and is highly incompetent in a government. The weaknesses of political dynasties include the potential for parties to become political machines that depend on popularity and wealth, the elimination of qualified candidates due to the presence of powerful individuals who serve the interests of the elite, and the challenges of building an honest and democratic state that can lead to corruption, collusion and nepotism (Rahma et al., 2022).

B. Minimizing Oligarchy

The oligarchic situation in Indonesia is very worrying and there must be efforts to prevent it. Moreover, the aroma of "elite(is) reconciliation" is so strong and has the potential to slip into a dangerous vortex of elitism. Policies that are elitistically structured on the substance of unpopular logic or drastic changes, political struggle agendas that are delivered in a fiery manner during campaigns are a little evidence of how the oligarchic mentality exists. There are several reasons why we must commit to fighting oligarchy to the end. Oligarchy will cause values such as equality, political participation, openness, freedom of expression, and especially popular sovereignty to sink. This situation will usually lead to the denial of *civil society* and the buying off of democratic institutions.

Oligarchy aimed at elitist and exclusive interests will cause democracy to run half-heartedly, namely from the procedural side only, while from the substance side it is dead. As a result, the sovereignty of the people will look vague and only appear at the moment of electoral contestation. Meanwhile, after that moment ends, policies are determined by the *invisible hand* involving only political elites, bureaucrats and businessmen. This phenomenon occurs massively to the regions. If you look closely, the increasing number of corrupt regional heads and their associates is a very clear reflection of this situation. As a consequence, the existing political system is also not immediately prosperous.

Democracy hijacked by oligarchs will cause all policies to be directed solely at fulfilling the exclusive interests of elites, businessmen and their associates. It is not surprising then that in countries with half-baked democracies, the welfare of the people stagnates. It is swallowed up by the political cartel that causes the spillover of prosperity to never be abundant. Another thing that is also dangerous is that oligarchy will foster the seeds of anti-democratic thinking and attitudes and trigger a lack of seriousness in improving democratic institutions, thus slowly but surely destroying democracy. In such an atmosphere, both elites and eventually the general public will become increasingly accustomed to manipulating the political process, creating a habit and normalcy for political engineering (Winters, 2011).

Currently, the situation is still concerning because the nation's economic situation is not encouraging, especially for the common people. This condition causes a handful of circles to finally be able to buy, influence and even manipulate the political choices of many people, including parties. At the local political level, this happens or even starts during the process of finding candidates who will contest. In other words, as long as the disparity in economic power is so high, the potential for oligarchy will be equally high. Second, revamping political institutions and the electoral system. Currently, it has been recognized by many circles that there is *high cost* politics due to the implementation of expensive elections. This high cost has made the existence of oligarchy relevant. This situation is exacerbated by the weak institutionalization of democratic parties and institutions, which leads to high financial dependence on certain parties, which in turn provides opportunities for oligarchs or plutocrats to have political access.

Not only that, there needs to be modernization of political parties such as mandatory regeneration which is expected to strengthen ideological aspects and reduce the spirit of pragmatism. With this, the financial dependence that leads to the weakening of party independence can be slowly ended. In the context of institutional improvement, it is also very necessary to accelerate the modernization and reform of ASN purely and consistently. This includes strict disciplinary enforcement of ASN violations that are proven to be involved in practical politics. This is because ASN is often still a part of oligarchic engineering. Third, strengthening the culture of democracy and civil society. Although in various surveys it appears that the majority of our society recognizes democracy as the best form of government, our democratic culture is still not strong.

Not only the culture of money politics, but also even up to the level of village elections is still rife. However, being a good winner or loser is still difficult to realize. Also, the lack of awareness of being opposition-critical-objective means that our society and elites still view opposition as minor and are easily carried away by the strong currents of power. It is also the "conservative", feudal mentality and the continuation of the *spirit of illiberal democracy* (Bourchier, 2015) that provide a way to justify the control of a few people/oligarchy.

In this nuance, the existence of oligarchs will always have a place and be accepted even though it is clearly against the interests of the people. All of this clearly requires the intake of a strong democratic culture of awareness. In addition, it is necessary to strengthen civil society. Currently, in a situation where almost all parties are in the ranks of government, it is imperative to strengthen civil society. It is only with the involvement of civil society in politics that resistance to oligarchy and elitism can be expected. For this reason, civil society (in collaboration with the remaining opposition parties) must continue to strive to mobilize rational moral forces in a continuum so that the government can continue to be in line with the aspirations of many people (Noor, 2019).

There are two things that can be done to minimize oligarchy in Indonesia. First, changes to the electoral system. The *one man one vote* system in presidential and regional head elections must be accompanied by not only counting the votes of the majority of voters, but also considering the geographical and demographic representation of voters. The current presidential election system is only based on the logic of the *popular vote*. This makes the victory of a presidential candidate practically only requires victory in seven voter-dense areas such as West Java, Central Java, East Java, North Sumatra, Banten, DKI Jakarta, South Sulawesi and Lampung. In fact, geographically and demographically Indonesia has 38 provinces.

In the future, the presidential election system needs to consider the victory of each presidential candidate in the electoral district. Electoral regions per province as in effect today must be re-divided proportionally based on the area and number of voters. This scheme is expected to realize making the election results more democratic and equitable. The direct election system also needs to be modified. Economically well-established districts/cities with a low corruption index, and this index can refer to surveys conducted by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) and have a dominant middle class group can indeed run a direct election model. However, regions with a low index of poverty, economic inequality and welfare, for example Central Sumba Regency, need to be provided with an alternative system, for example by returning elections through the DPRD mechanism.

Indeed, there is the potential for *abuse of power* in DPRD elections, but at least the development of the quality of democracy can be better controlled. However, there also needs to be a promotion mechanism for regions that are economically and welfare improving to be able to hold direct elections. Second, revamping the political and campaign financing system. It is time for the state to participate in financing the campaign of each national and regional legislative candidate. This is important to reduce the potential for corruption of elected candidates. It is common knowledge that political costs are currently very high. Corruption is usually committed by candidates when they are elected because they want to return their capital costs during the election.

When candidates have to finance their own political campaigns, they have a high potential to borrow capital or ask for financial support from third parties in exchange for clientelistic *politics*. In developed democracies, voter behavioral preferences almost always refer to *candidate centric* is certainly the main goal. However, this becomes a problem when *candidate centric* favoritism is born from the construction of voters' reasoning that has been interrupted by money politics. Regarding this financing, the question then is whether the APBN/APBD is available to finance the campaigns of all candidates?

In fact, campaign financing is not as big as we might think. A simple illustration is that to win legislative elections at the district/city level, candidates only need the support of around 4,000-5,000 voters. If the campaign is carried out dialogically and *door to door* as in some advanced democracies, such as the UK, campaign costs can be very affordable. In the context of regional elections, for example, a study conducted by the KPK showed that the costs incurred by regional head candidates can reach Rp10 billion, and these costs become very large due to the practice of giving dowries to political parties and the practice of buying votes. In the end, trial and error is a common thing in the democratic process. After more than 25 years of reform, we need to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the electoral system and political-campaign financing.

Through a reformed, tiered pattern of electoral mechanisms and avoiding the homogeneity of the electoral system, Indonesia can become a better democracy in the future, not just a democracy in the frame of electiontainment or elections as mere entertainment for the people. Political parties are thus key in minimizing oligarchy in Indonesia. The internal democracy of political parties is the factor that most determines the functioning of democracy in the state and society. Internal political party democracy is seen as the ability of political parties to aggregate interests, formulate public policies, recruit candidates who have the ability, and reflect public aspirations and interests (Puspitasari, 2018).

The absence of regulation is a weak point in organizing the internal democracy of political parties so that there are legal loopholes that can be infiltrated by the hegemonic interests of the party elite and the interests of financiers who are very interested in running their parties (Sihombing, 2018). Because of their significant role in determining the direction and development of the country through the legislative and executive institutions and indirectly also the judiciary and other institutions, political parties should not only be entitled to receive subsidies from the state, but also be regulated by the state so that internally political parties must be democratic. There is no reason for the government to avoid regulating the internal democracy of political parties, by delaying the regulation of internal political party democracy, it will certainly only allow the country to be increasingly undermined by the oligarchy of power and the growth of corrupt practices within political parties (Surbakti, 2013).

Meanwhile, Law Number 2/2011 on the Amendment to Law Number 2/2008 on Political Parties contains a number of provisions on the internal democratization of political parties. Among other things, the sovereignty of political parties is in the hands of members which is carried out according to the bylaws (Article 15 paragraph (1)) and members of political parties have the right to determine party policy, and have the right to vote and be elected (Article 15 paragraph (2)). The management of political parties at all levels is democratically elected (Article 22). Political party decisions are made democratically in accordance with the bylaws (Articles 27 and 28). The recruitment of party members for DPR / DPRD candidates, presidential / vice presidential candidates, and regional elections is carried out democratically and openly (Article 29) (Vivi friskilia et al., 2021).

Thus, in terms of legislation, political parties must be managed democratically. However, in the process of internal party democracy, problems arise, including the influence of elites who are very dominant, the selection of party leadership that is not competitive, the selection of party candidates for public office that is discriminatory, and clientelism. These are all reflected in the attitude of party leadership who are not interested in democratizing the party, which is precisely what their supporters want. In practice, the party ruler and/or a small group of party elites make decisions/determine party policies, while the members do not play a role in the decision-making process in the party but only play a role as voters in elections. (Surbakti, 2013).

According to Richard Katz, candidate selection is one of the typical functions of political parties in democracy (Fitriyah, 2020). In line with this, the candidate selection method is an important component in the process of internal party democracy. Therefore, efforts to prevent oligarchic practices and political party corruption through the redesign of internal political party democracy in this study focus on the ideal political party recruitment and regeneration process. The recruitment and regeneration functions of political parties, if carried out properly (ideally), can be an *entry point* as well as a driving factor for good democratic practices in a country. The challenges in the recruitment and regeneration process of political parties in Indonesia include the lack of a standardized, open, democratic and accountable political recruitment system among most political parties in Indonesia. Some political parties base their sources of political recruitment on the families and relatives of the political party elites themselves, so they tend to be closed, exclusive and nepotistic (Haris, 2016).

In addition, the recruitment process has tended to apply traditional patterns and styles. Parties that are developed are more characterized by *catch-all* parties, do not have a clear and specific social base, and still depend on individual political party figures. Meanwhile, in the regeneration process, most political parties do not have a clear regeneration system, so the source of political recruitment tends to be oligarchic. The dominance of party leaders in the selection and candidacy process of legislative candidates in Indonesia. The image of politicians jumping the fence, cadres of artists or comedians, rich people, and businessmen (whose political abilities are often doubted) is one of the many problematic intersections in the process of political recruitment and candidacy carried out by political parties (Haris, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Oligarchy and dynastic politics have grown since the Orba era when concessions and policies were traded by a handful of elites. However, after reformasi, oligarchy spread further. The decentralization of presidential power to institutions such as political parties and parliaments is increasingly massive. This included the decentralization of central power to the regions, which fostered dynastic politics. The authoritarian control of the Orba era was replaced by the use of money politics.

In an indirect democracy system such as in Indonesia, where the election scheme is preceded by legislative elections, political parties are an important element. Political parties have a strategic and vital role, namely being the party that is given political trust by the people through the mechanism of representation in parliament. If you look at the reality of political parties in Indonesia, it is clear that oligarchy is a disease that has been severe in this country. Almost all

parties in Indonesia are actually controlled by a handful of elites who have strong capital and social capital. The oligarchic octopus in political parties strengthens the assumption that political parties fail to perform their function as democratization aggregators. That is why the oligarchy situation in Indonesia is very worrying and there must be efforts to prevent it. Comprehensive thinking and strong regulations are needed to at least limit money politics, oligarchy and dynasties from running rampant and destroying the democratic order.

On that basis, the solutions are to change the electoral system and revamping the political and campaign financing system. In the future, the presidential election system needs to consider the victory of each presidential candidate in the electoral district. Electoral regions per province as in effect today must be re-divided proportionally based on the area and number of voters. This scheme is expected to realize making the election results more democratic and equitable. It is also the time for state to participate in financing the campaign of each national and regional legislative candidate.

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