

THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONALIZATION ISSUES WITHIN THE UNITED DEVELOPMENT PARTY (PPP) FOLLOWING THE CHANGE OF THE GENERAL CHAIRPERSON IN 2022 ON INTERNAL SOLIDARITY IN THE 2022 SIMULTANEOUS SELECTIONS

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Abstract

This research wants to investigate the impact of political institutionalization issues, specifically the contentious leadership change in 2022 (from Suharso Monoarfa to Mardiono), on the internal solidarity of the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan/PPP) leading up to the 2024 General Election in Indonesia. Political parties are critical pillars in a democratic system, and their institutional strength determines their effectiveness. However, PPP's history is marred by recurring internal conflicts that challenge its institutional stability. This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study design, collecting data through in-depth interviews with key party elites, regional functionaries, and document analysis. The findings reveal that the abrupt and controversial replacement of the Chairman severely undermined internal solidarity, manifesting as deep divisions, erosion of trust, and fragmented support at the grass roots. These internal institutional problems directly contributed to PPP's failure to meet the parliamentary threshold in the 2024 election. The study concludes that neglecting robust institutionalization processes, particularly during leadership transitions, severely compromises a party's electoral viability and long-term stability.

Keywords: Internal Solidarity, Leadership Change, Political Institutionalization, PPP, 2024 General Election.

A. INTRODUCTION

Political parties are crucial pillars of a democratic system, serving as bridges between the government and the people. Ideally, political parties should possess a robust institutional framework to carry out recruitment, communication, and conflict management functions (Wibowo, 2018; Budiardjo, 2008). However, the reality within the United Development Party (PPP) presents a contradictory phenomenon. As one of the oldest parties in Indonesia, the PPP continues to be mired in chronic political institutionalization issues, marked by recurring internal conflicts and a significant decline in electoral performance from election to election. Institutionalization issues within the PPP reached a critical point in 2022. Following the sting operation (OTT) against Muhammad Romahurmuziy and the poor results of the 2019 elections, the PPP attempted to stabilize itself through its 9th Congress, which elected Suharso Monoarfa. However, Suharso's leadership instead sparked new factionalism due to a leadership style deemed centralistic and technocratic, and a failure to embrace the cultural base of Islamic boarding schools. The controversy culminated in the "kyai envelope"

statement, which sparked the ire of the party's High Council. This was deemed a serious ethical violation that damaged the party's reputation (Tempo.co, 2022).

The crisis culminated in Suharso's dismissal at the 5th National Working Conference in Serang in September 2022, which then appointed Muhamad Mardiono as Acting Chairman. This sudden and controversial change occurred less than two years before the 2024 Simultaneous Elections. The problem is that uneven leadership transitions often undermine internal party solidarity. Weak political institutionalization, as theorized by Huntington (1968), is characterized by an organization's poor ability to manage internal conflict peacefully and procedurally. This study focuses on the impact of this change in Chairmanship on the PPP's internal solidarity in the run-up to the 2024 Elections. Historically, the PPP has been plagued by factionalism since its 1973 fusion (Choi, 2005). Therefore, the urgency of this research lies in analyzing whether the mid-term leadership change represents a solution to save the party or a catalyst for the PPP's electoral collapse, considering that for the first time in history, the PPP failed to reach the 4% parliamentary threshold in the 2024 elections (DetikNews, 2024).

The suboptimal political institutionalization within the PPP stems not only from conflicts within the elite, which subsequently gave rise to dual leadership, but is also reflected in systemic assessments (Agung & Ramdhani, 2024). This was stated by the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), which released the Political Party Institutionalization Index. The index is described as an academic tool for assessing the extent to which political parties have been institutionalized. The dimensions used as indicators include the degree of systemicity, the degree of value infusion, and the degree of independence (Wardah, 2024). The degree of systemicity is measured by four indicators: consistency with party rules, consistency in resolving internal conflicts based on party rules, consistency in changing party leadership based on party rules, and consistency in policymaking based on party rules (Erlina, 2023). The degree of value infusion is measured by the internalization process, cultural implementation, and the existence of values. Meanwhile, the degree of independence is measured by independence in organizational management and independence in recruiting public officials. The results also indicate that, compared to the scores achieved by other political parties, the United Development Party (PPP) can be considered a political party that has not been optimally institutionalized. This can be seen in Table 1. below.

Table 1. Ranking of Political Party Institutionalization Index Scores in Indonesia

| No. | Political Party | Score |
|-----|--|-------|
| 1. | Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS) | 88,65 |
| 2. | Partai Nasional Demokrat (Nasdem) | 83,14 |
| 3. | Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN) | 79,87 |
| 4. | Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDI-Perjuangan) | 76,74 |
| 5. | Partai Golongan Karya (Golkar) | 68,83 |
| 6. | Partai Demokrat | 68,54 |
| 7. | Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB) | 67,65 |
| 8. | Partai Gerakan Indonesia Raya (Gerindra) | 67,08 |
| 9. | Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP) | 66,92 |

Source: Processed by researchers from Wardah, 2024.

Furthermore, the problem of political institutionalization within the PPP ahead of the 2024 simultaneous elections cannot be separated from the conflict that occurred after the change in the position of general chairman in 2022. This began with the dismissal of Suharso Monoarfa from the position of general chairman of the PPP by three leaders of the party

councils, namely the Sharia Council, the Honorary Council, and the Advisory Council. The basis for the decision to dismiss him was the widespread attention and commotion surrounding the PPP, which then focused on Suharso Monoarfa's personality and the Indonesian people who were claimed to be PPP voters and sympathizers (Guritno & Santosa, 2022). Then, this decision was confirmed at the National Working Conference (Mukernas) forum in Serang, Banten on September 5, 2022, which also appointed Muhammad Mardiono as acting general chairman. Subsequently, ahead of the 2024 simultaneous elections, the United Development Party (PPP), under the leadership of Muhammad Mardiono, decided to support the Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud MD candidate pair. The declaration of support was made on April 26, 2023, after the PPP held a National Leadership Meeting (Rapimnas) the previous day in Sleman Regency, Yogyakarta Special Region Province.

The PPP's decision to support the Ganjar-Mahfud pair in the 2024 presidential election was not followed by its cadres and supporters. Some cadres and supporters instead chose to support candidates who differed from the PPP's central executive board (CNN Indonesia, 2023). For example, the volunteer group Forum Ka'bah Membangun (Forum Pembangunan Ka'bah), led by Habil Marati, the former treasurer of the PPP central executive board during Suryadharma Ali's leadership, supported the Anies-Muhaimin ticket. On the other hand, several PPP cadres have also established a volunteer group, "Pejuang PPP," which declared its support for the Prabowo-Gibran ticket. These PPP cadres include Hj. Hizbiyah Rochim, Deputy Secretary of the PPP Central Executive Board (DPP), Witjaksono, Deputy Chairman of the PPP Central Executive Board (DPP), and Raden Agung Zainal Abidin, PPP cadre. The disparity in support among PPP cadres and supporters indicates that the PPP Central Executive Board (DPP) tends to fail to absorb aspirations and consolidate support to foster party solidarity. In fact, PPP elites responded to the disparity in support among some cadres and supporters in the 2024 presidential election by labeling them "rogue elements" or "smugglers," a result of panic or attempts by PPP political opponents.

The problem escalated when PPP was declared to have failed to meet the 4 percent parliamentary threshold, resulting in its loss of representation in the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR-RI). In fact, the presidential and vice-presidential candidate pair Ganjar-Mahfud, officially supported by the United Development Party (PPP), also suffered defeat, securing only around 16 percent of the vote. This achievement was then considered to have caused turmoil within the PPP because some cadres and sympathizers believed that the support for the Ganjar-Mahfud pair did not reflect the PPP's grassroots voice, which was dominated by clerics and Muslims (Saptohutomo, 2024). This was then indicated to have had a negative impact on the coattail effect achieved by the PPP because it resulted in a decline in votes in several regions previously known as PPP's traditional mass base. This indication had previously been expressed by several PPP cadres and administrators who believed that the Central Executive Board's decision to support the Ganjar-Mahfud pair tended to be politically detrimental. In fact, the tendency of PPP cadres and sympathizers initially preferred to support Anies Baswedan. This tendency then showed that the PPP was experiencing internal divisions due to insolidarity between the elite and cadres and sympathizers at the grassroots level. Furthermore, there are also accusations blaming Muhammad Mardiono's failure as acting chairman in party management, which is considered to have contributed to the PPP's failure in the 2024 legislative and presidential elections.

This research has several objectives. First, it identifies the factors contributing to institutionalization issues within political parties in Indonesia, particularly in the case of the United Development Party (PPP). Second, it analyzes the process of changing the chairmanship of the United Development Party (PPP) in 2022 and the political dynamics that developed before, during, and afterward. Third, it analyzes the institutionalization of the party

following the change in chairmanship in 2022, affecting the PPP's internal solidity in facing the 2024 simultaneous elections. Furthermore, the significance of this research can be categorized into two types. First, academic significance. The output of this research strengthens theoretical assumptions and claims that political parties are crucial entities in determining the process of political institutionalization and democracy in a country. Furthermore, this research also shows how political parties in Indonesia after the Reformation have not been able to optimally institutionalize, as indicated by the persistence of a number of institutional issues, one of which refers to internal party conflict. On the other hand, this study seeks to strengthen the correlation between institutional issues and the internal solidity of political parties in facing elections, both at the national and local levels. This is crucial considering that internal solidity in facing elections is often used as a parameter in assessing the extent of a political party's ability to compete and possess competent institutional aspects. Second, practical significance. The findings of this study are projected to serve as a reference in recommending efforts and policies to produce more optimal aspects and dimensions of political party institutionalization. This can be realized, among other things, through the discourse of revising political laws, including the law on political parties, especially following the Constitutional Court's (MK) decision that eliminated the provisions on parliamentary thresholds and presidential and vice-presidential nomination thresholds in the 2029 simultaneous elections.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Political Party Institutionalization

Political party institutionalization is understood as the process by which a party develops into a stable organization with established rules and is able to withstand internal and external pressures. Huntington views institutionalization as the degree to which a political organization acquires value, stability, and legitimacy that transcends the interests of specific individuals or elites. A well-institutionalized party has clear internal mechanisms for managing conflict, leadership succession, and strategic decision-making. Conversely, weak institutionalization is characterized by the dominance of personal figures, recurrent factional conflicts, and low adherence to internal rules. In the context of the United Development Party (PPP), this theory is relevant to explaining how the change in the General Chairperson in 2022 reflects the fragility of party institutionalization and directly impacts electoral performance and organizational resilience (Huntington, 1968; Mainwaring & Scully, 1995). Indicators:

- Consistency with party rules and bylaws
- Internal conflict resolution mechanisms
- Leadership succession procedures
- Organizational independence from personal figures
- Stability of party structure and management

Internal Solidarity of Political Parties

Internal solidity of political parties refers to the level of cohesion, loyalty, and unity of attitude among elites, cadres, and organizational structures in pursuing a shared political agenda. Solidarity is not only structural, but also psychological and ideological, reflected in trust between actors and a willingness to submit to collective decisions. Parties with high internal solidity are able to mobilize resources, manage differences of opinion, and effectively navigate electoral contests. Conversely, low internal solidity is often characterized by elite divisions, fragmented grassroots support, and weak organizational coordination. In this study, the theory of internal solidity is used to analyze how the conflict following the

change in the PPP General Chairperson triggered internal disintegration, leading to the party's failure in the 2024 elections (Budiardjo, 2008; Subhan, 2012). Indicators:

- Cadre cohesion and loyalty
- Unity of elite attitudes and regional structures
- Level of internal trust
- Compliance with party decisions
- Effectiveness of cadre mobilization

Factionalism in Political Parties

Factionalism is understood as the existence of internal groups within political parties competing for influence, resources, and leadership control. This phenomenon often arises in parties with long histories, diverse ideological bases, or immature institutionalization mechanisms. Factions can play a constructive role when managed institutionally, but become destructive when conflicts between factions are not channeled through formal party mechanisms. Uncontrolled factionalism tends to weaken organizational cohesion, trigger dual legitimacy, and damage the party's image in the eyes of voters. In the context of the United Development Party (PPP), this theory is relevant to explaining how elite conflict and factional rivalry following the change of General Chairperson in 2022 deepened the institutionalization crisis and accelerated internal disintegration ahead of the 2024 elections (Choi, 2005; Mainwaring, 1999). Indicators:

- Fragmentation of the leadership elite
- Conflict between internal groups
- Dualism of organizational legitimacy
- Differences in political direction and coalitions
- Cadre resistance to central leadership

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because the researcher wanted to explore in depth the complex phenomena related to institutionalization and internal conflicts that are subjective and situational (Creswell, 2014). The case study allowed the researcher to examine in detail the 2022 PPP leadership change and its impact on party readiness from the grassroots to the national elite levels. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with several key informants, consisting of PPP Central Executive Board (DPP) functionaries, regional administrators (DPW), and senior cadres directly involved in the 5th National Working Conference (Mukernas V). In addition, the researcher observed the party's internal dynamics during the 2024 Election campaign period. Informants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that informants had valid information regarding the conflicts that occurred. Secondary data were obtained through document studies, including the party's Articles of Association (AD/ART), news clippings from mass media (such as Tempo, Kompas, and Detik), scientific journals related to party factionalism, and the official KPU vote count report. The data analysis technique followed the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Researchers tested the validity of the data through source triangulation, comparing information from central officials with regional administrators to gain an objective perspective on the level of party solidarity (Moleong, 2017).'

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research shows that the leadership change from Suharso Monoarfa to Muhamad Mardiono in 2022 triggered deep structural rifts within the PPP. Although Mardiono gained political legitimacy from the government (a decree from the Ministry of Law and Human Rights), significant resistance arose at the grassroots level and in several regional executive boards (DPW). Many regional administrators felt the 5th National Working Conference (Mukernas) was rushed without thorough consultation at the grassroots level, resulting in the emergence of "Suharso loyalists" who chose to remain passive in the election (Subhan, 2012). Internal dynamics worsened during the determination of legislative candidate numbers and the direction of the presidential election coalition. Interviews revealed that the Central Executive Board (DPP) under Mardiono tended to centralize authority in determining legislative candidates, ignoring suggestions from regional administrators. This dissatisfaction led to demoralization of cadres, with the party machinery not functioning optimally in areas where the PPP traditionally relied. Internal solidarity was at its lowest point as the party's energy was drained from extinguishing sparks of internal conflict following the change in chairman (Tempo.co, 2023). The end result of these institutionalization issues was a complete electoral failure in the 2024 elections. The United Development Party (PPP) secured only 3.87% of the national vote, effectively eliminating the party from the national parliament for the first time since its founding in 1973. Data shows that in regions experiencing the most intense leadership conflicts, PPP's vote share plummeted. This demonstrates that institutionalization issues—particularly the inability to manage a peaceful leadership transition—are directly correlated with the decline in a party's electoral competitiveness (DetikNews, 2024).

Based on a review of relevant literature, it is understood that the institutionalization issues of political parties in Indonesia tend to predominantly occur within their own internal spheres. This is evident in the widespread institutional issues within political parties, both in terms of party management and governance, consistency in upholding party ideological values, political recruitment, and the opportunistic and pragmatic tendencies exhibited by elites and administrators. Furthermore, when contextualized within elections, it is clear that the institutionalization of political parties significantly determines the quality of democracy within the party. However, the trends demonstrated in the results of each election indicate that a political party's victory or significant vote share does not necessarily mean it has achieved optimal institutionalization. This is because, even though the party possesses several robust institutional dimensions, another, equally crucial dimension remains to be examined: internal solidity. This gap, the researcher observes, has not been widely explored in other studies. Therefore, this research will focus on this gap, focusing on a specific case study: the internal situation of the United Development Party (PPP) following the change of chairman in 2022 and its solidity in the face of the 2024 simultaneous elections.

The analysis of the PPP's institutionalization issues can be analyzed through Huntington's theory of degrees of institutionalization, which encompasses aspects of adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence. In the PPP's case, coherence or internal solidity is its weakest point. The 2022 conflict demonstrated that the PPP lacked a robust conflict resolution mechanism, leading to elite disagreements that led directly to a forced ouster, unconstitutional from the perspective of the losing faction (Huntington, 1968; Mainwaring, 1999). Factionally, Mardiono's leadership failed to unite the warring factions. The unresolved history of the 1973 fusion created lingering conflict between elements of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Parmusi (Parmusi), PSII (Indonesian Second Party of Indonesia), and Perti (Indonesian Party of Indonesia). When Suharso (the technocrat/Parmusi faction) was replaced by Mardiono (the businessman/government coalition faction), a shift in the balance of power

resulted in the aggrieved faction engaging in "silent sabotage" of the party's vote mobilization (Choi, 2005; Subhan, 2012).

The party's strategic policies under Mardiono, which relied heavily on executive intervention (President Jokowi), also weakened its autonomy. Support for Ganjar Pranowo was undertaken for the sake of survival, pragmatically securing 4% of the vote through the coattail effect. However, this strategy ignored the aspirations of the more conservative Islamic mass base. The disharmony between elite policies in Jakarta and the desires of the grassroots in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) caused the PPP to lose its unique identity as an Islamic party (Barton, 2002; Mujani, 2007). The PPP's inability to rebrand itself after Suharso's dismissal was also noteworthy. Instead of a clean and solid new image, the public saw the PPP as a party plagued by constant conflict. The integrity crisis that began with Rommy's case never fully recovered because party elites were more preoccupied with jockeying for leadership positions than improving the cadre system. This demonstrates the low level of organizational complexity and adaptability in facing changes in the political market (Ramage, 1995). Theoretically, the PPP's failure in 2024 is proof that "political parties that fail to institutionalize internally will be unable to mobilize externally effectively." The internal conflict in 2022 was an independent variable that undermined the dependent variable of cadre solidarity, which in turn destroyed the party's electoral output. Without solidarity, the party machine is merely a collection of uncoordinated individuals, easily crushed by new parties or older, more institutionalized parties (Mainwaring & Scully, 1995).

The United Development Party (PPP) was founded on January 5, 1973, as a forced response to the New Order regime's party fusion policy aimed at simplifying the party system. The PPP was a merger of four major Islamic parties: Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the Indonesian Muslim Party (Parmusi), the Indonesian Islamic Union Party (PSII), and the Islamic Education Association (Perti). Although the PPP proclaimed itself as the Great House of the Muslim Community and adhered to Islamic values such as worship, steadfastness, and moderation (*tawasuth*), it inherited the seeds of chronic internal conflict from its inception. The biggest institutionalization problem in the 1973-1977 period was the failure to transform the imposed four-faction coalition into an integrated organization, with the traditionalist NU faction and the modernist ex-Parmusi faction continually vying for control of leadership and policy. This factional conflict was exacerbated by the New Order's political design, which structurally weakened the party, particularly through the floating mass policy that limited organizational activity to the village level, destroying the traditionalist NU mass network. The PPP crisis peaked in the 1977-1982 period, marked by an escalation of conflict after the 1977 elections and deepening state intervention. The conflict between the NU faction and the modernist/pragmatic faction led by Djaelani Naro reached its peak at the 1979 Congress, where Naro's faction succeeded in dominating the Central Executive Board (DPP) with strong allegations of support and facilitation from the New Order regime. This incident created a severe dualism of legitimacy: the PPP, which had been legal under Naro, lost its cultural legitimacy in the eyes of the NU mass base. In response, at the NU Congress in Situbondo in 1984, the organization officially decided to return to the 1926 *Khittah*, meaning NU's withdrawal from the PPP's practical electoral politics. This institutional decision was a severe blow, eliminating the PPP's largest mass base and network of ulama.

This loss of mass base was followed by a second ideological blow, referring to the New Order government's obligation to adopt the sole principle of Pancasila for all political organizations by 1985. The PPP, founded to uphold Islamic principles, was forced to abandon its formal identity for the sake of political survival. This decision transformed the PPP from an Islamic party into a Pancasila party with a culturally Islamic mass base. The impact was immediately apparent in the 1987 elections, where the PPP experienced a drastic electoral

decline from 29.29% (1977) to just 15.96%. The post-1987 PPP entered a phase of stagnation, functioning entirely as a balance party co-opted by the regime, losing its opposition spirit, and losing its political power in parliament. Its main institutionalization problem was the loss of ideological autonomy and substantive political function. The final period of the New Order (1987-1997) was a time of consolidation of institutional defeat for the PPP. Under the leadership of Ismail Hasan Metareum, despite a slight increase in votes in the 1992 and 1997 elections (as a protest vote against the regime), the party remained trapped in co-optation, failed to rebuild a strong organizational branch, and was unable to reconcile the rift with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). This failure to reconcile ensured that the PPP entered the 1998 Reformation era without its strongest mass base.

Furthermore, the fall of the New Order and the opening of democratization in 1998 brought institutional shock to the PPP. The biggest problem in the Reformation era (1998-2019) was the loss of its monopoly on Islamic politics. Democratization enabled the emergence of new parties, such as the National Awakening Party (PKB), which captured the traditionalist base of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and the Crescent Star Party (PBB), which captured the modernist segment. The PPP entered the 1999 election with a weak and poorly organized structure, a legacy of the floating mass policy, causing its vote share to plummet to 10.71%. From 1999-2014, the PPP became increasingly trapped in a cycle of electoral erosion and unresolved factional conflict. Although the PPP succeeded in installing Hamzah Haz as Vice President, this access to the pinnacle of power did not resolve institutional problems at the grassroots level. On the contrary, the PPP's decision to consistently join governing coalitions (as in the SBY and early Jokowi eras) led to its being perceived as a power-oriented party, losing its critical role, and failing to compete with parties that offered a clean and independent image, such as the PKS.

This institutional crisis reached its peak in the 2009-2019 period, marked by two calamities: the dual leadership involving Suryadharma Ali (SDA) and Muhammad Romahurmuziy (Rommy), and a moral crisis stemming from corruption cases implicating the General Chairmen (SDA and later Rommy). This integrity crisis damaged the United Development Party (PPP)'s image as an Islamic party upholding morality in the eyes of Muslim voters. In the 2019 elections, all of these institutional problems manifested themselves in the PPP's lowest vote share in its history, at just 4.52%, narrowly missing the parliamentary threshold. This result confirmed that the PPP was on the verge of elimination and represented the failure of the established party to adapt to the demands for integrity and free political competition in the Reform era.

The party entered the 2019-2022 period in a very fragile state, with its electability nearly eliminated in the 2019 elections and its credibility shattered following the corruption case that ensnared its previous chairman, Muhammad Romahurmuziy. To restore order, the United Development Party (PPP) held its 9th Congress in 2020, which confirmed Suharso Monoarfa as its chairman. This inauguration aimed to stabilize and legitimize the leadership after the ethical crisis, while simultaneously formulating a survival strategy for the 2024 simultaneous elections. However, Suharso's tenure was soon marred by new institutionalization issues. Suharso, with his technocratic background and limited cultural roots in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), was deemed to have failed to bridge the gap between technocratic and cultural legitimacy, which is crucial for the PPP. This failure was exacerbated by the excessive centralization of power at the Central Executive Board (DPP), which was accused of neglecting the consolidation of regional-level structures (DPW/DPD) and hampering the party's rebranding efforts. Internal factionalism, which had been suppressed, resurfaced, fueling widespread discontent among culturally oriented figures and marginalized groups. Amidst this already fragile situation, the crisis reached its peak in July 2022 when Suharso

Monoarfa made a controversial statement regarding "envelopes" in the context of the Hajj pilgrimage to internal cadres. This statement was immediately deemed by the PPP's three high councils (Sharia, Advisory, and Honor) as a serious breach of ethics and morality, damaging the party's reputation as an Islamic figure and undermining its efforts to restore its image following repeated corruption cases. This ethical violation became the immediate trigger, providing the legal and moral basis for Suharso's dismissal.

Following the "envelope" incident, internal political dynamics quickly moved toward his dismissal. The three PPP High Councils immediately issued recommendations for Suharso Monoarfa's resignation, asserting their moral and legal authority as the party's highest arbiter of institutional ethics. When Suharso refused and chose to remain, the internal opposition faction succeeded in gathering a majority in the Central Executive Board (DPP) and Regional Executive Boards (DPW) to force the convening of the 5th National Working Conference (Mukernas). This Mukernas was held in Serang, Banten, on September 4, 2022. The 5th Mukernas was designed as an emergency institutional mechanism to save the party from ethical collapse and the threat of electoral elimination in the 2024 elections. The dynamics of the Mukernas were driven by the consensus that the safety of the party was above individual interests. The Mukernas officially dismissed Suharso Monoarfa from his position as chairman. As his replacement, the Mukernas appointed Muhamad Mardiono as Acting Chairman. Mardiono's election was a compromise solution accepted by the majority of factions, primarily because he was considered capable of bridging the moral demands of the High Council while also having access to the State Palace (as a pragmatic figure). Following the National Working Conference (Mukernas), although Suharso had launched a legal challenge to the decision, Mardiono's leadership legitimacy was strengthened by the support of the majority of the Regional Leadership Councils (DPW) and the absolute authority of the High Council. Overall, the process of replacing the General Chairperson in 2022 was an emergency institutionalization measure that successfully resolved the ethical leadership crisis, but it also reaffirmed the PPP's vulnerability to internal conflict in the lead-up to the elections.

Furthermore, the period following the replacement of the General Chairperson in 2022, under the leadership of Acting Chairman Muhamad Mardiono, was dominated by the United Development Party's (PPP) strenuous efforts to consolidate its structure and formulate a survival strategy for the 2024 Simultaneous Elections. This consolidation involved a major restructuring of the Central Leadership Council (DPP) and the freezing/reshuffling of leadership within the Regional Leadership Councils (DPW) and Regional Leadership Councils (DPD). The goal was to eliminate factions loyal to Suharso Monoarfa, demand sole loyalty to the Central Executive Board (DPP), and improve the party's fragile electoral performance. However, this consolidation effort actually triggered a new central-regional conflict, where the DPP's centralized policies in appointing administrators and determining legislative candidates (Caleg) were challenged by regional administrators who felt their autonomy was being ignored. This unresolved internal conflict significantly weakened the party's mobilization in the lead-up to the contest. In the national political realm, the PPP's dynamics centered on determining the direction of the coalition. After initially being part of the United Indonesia Coalition (KIB), the PPP then made a crucial maneuver by unilaterally leaving the KIB and declaring its support for Ganjar Pranowo as its presidential candidate. This strategic decision was based on the party's survival pragmatism, with the strong hope of gaining the coattail effect of a presidential candidate with high electability and perceived support from President Joko Widodo. President Jokowi's intervention in power played a dominant role, with Mardiono seen as choosing to maintain access to power and executive stability rather than fighting for the party's ideological autonomy. This choice forced the PPP

to sacrifice its ideological differentiation as an Islamic party and bet entirely on a coalition strategy, even though it caused resistance among the conservative mass base who wanted a candidate who better represented the spirit of Islam.

The political dynamics and strategies developed by the United Development Party (PPP) in the run-up to the 2024 elections resulted in the worst institutional consequences in the party's history. The coattail effect strategy, which had been relied upon, failed miserably, with the 2024 election results showing the PPP securing only 3.87% of the national vote. This figure fell below the parliamentary threshold (4%), which institutionally meant the PPP was eliminated from parliament for the first time since its founding in 1973. This failure demonstrated that while executive intervention successfully guided the Central Executive Board's political decisions, it was unable to remedy the chronic structural damage and deep-rooted integrity crisis within the party. The electoral failure immediately triggered a legitimacy crisis and destructive internal political dynamics. Mardiono's leadership automatically lost its moral and political foothold. In response, dissatisfied factions, particularly those within the Regional Leadership Council, immediately demanded an Extraordinary Congress (MLB) to thoroughly evaluate its strategy and leadership. The MLB's demands aimed to take over the party and implement radical reforms. In an attempt to delay political accountability, the Central Executive Board (DPP) under Mardiono responded by filing a lawsuit against the election results with the Constitutional Court, a maneuver seen as a bid for time. The post-election political dynamics will culminate in the 10th Congress (regular or extraordinary), where the party will face an existential choice: undergoing comprehensive structural and ideological reform to survive outside parliament, or re-entering factional conflict that could lead to permanent division and the disappearance of the PPP entity from the national political landscape.

Implications of Research Findings

These findings have practical implications for the PPP, requiring it to immediately conduct a comprehensive institutional audit. The PPP can no longer rely on figurehead centralism if it hopes to return to parliament in 2029. The primary implication is the need for reforms to a more inclusive and transparent leadership transition mechanism to avoid creating lasting political wounds for the losing faction. Strengthening the authority of the High Council must be accompanied by legal certainty in the Articles of Association (AD/ART) to prevent decisions from being perceived as arbitrary by certain elites (Subhan, 2012). Theoretically, this research reinforces the thesis that for political parties with a traditional/ideological mass base, elite integrity and internal solidarity are far more important than the pragmatism of governing coalitions. The implication for the development of political science in Indonesia is the need to reexamine models of party institutionalization in new democracies vulnerable to executive intervention. The United Development Party (PPP) must return to its original mission as a cadre party rooted in Islamic values if it is to rebuild the coherence lost due to the 2022 conflict (Budiardjo, 2008; Huntington, 1968).

E. CONCLUSION

The change in the position of the PPP General Chairperson in 2022, although carried out through internal mechanisms, is a manifestation of chronic political institutionalization issues within the party. This controversial process significantly undermined the PPP's internal solidarity, creating fragmentation at the elite level, erosion of trust, and the inaction of the grassroots movement. A direct impact of this solidarity issue was the PPP's failure to reach the 4% parliamentary threshold in the 2024 Simultaneous Elections. This study concludes that fragile political institutionalization, particularly in the face of leadership succession dynamics, is a key factor weakening the party's electoral competitiveness. Therefore, the PPP

must prioritize the reconstruction of strong, transparent, and autonomous institutions to ensure its survival in the Indonesian political system.

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