Graduate School of Public Policy

The University of Tokyo

Of Electoral Systems and Decentralisation: An institutional explanation to the lack of ideological and programmatic competition among Indonesia's political parties

Written by: Rehabya Randy Wijaya

Student ID: 51-158223

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1. Introduction

In this paper, I will explain the non-ideological nature of electoral competition among Indonesia's political parties by looking at its electoral system and decentralised governance. Despite them having deeper ideological roots that often assumed (Ufen, 2008), come election time these parties often claim to stand for and aim for the same things (Busyra, 2014): Pancasila - Indonesia's official state ideology, people-centric economics (*ekonomi kerakyatan*), and people's welfare (*kesejahteraan rakyat*). Indeed, Indonesian political parties are known to suffer from 'programmatic shallowness' and a lack of ideological debates (Fionna & Tomsa, 2017). The clearest reflection of this programmatic shallowness can be found on the chaotic nature of Indonesia's electoral competition, where party coalitions do not form along ideological boundaries and are highly fluid.

This lack of ideologies or programmes has real and profound implications on the development of democratic governance. For instance, programmatic shallowness hinders democratic accountability. Without real policy debate, it is difficult for voters to know and understand what the party or candidate they vote for represents and what policies they can expect the party or candidate to pursue if is elected to office (Cheeseman & Paget, 2014). Parties that form programmatic linkages with their constituents can exert a positive impact on good governance, as not only do their policies offer a way to gain votes in lieu of patronage, once a party is known as a programmatic party it becomes "particularly vulnerable to corruption scandals that could erode their electoral support" (Cheeseman & Paget, 2011). Moreover, programmatic politics is also a key element of party system institutionalisation (Mainwaring & Torcal, 2005), as parties may decide to compete on divisive policy issues so that it is less likely that their members and voters switch allegiances (LeBas, 2011), thus creating stronger party-voter linkages and a more stable and predictable electoral dynamics.

Given the importance of ideologies and programmes to democratic governance, two questions must be asked: (i) why do Indonesia's parties suffer from programmatic shallowness? (ii) is any institutional factor hindering the development of programmatic politics? To find answers, I examine Indonesia's decentralisation and electoral system and find that they have created an incentive structure for parties to avoid ideological and programmatic competition. I will present my findings and arguments in four sections. The first section will briefly discuss the history of political parties in Indonesia, the current electoral system, and existing parties. The second section will go over the nature and extent of decentralisation that has taken place since the return of democracy in 1998. The third section will describe the nature of electoral competition among Indonesia's existing parties. The fourth and final section will present my main arguments of why Indonesia's electoral competition is as described in the preceding section by looking at the impacts that decentralisation and the electoral system have had on it.

2. Indonesian political parties and party system

2.1. Historical background

A discussion on Indonesia's political parties and elections warrants a look at how political parties and party politics have developed over the years in Indonesia. Political parties began to take root in Indonesia in the early 20th century, when Indonesia was still a Dutch colony. Initially, they were organised as social movements as the Dutch colonial authorities imposed draconian restrictions on political parties. The social organisations that emerged during this period can be categorised into three main groupings: the secular-nationalists who eventually coalesced around the Indonesian National Party (PNI), the communists of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), and the Islamists in the Islamist Trade Union (Sarekat Dagang Islam), Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and Muhammadiyah.

These three groupings remained as the basis of Indonesia's party system even after it declared its independence in 1945 (Lev, 1967). By the time of the first legislative election in September 1955, the PNI and PKI had regrouped, the Islamists had established three major political parties – the Council of Indonesian Muslim Associations (Masjumi), the NU, and the Indonesian Islamic Union Party (PSII), and numerous smaller parties had been created. It is interesting to note here that the Indonesian government at the time also classified existing political parties into those based on nationalism, those based on religion, and those based on socialism (Ministry of Information, 1954). It was also when referring to this period that Clifford Gertz conceptualised his now famous 'three streams' (*aliran*) of Indonesian[1] socio-political tradition: the PNI-supporting descendants of the old Javanese aristocracy (*priyayi*), the PKI-sympathising peasants and workers who practiced syncretic versions of Islam (*abangan*), and the more devout Muslims who supported Masyumi and NU (*santri*) (Geertz, 1963; Mietzner, 2009).

The establishment of the authoritarian New Order regime in the latter half of the 1960's brought about a realignment to the party system. After the failure of the alleged communist-backed coup in September 1965, the PKI and other left-leaning parties were violently disbanded. General Soeharto, who rose to the presidency amidst the chaos, aligned with the Functional Groups (Golkar), an army-led conference of interest groups that had its roots in the Central Organisation of Indonesian Workers (Soksi), an anti-Communist trade union formed by the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI). After the 1971 legislative election, which was the first under the New Order regime, Soeharto embarked to simplify the party system. Under government orders, Islamist parties were merged into the United Development Party (PPP), while pluralist-nationalist as well as Christian parties into the Indonesian Democratic Party

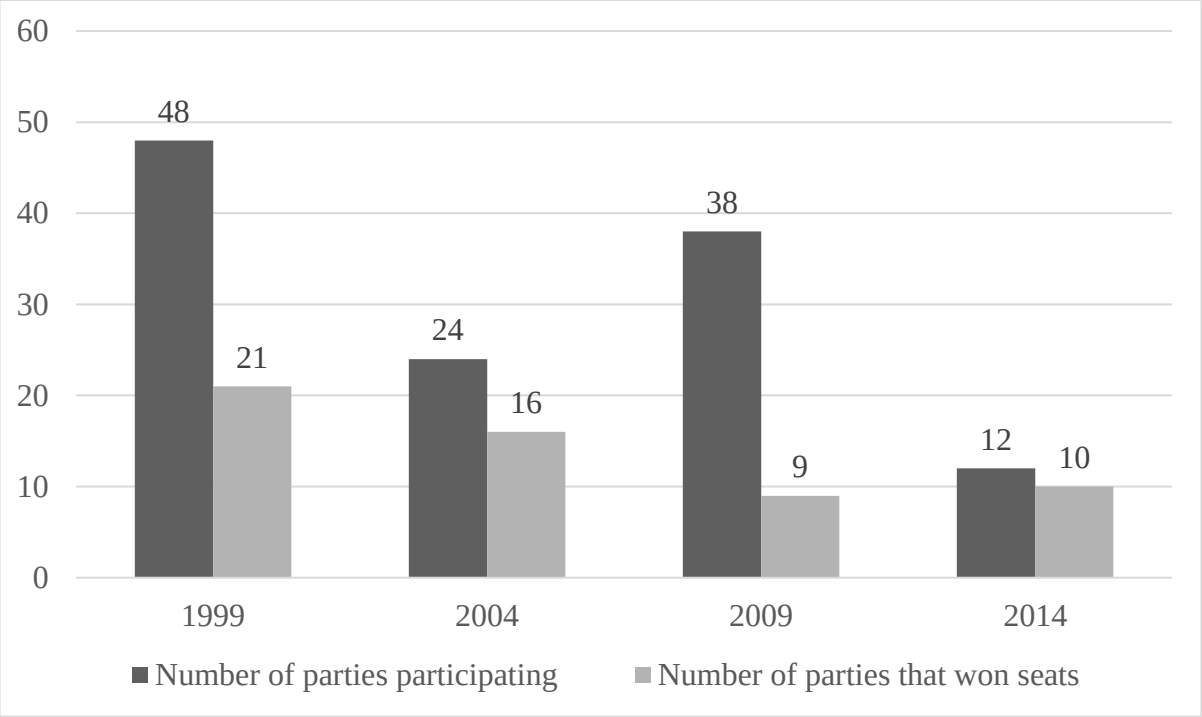
[1] Although to be more precise, Geertz work focused on Javanese society rather than the heterogeneous Indonesian society.

(PDI). For the remainder of the New Order regime, Indonesia's party system consisted of these three parties with the PPP on the Islamist right, the PDI on the nationalist left, and Golkar in the centre as the dominant party that transcends all ideologies and cleavages.

2.2. Post-New Order party system

The downfall of the New Order Regime in 1998 brought with it free elections and a proliferation of political parties. Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of the post-New Order party system is its extreme multipartyism (Croissant & Völkel, 2012). As can be seen in Figure 1, Indonesia's first post-New Order election was contested by 48 political parties, 21 of whom made it to parliament. These numbers have decreased over subsequent elections to just 12 parties participating in the latest legislative election in 2014 and ten parliamentary parties currently. One possible explanation for this is that it is the result of the numerous modifications to the electoral system made since 1999.

Figure 1 - Number of parties in Indonesian elections, 1999-2014 (General Elections Commission, 2010; General Elections Commission, 2014a)



2.2.1. The electoral system

Indonesia is a presidential republic with a bicameral legislature. Elections are held every five years, with the presidential elections usually held three to four months after the legislative election. Elections for the 560-member People's Representative Council (DPR), the lower house of parliament, are held using open-list proportional representation (PR) in multi-member districts, with a 3.5% national electoral threshold. There are currently 77 electoral districts with district magnitudes ranging from three to ten. However, this was not always the case. Post-New Order Indonesia has gradually moved from closed-list proportional representation to one with open lists. The electoral threshold has also been raised, from 2% for the 1999 election. Presidential and vice-presidential candidates, for their part, run on joint tickets and compete for the Executive in a two-round system. Since 2009, a party or coalition of parties must control at least 20% of the seats in the DPR or have won at least 25% of the popular vote in the preceding legislative election in order to be able to nominate a ticket.

2.2.2. Current parliamentary parties

Table 1 shows a list of the ten political parties currently represented in the DPR, their seat shares, ideologies on a nationalist-Islamist spectrum, classification by Marcus Meitzner, and current government status. On the nationalist end of the spectrum are parties that embrace the pluralistic nature of Indonesia's national identity like the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP), a successor of the PDI, while on the Islamist end are parties that call for the implementation of Sharia Law like the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). I chose a nationalist-Islamist spectrum instead of the more commonly used nationalist-religious spectrum (or indeed, the left-right spectrum used for Western political parties) because it better reflects the more ambiguous ideologies of Golkar and the Democratic Party (PD), which are secular-nationalist but tend to be more accommodating to conservative Islamist policy demands than other secular-

nationalist parties, as well as the National Mandate Party (PAN) and National Awakening Party (PKB), whose support base are major Islamist organisations (Muhammadiyah and NU, respectively) but have a more pluralistic outlook than the Islamist parties.

In addition, I included Mietzner's classification of established parties and presidentialist parties to illustrate the different extents of institutionalisation each party has. Whereas the established parties have "long-standing roots in particular communities", the new presidentialist parties were created as political vehicles of presidential aspirants (Mietzner, 2013). Of these, Mietzner in 2013 counted the PD, the Great Indonesia Movement (Gerindra), and the People's Conscience Party (Hanura). I have added the Nasdem Party, which entered parliament only in 2014, to this category as it fits the description. Currently the PDIP is the party of incumbent President Joko Widodo and the largest party in the ruling coalition, which as of May 2017 consists of seven parliamentary parties. Gerindra is the largest opposition party, while the PD has chosen to remain in the crossbenches.

Table 1 - Parliamentary parties (Mietzner, 2013; General Elections Commission, 2014a)

Party[2]	Seat share	Ideology	Mietzner classification	Coalition (as of May 2017)
PDIP	19.5%	Secular-nationalist	Established	Government
Golkar	16.3%	Religious-nationalist	Established	Government
Gerindra	13.0%	Secular-nationalist	Presidentialist	Opposition
PD	10.9%	Religious-nationalist	Presidentialist	Crossbenches
PAN	8.8%	Religious-nationalist	Established	Government
PKB	8.4%	Religious-nationalist	Established	Government
PKS	7.1%	Islamist	Established	Opposition
PPP	7.0%	Islamist	Established	Government
Nasdem	6.3%	Secular-nationalist	Presidentialist	Government
Hanura	2.9%	Secular-nationalist	Presidentialist	Government

[2] PDIP: *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan* (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle); Golkar: Partai *Golongan Karya* (Party of the Functional Groups); Gerindra: Partai *Gerakan Indonesia Raya* (Great Indonesia Movement Party); PD: P*artai Demokrat* (Democratic Party); PAN: *Partai Amanat Nasional* (National Mandate Party); PKB: *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa* (National Awakening Party); PKS: *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (Prosperous Justice Party); PPP: *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (United Development Party); Nasdem: *Partai Nasional Demokrat* (Nasdem Party); Hanura: *Partai Hati Nurani Rakyat* (People's Conscience Party)

2.2.3. Election results and party strength

Table 2 below is a summary of the seat shares of the ten parties currently represented in the DPR from 1999 to 2014. The winner of each legislative election is underlined, while the winner of that year's presidential election is displayed in bold. For analytical and continuity purposes, I have decided not to include parties that previously had seats in the DPR but did not win any at the 2014 election. As we can see, not only have there been large fluctuations in each party's share, there have also been cases where newly-formed parties win big at their first or second election. The fact that four of the ten current parliamentary parties did not exist in 1999 tells something about the ease with which parties enter and exit the competitive political arena. This implies that party-voter linkages are weak. A survey conducted in December 2013 showed that only 21.9% of respondents "felt closeness with a particular political party" (Indo Barometer, 2013). This is a sharp decline from the result of a similar survey conducted in July 2004 when 58% of respondents identified with a certain party (Lembaga Survei Indonesia, 2008).

Table 2 - Seat share of current parliamentary parties, 1999-2014 (General Elections Commission, 2010; General Elections Commission, 2014b)

Party	1999	2004	2009	2014
PDIP	33.1%	19.8%	16.8%	**19.5%**
Golkar	26.0%	23.3%	18.9%	16.3%
Gerindra	*N/A*	*N/A*	4.6%	13.0%
PD	*N/A*	**10.0%**	**26.4%**	10.9%
PAN	7.4%	9.6%	8.2%	8.8%
PKB	**11.0%**	9.5%	5.0%	8.4%
PKS	1.5%	8.2%	10.2%	7.1%
PPP	12.6%	10.6%	6.8%	7.0%
Nasdem	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*	6.3%
Hanura	*N/A*	*N/A*	3.0%	2.9%

3. Decentralisation in Indonesia

Decentralisation was one of the most important reforms brought in in 1999 as part of the country's *Reformasi*, or reform and democratisation process after the fall of Soeharto. The New Order was a heavily centralised regime (Green, 2005). In its essence, this decentralisation was a drive to give Indonesia's culturally and linguistically diverse regions a level of autonomy in the belief that this will placate secessionists, improve governance, and spread development more evenly (Buehler, 2010). As a result of these transfers, Indonesia today is considered one of the most decentralised countries in the world (Buehler, 2010).

The Ministry of Home Affairs defines four tiers of local governments in Indonesia. The first tier are the 34 provinces, including four special regions and one capital region. They are divided into the second tier, which comprise of 98 municipalities (*kotamadya*) and 416 regencies (*kabupaten*). In turn, these are further divided into 7,094 counties (*kecamatan*) and subdistricts (*distrik),* the third tier. At the lowest level are 8,412 urban administrative villages (*kelurahan*) and 74,093 rural villages (*desa*) (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2015). Each of the first two tiers of local government have their own directly-elected executive – governor, mayor, or regent (*bupati*)– and legislature, the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD). Counties, subdistricts, and urban administrative villages are headed by appointed civil servants (*camat*, *kepala distrik,* and *lurah*), while rural villages directly elect their heads of village (*kepala desa*).

Indonesia's decentralisation has been shaped by three major pieces of legislation. First, Law No. 22/1999 concerning Regional Administration, which was designed as "the framework for implementing decentralisation in the post-New Order era" (Mokhsen, 2003), provided the basis for political and administrative decentralisation. The legislation designates all provinces, municipalities, and regencies as autonomous territories responsible for all policy matters except foreign policy, defence, law and order, fiscal and monetary policy, and religion, which remain

a prerogative of the central government. Second, Law No. 25/1999 concerning Fiscal Balance Between Central and Local Governments mandates fiscal decentralisation, stipulating that all devolved government functions under Law Number 22/1999 were to become the financial responsibility of the respective local governments. Third, Law No. 32/2004 concerning Regional Administration established direct popular elections for governors, mayors, and regents.

3.1. Fiscal decentralisation

Figures 2 and 3 show the composition of local government revenues at the provincial and municipal/regency levels between 2001 and 2013. As can be seen, both tiers of local government still rely on transfers from the central government as their main source of revenue, although this is becoming less so. In general, provinces generate much more of their revenues than do municipalities and regencies, at 50% versus 11% in 2013.

Figure 2 - Sources of provincial revenue, 2001-2013 (%) (Nasution, 2016)

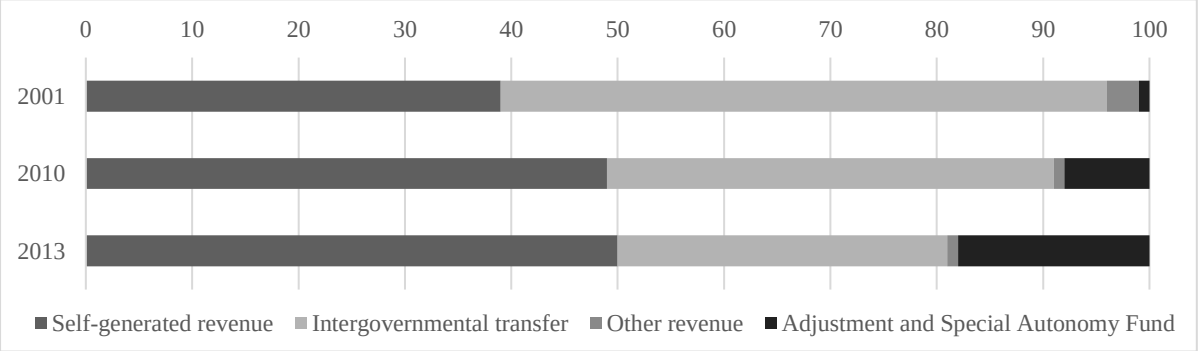
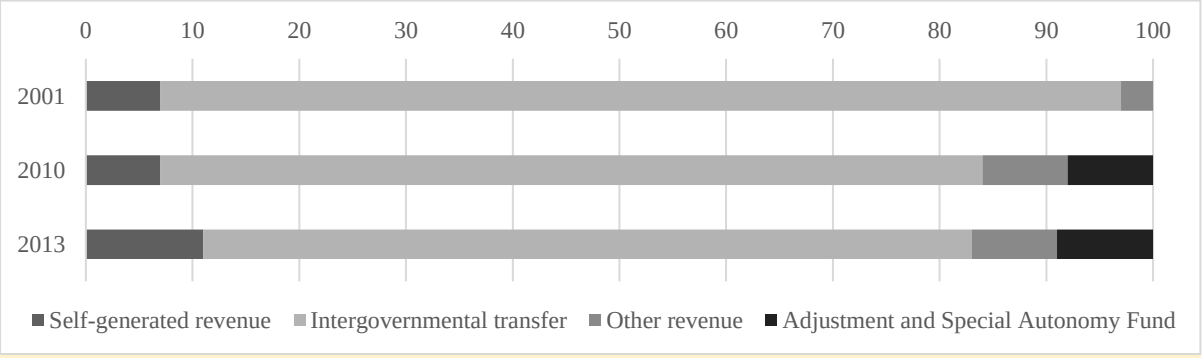


Figure 3 - Sources of municipal/district revenue, 2001-2013 (%) (Nasution, 2016)



4. Indonesian electoral dynamics

As briefly discussed at the beginning of this paper, there is a lack of ideological and programmatic contestation among Indonesia's political parties, despite some of the parties having deeper and stronger roots in particular cleavages that commonly assumed. A great volume of research has been done on the nature of Indonesia's political campaigns. The general consensus is that more often than not electioneering in the country, whether for national or local elections, are centred on personalities, not parties (Allen, 2014; Choi, 2007). However, to better grasp the ideological and programmatic shallowness of Indonesia's parties, I believe it is necessary to look at the relationship between and among the parties.

I do this by looking at the coalition building that occurs across different levels of government and across time. Minimal range coalition theory makes the assertion that parties with similar policy preferences find it easier to create and sustain coalitions than those with wildly different policy preferences (Lijphart, 1999). Following this logic, haphazard coalition building with little regard to ideological distance or other existing coalition agreements can be seen as evidence of a systematic lack of ideologies and programmes in the party system.

4.1. Electoral coalitions in Indonesia

Table 3 shows a list of coalitions that registered their nomination of particular gubernatorial and vice-gubernatorial candidates to the General Elections Commission for the first round of gubernatorial elections in 2015 and 2017. At the top of the list are the coalitions of parties that nominated the two pairs of presidential and vice-presidential candidates in the most recent national election in 2014. For comparative purposes, the parties that nominated candidate Joko Widodo and his running mate Jusuf Kalla[3] – PDIP, Nasdem, Hanura, PKB - are

[3] Note that Jusuf Kalla was a former leader and still is a member of Golkar, which nominated the Prabowo and Hatta Rajasa pair in the 2014 Presidential Election.

shaded grey, as they can be considered the core of the current national governing coalition. Note that since the election, three parties that nominated Mr. Widodo's opponent have defected (see Table 1).

The parties in the Table 3 are grouped by their ideological classification as discussed earlier (see Table 1), and then within their ideological grouping in order of their size in the DPR, with the largest parties on the left-hand side and the smallest on the right-hand side. As can be seen throughout the table, there is no recognisable pattern in coalition building in Indonesia. Of the 40 pairs of party-backed provincial-level candidates, not a single one is nominated by the same coalition of parties that exist at the national level. Parties that are adversaries in a province easily team up in another (or at other government levels). For example, Gerindra and the PDIP, who since the 2014 elections have been fervent opponents at the national level, teamed up in four provinces (shown in bold). Moreover, not only are the coalitions very fluid, they do not appear to follow any ideological logic. Except in a handful of cases, every coalition on the list traverse the breadth of Indonesia's political spectrum. Even the PDIP, often considered the most fiercely secular party in the country (Power, 2015; Ufen, 2008), has entered into coalition with PKS, the most strongly Islamist party (Mietzner, 2013; Power, 2015), in four provinces (framed). Gerindra, another secular-nationalist party, is in coalition with Islamists in ten different provinces as well as at the national level.

This chaotic coalition building does not only occur across different regions and layers of government, but also from one election to the next in the same region. Of the 17 provinces that conducted gubernatorial elections in 2015 and 2017, six had competing candidates who were in coalition in the previous election. In other words, the incumbent governors in such provinces went head to head with the incumbent vice governors, signalling a breakdown in the coalition agreement. These provinces are underlined in Table 3.

Table 3 - Coalition map for the first round of gubernatorial elections, 2015 and 2017 (General Elections Commission, 2017; Susila, 2015)

Election Year	Province	Ticket	Nominating coalition at time of registration									
			Secular-nationalist				Religious-nationalist				Islamist	
			PDIP	Gerindra	Nasdem	Hanura	Golkar	PD	PAN	PKB	PKS	PPP
2014	National	Prabowo-Rajasa		X			X		X		X	X
		Widodo-Kalla	X		X	X				X		
2015	West Sumatra	Prayitno-Abit		X							X	
		Kasim-Bahar	X		X	X			X			
	Riau Islands	Sani-Basirun		X	X			X		X		X
		Respationo-Ahmad	X			X			X		X	
	Bengkulu	Najamudin-Mujiono	X					X				
		Mukti-Mersyah			X	X				X		
	Jambi	Zola-Umar			X	X			X	X		
		Bagus-Purwanto	**X**	**X**							**X**	
	Central Kalimantan	Yoseph-Anwar	X									
		Iskandar-Jawawi			X	X						X
		Sabran-Said		X				X	X	X		
	South Kalimantan	**Noor-Resnawan**	**X**	**X**		**X**			**X**		**X**	
		Azhar-Syafii			X			X		X		
	North Kalimantan	Lambie-Hianggio	X					X	X		X	
		Kasim-Billa			X	X				X		
	Central Sulawesi	Djanggola-Sudarto		X					X	X		
		Mastura-Adam				X	X					
	North Sulawesi	Dondokambey-Kandouw	X									
		Rumantir-Kairupan		X				X				
2017	Aceh	Karim-Ali			X		X					X
		Manaf-Khalid		X							X	
		Yusuf-Iriansyah	X					X		X		
	Bangka Belitung	Ihza-Yazid						X				X
		Effendi-Irwansyah	X									
		Arsani-Sukirman				X	X		X		X	
		Rosman-Fatah		X	X					X		
	Jakarta	Yudhoyono-Murni						X	X	X		X
		Purnama-Hidayat	X		X	X	X					
		Baswedan-Uno		X							X	
	Banten	Halim-Hazrumy		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
		Karno-Syarief	X		X							X
	Gorontalo	**Fadel-Junus**	**X**	**X**						**X**		**X**
		Habibie-Rahim					X	X				
		Hasan-Dambea				X			X		X	
	West Sulawesi	Duka-Katta				X		X			X	
		Mengga-Mashud					X					
		Baal-Anwar	**X**	**X**	**X**				**X**	**X**		**X**
	West Papua	Mandacan-Lakotani	X		X				X			
		Manibuy-Manaray				X				X	X	X
		Malak-Hindom					X	X				

To further understand the level of the chaos in Indonesia's coalition patterns, it is useful to take a look into coalition maps for presidential elections as well as Jakarta's high-profile gubernatorial elections. Table 4 displays a list of presidential and vice-presidential tickets for the 2004, 2009, and 2014 elections, as well as the coalitions of parties supporting them. As can be seen, presidential coalitions are fluid from one election to the next. That being said, in 2009 the coalitions seemed to have clearly defined ideological characteristics, with the PDIP-Gerindra coalition being distinctly secular-nationalist and the PD-led coalition showing more openness to cooperating with Islamist parties. However, by the time of the 2014 election these ideological coalitions had disbanded and replaced by large, cross-ideological coalitions.

Table 4 - Coalition map for the first round of presidential elections, 2004 to 2014 (Ananta, Arifin, & Suryadinata, 2005; Jakarta Globe, 2009)

Election Year	Ticket	Supporting coalition									
		Secular-nationalist				Religious-nationalist				Islamist	
		PDIP	Gerindra	Nasdem	Hanura	Golkar	PD	PAN	PKB	PKS	PPP
2014	Prabowo-Rajasa		X			X		X		X	X
	Widodo-Kalla	X		X	X				X		
2009	Megawati-Prabowo	X	X								
	Yudhoyono-Boediono						X	X	X	X	X
	Kalla-Wiranto				X	X					
2004[4]	Wiranto-Wahid					X					
	Megawati-Muzadi	X									
	Rais-Husodo							X		X	
	Yudhoyono-Kalla						X				
	Haz-Gumelar										X

Not only do the coalition configurations change every election, some candidate pairs also split and run against each other in the next election, or form alliances with their erstwhile adversary. For example, Jusuf Kalla ran in 2004 with Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and were

[4] Note that the requirement for nominating a ticket in 2004 was 5% of legislative votes or 3% of DPR seats.

elected Vice President and President respectively. Golkar, Kalla's party, nominated Wiranto instead of endorsing the pair. By the 2009 election, Kalla had become leader of Golkar and broke ties with Yudhoyono. Instead, he allied with Wiranto, who had now left Golkar and founded Hanura. In both the 2004 and 2009 elections, Kalla fought against the PDIP leader Megawati Soekarnoputri. In 2014, however, he allied with the PDIP by becoming Joko Widodo's running mate.

Table 5 - Coalition map for the first round of Jakarta gubernatorial elections, 2007 to 2017 (Dariyanto, 2016; General Elections Commission, 2017)

Election Year	Ticket	Supporting coalition									
		Secular-nationalist				Religious-nationalist				Islamist	
		PDIP	Gerindra	Nasdem	Hanura	Golkar	PD	PAN	PKB	PKS	PPP
2017	Yudhoyono-Murni						X	X	X		X
	Purnama-Hidayat	X		X	X	X					
	Baswedan-Uno		X							X	
2012	Bowo-Ramli				X		X	X	X		
	Widodo-Purnama	X	X								
	Wahid-Rachbini									X	
	Noerdin-Sampono					X					X
2007	Daradjatun-Anwar									X	
	Bowo-Prijanto	X				X	X	X	X		X

The Jakarta gubernatorial elections also have a track record of haphazard coalitions. Table 5 lists the candidates for the first round of the 2007, 2012, and 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial elections and their supporting parties. In the first direct election in 2007, a cross-ideological coalition of parties threw their support behind Fauzi Bowo, the incumbent vice governor, and his running mate Prijanto to go head to head with a PKS-nominated ticket. As with the 2009 presidential election, the 2012 election saw a somewhat more ideological coalition pattern. The PKS continued to nominate a ticket on its own in the 2012 election. The coalition that supported Bowo disbanded into three groups, with the PDIP and Gerindra running together on a decidedly

secular-nationalist ticket against two more visibly religious coalitions. Nevertheless, this coalition pattern was not replicated in 2017. The PDIP and Gerindra parted ways and each entered into coalition with their 2012 election adversaries. In terms of ideology, while the PDIP's coalition in 2017 involved mostly secular-nationalist parties, Gerindra joined forces with the Islamist PKS.

5. Explaining the nature of Indonesia's electoral competition

What are behind these chaotic electoral dynamics? Why do Indonesia's parties find it easy to enter into coalitions with various competing partners at the same time? If ideologies and programmes do not, what motivates Indonesia's parties to compete or work with each other as they do? Many have attributed the lack of ideological and programmatic competition among Indonesia's parties to clientelism, rent-seeking, and cartelisation. This is not without good reason, as plenty of Indonesia scholars have made similar observations. Dan Slater, for example, observes that like a business cartel, Indonesia's political elites protect themselves from outside competition (Slater, 2006). Andreas Ufen argues that Indonesian politics of recent years have been undergoing a 'Philipinisation', with "the rise of presidential parties, … the predominance of purely materialistic objectives ('money politics'), the lack of detailed programmes, weak allegiances towards parties, the construction of cartels with fluid coalitions, and the rise of local elites" (Ufen, 2006). Others have pointed out the low (Johnson Tan, 2006) and uneven (Tomsa, 2008) levels of party institutionalisation in Indonesia.

However, did clientelism, rent-seeking, cartelisation, fluid coalitions, low levels of party institutionalisation, the rise of presidential parties and local elites, and weak party allegiances cause Indonesian parties' programmatic shallowness? Or are they just other traits that are present in Indonesia's party system together with programmatic shallowness? Could

they in fact be the result of said programmatic shallowness? As the causal relationship is debatable, perhaps it would be more useful to look for plausible explanations at a more fundamental level, namely the incentive structure for electoral behaviour.

For this, I examine if the way in which governmental powers are distributed across different levels of government and the way in which executives and legislators are elected have contributed to the lack of ideological and programmatic competition.

5.1. Decentralised government and control over public resources

As previously discussed, governmental powers have since *Reformasi* been devolved to lower levels of government. Most importantly, provincial and municipal/regency-level governments now cover significant portfolios and are responsible for large amounts of public resources. During the New Order Era, these resources were allocated to the provinces, municipalities, and regencies by the central government. In addition, those responsible for managing and administering the use of these resources were appointed by the central government. With decentralised democracy, there was now a need for regional and local political elites to gain and maintain enough influence in sub-national legislative and executive branches to access and control these resources. They now also needed to build their own constituents and support networks to make sure that they win enough votes every election cycle to retain their access to these public resources. Given that democratisation has led to the political elite relying on patronage networks to stay in power (Fukuoka, 2012), the incentives are high for the political elite to gain as much control over these resources as they can. By devolving control of public resources to lower levels of government, Indonesia's decentralisation has created incentives for clientelistic competition over lucrative public resources at sub-national levels, especially at the provincial, municipal, and regency levels.

5.2. The electoral system and how parties connect with voters

Clientelistic competition over access to and control of public resources alone is not sufficient to explain the programmatic shallowness of Indonesia's parties and the competition among them. Political parties in countries like Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, have also been known for clientelistic electoral behaviour (Hellmann, 2013). However, their parties tend to have clearer ideological divides, and have become increasingly programmatic (Catalinac, 2016; Hermanns, 2009). Moreover, interparty competition and coalition patterns are also more stable and predictable in these party systems: LDP-Komeito vs others in Japan[5], conservative vs liberal in South Korea, and pan-blue vs pan-green coalitions in Taiwan. Meanwhile, as discussed earlier, although parties in Indonesia can broadly be thought of to straddle a secular-nationalist/Islamist spectrum, electoral competition and coalition building there do not always occur along this or any other ideological or programmatic divide.

The clearest institutional difference between Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan on the one hand and Indonesia on the other, is the legislative electoral system. Unlike Indonesia, the three East Asian countries use semi-proportional mixed member majoritarian systems that combine first-past-the-post voting in physical constituencies with party-list PR for their legislatures. Indonesia's open-list PR with multi-member districts encourages a form of electoral dynamics that relies less on ideological or party identities but more on personal reputation, as it increases electoral (as opposed to internal) competition among candidates from the same party (Carey & Shugart, 1995). Because of this, personality often trumps party identity or allegiance in Indonesia, and parties find it difficult to develop ideological linkages with the electorate to attract voters. Instead of building these linkages by investing in

[5] Even in Japan, where in gubernatorial or mayoral elections parties have been known to form large coalitions that cross ideological boundaries, they were often formed against a certain party (e.g. anti-LDP coalitions or anti-communist coalitions). In this way, it can be argued that while these coalitions may not be ideological, they are to an extent stable and follow a predictable pattern.

developing clear party ideologies and loyal cadres, Indonesia's parties have often resorted to recruiting well-known public figures from TV stars and singers to sportspeople to make themselves more attractive to voters (ABC News, 2008; Kenawas & Fitriani, 2013).

Indonesia's parties have also followed a similar pattern of candidate identification and recruitment in regional and local elections, which follow the same rules as national elections. Like the DPR, DPRD members are elected using an open-list PR in multi-member districts, a system which, as previously discussed, leads to the primacy of personal over ideological or party identities. Like their national-level counterparts, candidates for regional and local executives must have the support of at least 20% of the seats in their respective DPRD to be able to run. The combination of these rules has compounded the programmatic shallowness of Indonesia's parties. Difficulty connecting with voters at an ideological or programmatic level has meant that these elections are as personalistic as legislative elections, if not more so, with parties often coalescing around popular non-party figures who have expressed an interest in running. When some parties nominate popular figures from within their ranks, other parties gravitate towards them. Hence the chaotic coalition building discussed in section 4.1. Parties do not compete with ideologies or programmes because doing so would make such coalitions politically costly. For them, sharing access and control over resources with adversaries is the price they are willing to pay rather than risking no access at all thanks to the unpopularity of their own cadres or party identities.

6. Conclusion

As demonstrated by looking at coalition maps for presidential and gubernatorial elections since the introduction of direct executive elections, there is a lack of ideological or programmatic component in Indonesia's electoral dynamics. This is explained by (i) a power

distribution system that creates fierce competition over public resources across different layers of government and (ii) an open-list PR with multi-member districts electoral system that encourages the dilution of party and ideological identities. The mixture of this decentralisation and particular type of electoral system has hindered the institutionalisation of Indonesia's parties and party system by preventing the development of programmatic parties and predictable patterns of electoral competition. Whether or not this was by design remains unanswered. Did Indonesia's *Reformasi* elite purposefully design the systems to ensure their survival? Or are they simply benefiting from a side effect of what was intended to be genuine reform? Nic Cheeseman and Dan Paget have stressed that programmatic parties and electoral competition have an important role to play in stabilising political systems and improving governance (Cheeseman & Paget, Programmatic Parties, 2011). Indonesia is a complex society. Creating a mature democracy out of its diverse ethnic, linguistic, religious, and socio-economic cleavages is not a simple task. However, if Indonesia wants to move forward in its democratisation, it is clear that the electoral system is a good place at which to start looking.

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