ISLAMIC POLITICAL PARTIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: THE ORIGIN AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS

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Abstract

Purpose: The objective of the study was to describe factors that influenced the establishment of the Islamic political parties and its political problems in South East Asia.

Methodology: The research methodology used in the present research study is a literature study method with qualitative analysis. The data obtained from documents and books which were studied by online and offline. The gathered data analysed by using political theories. One of them was the analysis of the emergence of Islamic political parties.

Main Findings: The study had two main findings. First, there were six factors which influenced the establishment of Islamic political parties, that is the demography, political system, political ideology, contagion, international political economy, and political competition. Secondly, there were four problems faced by Islamic political parties in winning the political contest, especially in the general election. The first problem was the division of local cultural identity, followed by the unfavorable situation for Islamic political parties, political ideology, and the quality of Islamic political parties themselves.

Implications: It had a theoretical implication on the harmony between Islam and democracy, the emergence of Islamic political parties, and the problems. It revealed that there was no problem between the existence of Islamic political parties and democracy.

Novelty: When the secular political party lost public trust, the voters did not automatically shift their political votes to the Islamic political parties.

Keywords: Islamic politics, Islamic political party, Political identity, Political ideology, General Election, Democracy.

INTRODUCTION

Why are Islamic Political Parties not as successful as secular parties? This is the principal question concerning their existence. Islamic political parties have emerged since the Indonesian independence era. In the first general election in 1955, they obtained a lot of the number of votes. Fadillah Putra points out that the voters for Islamic political parties at that time were split into two big parties – Nahdlatul Ulama (18.41%) and Masyumi (20.92%). Some voters voted for a nationalist party. PNI (Indonesian National Party) obtained 22.32% of votes (Putra, 2003, p. 11).

Bima Arya Sugiarto points out that the number of votes of Islamic political parties was getting decreased from time to time. In the first general election of 1955, the total number of votes gained by Islamic parties was 42%. In the second general election of 1971, the total number of votes gotten by Islamic parties (NU, Parmusi, PSII, &Perti) decreased in half to 23.9% (Sugiarto, 2010, p. 32). In the New Order era, the number of votes gotten by Islamic parties (PPP) increased to 29.29%, although it began to decrease in the 1998 general election. The lowest voting coverage of PPP was 14.59% in 1992 (Khoiri, 2012). The number of votes gotten by Islamic political parties did not change significantly in the 1999 and the 2004 general elections. In the 1999 general election, PPP, PK, PBB, has gained a total of 17 percent of the votes. Likewise, in the 2014 elections, PPP and PKS won a total of 17 percent of the vote. Sugiarto points out that NU and PAN were not included as Islamic political parties because they claimed that they were inclusive parties (Sugiarto, 2010, p. 32).

Based on Sugiarto's parameter about Islamic political parties, the number of votes gotten by Islamic political parties in Indonesia (PKS, PPP, PBB, PKNU, PBR, and PMB) in the general election of 2009 was 18.07% (Romli, 2009, p. 55). The total number of votes gotten by Islamic political parties in Indonesia (PPP, PKS, and PBB) in the 2014 general election was 14.78% (Triono, 2015, p. 94). The data from general elections in 2009 and 2014 revealed that the total number of votes gotten by Islamic political parties was still low even though the number of Islamic poetical parties increased or decreased.

In Malaysia, the first general election in 1955 was won by secular-nationalist parties. Pan-Malaya Islamic Party (PAS) could not compete with them. In the next general elections from 1957 until 1998, Barisan Nasional, which was the coalition of political parties based on ethnicities, usually dominated the number of votes in general elections. They were the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) which represented the interest of the Malay ethnic group, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) which served the interest of the Chinese ethnic group, and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) 1946 which represented the interest of the Indian ethnic group (Hairi, 2017, p. 174).

The number of votes gotten by PAS in the general election from 1999 until 2018 did not change much. The average number of seats won by PAS was still below 50%. The highest coverage of seats was 14.99% or 27 seats. According to the

latest directive of parliament, the last acquisition of seats was 16,91% or 18 seats (See: Table 1) (Keputusan Terkini Dewan Undangan Negeri, 2018; Moniruzzaman, 2018, p. 216; Funston, 2018, p. 73).

Table 1: Electoral Performance of PAS in Malaysia in the General Elections of 1999-2014

No	General Election Year	General Election	Performance of Acquisition of Seats in Parliament
1	1999	GE 10	27 Seats (14.99 Percent)
2	2004	GE 11	7 Seats (15,33 Percent)
3	2008	GE 12	23 Seats (14.36 Percent)
4	2013	GE 13	21 Seats (14,78 Percent)
5	2018	GE 14	18 Seats (16,91 Percent)

Retrieved fromhttps://election.thestar.com.my/infographics.html, accessed on 01 Aug 2019.

Based on the background of the number of votes gotten by Islamic political parties in the general election, this study would answer two questions; first, why do Islamic political parties emerge? Secondly, what are some of the obstacles faced by Islamic political parties concerning the efforts to win the competition in the general election? There are three reasons why this study was interesting to be analyzed. First, Islamic political parties had the number of potential voters: the high number of Moslems, especially in Indonesia and in Malaysia. Secondly, Islamic political parties have existed since a long time ago; they even had existed since the first-time general election was held. They participated both in Indonesia and in Malaysia in 1955. Thirdly, even though political reformation has been done and general elections become more transparent, it seems that Islamic political parties still could not compete with the other parties. The third reason can be seen in the cases in Indonesia. Since the general elections held in 1999, 2004, 2009, and 2014, the number of votes gotten by Islamic political parties was still below the votes obtained by nationalist parties.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of Islamic political parties is an interesting focus for researchers. This party is a unique element of democracy due to democracy in Muslim countries throughout the world. Michel Buffer's (Buehler, 2009, pp. 51-63) article shows that his analysis of the relationship between Islam and democracy in Indonesia has led to analyzing Islamic political parties. Likewise, Jan Woischnik and Philipp Müller, in their article, mentioned Indonesia as the largest Muslim country in the world (Woischnik, 2013, pp. 59-79).

Analysis of the emergence of Islamic political parties was done by Lili Romli (Romli, 2006, pp. 243–244). There are four enabling factors of the rise of Islamic political parties in the Reformation era. First, the sociological factor in which Islamic political parties became the channel of political aspiration for Moslems; secondly, historical factor in which Islamic political parties emerged because they had previously been Islamic political parties; thirdly, theological factor in which Islamic political ideology teaches that Islam and politics are inseparable. So Islamic political parties are the implementation of this doctrine, fourthly, reformation factor in which there is an opportunity to establish Islamic political parties (Romli, 2004, pp. 29-48).

Lili Romli (Romli, 2006, pp. 243–244) points out that theological factor is one of the causes of the emergence of Islamic political parties even though it cannot explain why the emergence of Islamic political parties is merely a label. Eep Saifullah points out that there are Islamic political parties that use the label of Islam, but they have no Islamic principle in them (Romli, 2006, p. 13). In other words, there is a theological factor in the process of establishing some of the Islamic political parties. However, it is only applicable in certain cases because this kind of party cannot be categorized as an Islamic political party, especially toward Islamic political parties which merely use Islamic labels or symbols.

Another opinion comes from Husain and Hillel Fradkin (Haqqani &Fradkin, 2008), which states that there are some records concerning the emergence of Islamic political parties which are referred to like the cases in the Middle-East countries and Turkey. First, the establishment of Islamic political parties brings about controversies in the context of Islamic political thought regarding the relationship between Islam and politics. Secondly, an Islamic political party is a result of evolution from the Islamic movement. Thirdly, a political movement which becomes an Islamic political party does not seriously want to be modern when it becomes a political party; it is indicated by the absence of the change toward pluralist.

The opinion of Husain Haqqani and Hillel Fradkin reminds us about the theory of Samuel P. Huntington, which states that Islam and democracy are like "water and oil" (extremely contradictory). According to Huntington, no Islamic country has sustained a fully democratic political system for any length of time (Huntington, 1991, p. 41).

Islamic values have so many limitations; on the other hand, liberal values provide room to maneuver for socio-politics as broad as possible. That is why democracy cannot survive in the countries with the majority of Moslems. According to Ratnawati, in the case of Indonesia, the number of votes of Islamic political parties has decreased over time (Ratnawati, 2008, p. 13). Meanwhile, Kikue Hamayotsustated that the institutionalization approach is essential for Islamic political

parties to be able to compete in elections. According to him, building a well institutionalized is more important than strengthening the identity of religious ideology. (Hamayotsu, 2011, p.153).

The objective of the study is to describe factors that influenced the establishment of the Islamic political parties in South East Asia, especially in two countries: Malaysia and Indonesia. This study also describes the political problems of Islamic political parties. The central hypothesis of this study is that the political and non-political factors are affecting the existence of Islamic political parties in Southeast Asia.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research used a literature study method with qualitative analysis. The data were obtained from documents and books which were studied by online and offline. The gathered data were analyzed by using political analyses or theories. One of them was the analysis of the emergence of Islamic political parties. This analysis was useful to answer the research problems: why did Islamic political parties emerge? What problems faced by Islamic political parties in winning the general election?

THE ORIGIN OF ISLAMIC POLITICAL PARTIES

The existence of Islamic political parties cannot be separated from the citizens' religious identity of a certain country, which is related to ideology. The assumption of establishing an Islamic political party is that ideological channel is needed in politics, and this perspective appears in a democratic country. However, in a non-democratic country, there is also an assumption that Islamic political parties need to be established. Therefore, it is simply said that an Islamic political party is a medium for consolidating all Moslems in a political atmosphere.

The enabling factor of the emergence of Islamic political parties in many countries is closely related to demographic factors. The number of populations is vital because the principal capital for establishing a party is the availability of mass or populace as the constituents or as the ideology which wants to be united. In some Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines it is evidence that the emergence of an Islamic political party is the consequence of the existence of a significant number of Moslems which number is excellent and they are solid. The number of Muslims in Indonesia is 85%, also 61.3% in Malaysia, 10% in the Philippines, and 16% in Singapore (Table 2). On the other hand, in countries such as Cambodia, Timor Leste, and Laos, it is complicated to establish an Islamic political party since there is only a small number of Moslems in these countries.

The data from muslimpopulation.com indicate that there is only 1% of Moslems in these countries, and there is only 1% of Moslems in Vietnam (See: Table 2).

Table 2: Estimation of the Percentage of Moslems in Southeast Asia

No	Country	Estimation of the Percentage of the Number of Moslems
1	Indonesia	88 Percent
2	Malaysia	61.3 Percent
3	Singapore	16 Percent
4	Thailand	10 Percent
5	The Philippines	10 Percent
6	Brunai Darussalam	67 Percent
7	Vietnam	1 Percent
8	Cambodia	7 Percent
9	Myanmar	15 Percent
10	Laos	1 Percent
11	TimorLeste	4 Percent

Retrieved from http://www.muslimpopulation.com/asia/, accessed on 01 Aug 2019.

The emergence of Islamic political parties in Southeast Asia as the implication of the existence of the Moslems confirms the viewpoint of Lili Romli. According to Lili Romli, the emergence of Islamic political parties is the Islamic sacred mission, and at the same time, it is as the channel of the Moslems (Romli, 2006, pp. 243–244). Islamic scholars are the actors of the establishment of Islamic political parties. In Indonesia, they contributed to the establishment of Islamic political parties such as Masyumi and Nahdlatul Ulama, while in Malaysia, they also played an essential role in establishing PAS.

The number of Moslems is not sufficient as the prerequisites for the emergence of an Islamic political party. The political system also influences establishing and not establishing it. In Brunei Darussalam, it is difficult to find an Islamic political party even though 67% of its people are Moslems. Why? It is because there is no Islamic political party in this country. There is a tight regulation in Brunei Darussalam, which causes its absence.

Meanwhile, it is impossible for an Islamic political party to exist and to develop in Myanmar since the political system in this country does not give a chance for it. Military Junta governmental system prioritizes political order rather than democracy and political freedom. Therefore, this second factor (political system) confirms the viewpoint of Lili Romli (Romli, 2006, pp. 243–244) that one of the causes of the emergence of an Islamic political party is due to the opportunity to establish it. Islamic political parties that have existed other than in Indonesia and Malaysia are the Islamic Party of the Philippines (IPP) in the Philippines (It is a local party in the autonomic region of Mindanao) (McKenna, 1998, p. 247), and Angkatan Islam Singapura (1966) in Singapore (Singapore Elections, 2004).

There is no Islamic political party in Brunei Darussalam because it is a country with an absolute monarchy system. In this country, there is only a political party namely The National Development Party (NDP) (2005) (Freedom House, 2018). In Timur Leste, although Mari Alkatiri (Moslem politician) was the first Prime Minister of Timor Lestein 2002 (Asmardika, 2017), there is no Islamic party in this country. Similarly, in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia where there are no Islamic political parties for various reasons. There is a vertical conflict in some of the regions of South Thailand, and Laos is a social-communism country (Kamm, 1995).

Other factors that are called specific factors. Some of them are the factors of contagion, international political economy, and political competition. What it means by contagion is because it imitates the phenomena of other countries that have Islamic political parties. For example, Angkatan Islam Party in Singapore (Singapore Elections, 2004) has a historical connection with Islamic parties in Malaysia. Another example is PAS in Malaysia, which is inspired by the Masyumi party in Indonesia. There is an assumption that the Ikhwan Muslimun movement from Egypt has inspired the formation of the Masyumi Partyin Indonesia and PAS in Malaysia. PKS (Prosperous Justice Party) in Indonesia is assumed to have a connection with the Ikhwan Muslimun movement in Egypt.

The factor of the international political economy means that the funds for Islamic political parties are supported by figures of the Islamic Middle East countries. Burhanuddin Muhtadi points out that there is the aid of Saudi Arabia in the activity of Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII) (Muhtadi, 2012, p. 256). In the case of an Islamic political party, PKS is one of the examples of the Islamic political party which gets aid from Middle East countries. Yusuf Supendi (one of the founders of Partai Keadilan or Justice Party in 2013 which is now changed to PKS) admitted it. He said, "The first time our party participated in the general election in 1999; we were also supported in funds from the Middle East" (Munawwaroh, 2013). This statement can be interpreted as the fact that the existence of Islamic political parties is influenced by the factors of the international political economy.

The last factor is that the emergence of Islamic political parties is due to political competition. Islamic parties appear as part of the attempt to increase political competitiveness. Islamic political parties have prominent figures that have strong influence internally. Sometimes conflicts occur in the internal party, which can cause an internal schism. In consequence, the influencing figures in the party get out of the party and establish another new party. For example, there was an internal conflict in PPP (United Development Party) in Indonesia, which brought about the emergence of a new PPP Reformasi (Reformation PPP).

Another example was the internal conflict in PKB (National Awakening Party), which brought about the emergence of PKNU (Nahdlatul Ulama Awakening Party). The internal disputes at the PBB (Crescent Party and Star) led to the rise of PAS and PII(Indonesian Islamic Party) (Ghafur&Arif, 2017, pp. 580–581). It is interesting to note about the factors which influence the establishment of Islamic parties are that these factors do not stand by themselves; sometimes, they are the combination of the existing elements.

POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF ISLAMIC POLITICAL PARTIES

Islamic political parties have some problems in their attempt to win the political competition, especially the political contest in general election and the existence of the Islamic political parties themselves. The first problem is concerning the split in local cultural identity. The political anthropological approach is a fundamental approach to analyze this kind of problem. This approach views that the local cultural identity of the Indonesian people is varied. This variety has an impact on the emergence of certain specifications in Indonesian society; in consequence, there is a need for recognition. Certain people's identity becomes the element that strengthens cultural interest from the political point of view. In other words, there is cultural competition behind the political contest.

Local identity has become its challenge for Islamic political parties in political practice, especially in general elections. The status of "Islam" which theoretically becomes a unifying force actually has a classification, either from ethnicity, ethnic structure, and geographical location. The term, Islam, in Java and outside Java is one of the factual splitting forms in the national politics in Indonesia. There is a classification concerning social structure based on ethnicity. According to Clifford Geertz, the Javanese who are Moslems, are divided into social class, which is known as priyai (upper-class man), santri (pious person), and abangan (nominal Moslem) (Geertz, 1989). Burhan D. Magenda, cited from Geertz, in his writing entitled, *Community Change and Sustainability in the Division of Indonesian Society*(Magenda, 1990) points out that the classification of the Moslems is usually used to explain the fewer number of votes gotten by Islamic political parties than that reached by the other political parties. It implies that the majority of Moslems do not guarantee that Islamic political parties will get a large number of votes in a general election.

In Malaysia, Malay as an ethnic identity and Islam as a religious identity are not completely united in a social and political space. Many people believe that ethnic identity is more important than religious identity. As a country of pluralism, Malaysia identifies a specific case on the communalism (ethnic) of Malay and Islam. The Malay as an ethnic identity and Islam as religion are two dialectical tendencies, willing or not, are not complementary to each other in the situation of power stability (Mutalib, 1995, p. 78). This condition becomes a problem for the Islamic political parties in Malaysia. Both of them are not equally accommodated in conceptualization and the practice of political policy. John Funston in his writing, Malay Politics in Malaysia: UMNO and PAS, points out that both UMNO and PAS (in the period of pre-1970-1975) had different ideas and strategies in Malaysian politics. For UMNO, the protection and development of Malay nationalism had the highest priority. For PAS, besides upholding this priority, it also emphasizes on the Islamic principles and values (Mutalib, 1995).

The second problem is the unfavourable political situation. Islamic political parties are involved in a changing political situation. Sometimes the capacity of the political situation increases, along with the increase in the limitation of freedom of politics. For example, there were some limitations of Islamic political parties in Indonesia in the period of Soekarno's regime. Some of the Islamic parties were even prohibited, and their leaders had the same treatment. This condition continued in the Soeharto's regime. Some parties were merged in 1971. Islamic political parties were merged into one party, PPP (United Development Party). Consequently, this party usually underwent internal conflicts (Haris, 1988, pp. 286–289); for example, the conflict between Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Non-NU (Muslimin Indonesia or MI), and the conflict between Serikat Islam (SI) and PersatuanTarbiyah Islam (Perti).

The example of an unfavorable situation is the change in the character of a party in the New Order area to be the one and only principle (Pancasila). According to Ichlasul Amal and Rizal Panggabean, after the one and only principle of Pancasila was implemented, it could be imagined that there was an essential change in a party's social basis and integrated function. All parties, political parties, and Golkar (Functional Work Group) had to be transparent toward the category of voters. They are not biased anymore in specifying certain segments of the people based on their commitment toward other religions or ideologies (Iclasul Amal &Panggabean, 1990, p. 78). The implication is that Islamic political parties have to be open to political parties. They also underwent a dilemma because they were regarded as the parties which tolerated the unlimited power of the Soeharto's regime.

Islamic political parties in Malaysia had the same phenomena as what happened to the cases in Indonesia, even though they are slightly different. Indrya Smita Notosusanto (Indrya Smita, 1986), in his case study in Malaysia in the period of 1974-1984, explained that the government's politics of general election had triggered the appearance of radicalism, not only in Islamic political parties but also in the Moslems. The government (dominant party) sometimes used a policy tactfully to suppress opposition parties.

Was the situation for PAS in Malaysia or Islamic political parties in Indonesia the cause of the loss of Islamic political parties? In the cases in Indonesia and Malaysia, this reason is feeble. The proof can be seen from the result of the general election in the political reformation era, which did not indicate a significant increase in the number of votes gotten by Islamic political parties. Table 3 describes the votes of PPP and PBB, which decrease compared with those in the general election of 1999. The number of votes gotten by PKS increased in 2004, but it became stagnant in the percentage of 6% in 2014. Meanwhile, the number of votes gained by nationalist parties was significant, even a nationalist party which began to participate in the general election (National Democratic Party or Nasdem) obtained 6.72% of votes in the general election of 2014.

Table 3: Percentage of the Number of Votes Gotten by Political Parties in Indonesia in the General Election of 1999-2014

No	Name of Party	1999	2004	2009	2014
1	Democratic Party (Demokrat)	-	7.45 Percent	20.85Percent	10.19Percent
2	Functional Group Party (Golkar)	22.4Percent	21.58 Percent	14.45Percent	14.75Percent
3	Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP)	33.7Percent	18.53 Percent	14.03Percent	18.95Percent
4	Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)	1.4Percent	7.34 Percent	7.88Percent	6.79Percent
5	PAN	7.1Percent	6.44 Percent	6.01 Percent	7.59Percent
6	United Development Party (PPP)	10.7Percent	8.15Percent	5.32Percent	6.53Percent
7	National Awakening Party (PKB)	12.6Percent	10.57Percent	4.94Percent	9.04Percent
8	The Great Indonesia Movement Party (Gerindra)	-	-	4.46Percent	11.81Percent
9	People's Conscience Party (Hanura)	-	-	3.77Percent	5.26Percent
10	National Democratic Party (Nasdem)	-	-	-	6.72Percent
11	Crescent Star Party (PBB)*	1.94 Percent	2.62Percent	1.79Percent	1.46Percent
12	Indonesian Justice and Unity Party (PKPI)*	-	1.26Percent	-	0.91Percent

Prerequisite for passing the parliamentary threshold in 2009 was 2.5 percent and in 2014 was 3.5 percent of the valid national votes.

The third problem is the ideological problem, which cannot be separated from the hypothesis that Islam and politics are not separated. Therefore, establishing a political party is considered as a manifestation of *ibadah* (religious devotion). Consequently, organizing an Islamic political party is usually regarded as the obligation of Moslems. This theological factor was adhered to the motivation of the Moslems, especially to the Islamic scholars to establish Islamic political parties. Meanwhile, some of the Islamic scholars who showed their objection to theological elements in creating political parties were reluctant to use the label of Islam. However, the political atmosphere at that time changed, they gradually began to realize that the Moslems were very potential as social capital in a general election, even a non-theological purpose. Eventually, Islamic political parties were established by 'borrowing' Islam as their identity.

Since the Reformation era in 1998, Indonesia has had some political parties which do have a theological motivation to take an active part in politics. This was due to the suitability of the existence of Islamic political parties and democracy, which had been worried about, and this was the main problem and dilemma. For PKS (Prosperous Justice Party) it became a challenge that had to be solved. Anis Matta (the Secretary-General of the Central Executive Committee of PKS) revealed that...” in the level of ideological perspective, PKS has to prove the compatibility between Islam and Democracy” (Muhtadi, 2012, p. xxii). Table 4 describes that the vote of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) is the highest among the Islamic political parties in Indonesia. However, it has declined in the 2014 elections (see: Table 3).

Table 4: The Number of Votes Gotten by the Islamic Parties in the General Election of 2009

No	Name of Party	Number of Votes	Percentage
1	Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)	8,206,955	7.88Percent
2	United Development Party (PPP)	5,533,214	5.32Percent
3	Crescent Star Party (PBB)	1,864,752	1.79Percent
4	NahdlatulUlema Awakening Party (PKNU)	1,527,593	1.47Percent
5	Reform Star Party (PBR)	1,264,333	1.21Percent
6	New Masyumi Party (PMB)	414,750	0.40Percent

Unlike the condition in Indonesia, theological factor as the enabling factor of the emergence of Islamic political parties was very relevant to the case in Malaysia, where PAS as an Islamic Political Party in Malaysia consistently campaigned for the upholding of the Islamic values. Meanwhile, Islamic political parties in Singapore – except in the Philippines – did not have any clear theological motivation even though the tendency toward it should have existed. The case of PAS in Malaysia confirms the viewpoint of Husain Haqqani and Hillel Fradkin (Haqqani &Fradkin, 2008) that a political movement that becomes an Islamic political party will not automatically change to pluralist. An Islamic political party that changes its political ideology will take the risk for internal conflict as what has occurred to PKS in Indonesia. On the other hand, this phenomenon can be seen as the fact which strengthens the viewpoint of Samuel P. Huntington (Huntington, 1991) on the conflict between Islam and democracy. In reality, however, the conflict occurs among the ruling elites of the Islamic political parties themselves.

The fourth problem is the quality of the Islamic political parties themselves. In the reformation era, Islamic political parties in Indonesia did not show their competence (Amir, 2003). In the general election of 1999, secular nationalist parties won a clear victory. When the votes were accumulated, the total number of votes gotten by the nationalist parties would be more than 50%. In the general election of 2004, Islamic political parties had to accept the victory of Golkar (Functional Work Group Party), which got 21.58% of votes and PDIP (Indonesian Struggle Democratic Party) which reached 18.53% of votes, both of them were nationalist parties (Table 3).

Meanwhile, the Islamic political party, which ranked the fourth was PPP (United Development Party), which got 8.15% of votes, PKS (Prosperous Justice Party) ranked the fifth with 7.34% of votes, and Democrat Party (secular nationalist) ranked the sixth. The specific characteristic of the elections was that there was inequality in the number of voters in each area, which became the voting region. As a comparison, see the number of votes gotten by Islamic political parties in the general election of 1999 in Table 3.

From the case in Indonesia, it is unclearly seen any difference from the phenomena of Islamic political parties in Malaysia, which can exist only in certain regions. Nationally, PAS could not compete with UMNO, but in certain areas such as Terengganu, Kelantan, and Kedah, the popularity of PAS was promising, especially in the first general election in 1955. Zainah Anwar used the phrase, “Compete for the Most Pious” to describe the condition of the general election at that time (Abdalla, 2002, pp. 79–104).

The analysis of the phenomena of the acquisition of votes can be seen from the quality of political parties. There are many ways to be able to become a qualified party. It can be done by improving the leadership model, by making into cadres, or by developing constituents. This method can even be indicated by the absence of party cadres who are punished because of committing the criminal corruption act. Therefore, political competition does not only create and maintain public trust.

Unfortunately, this method cannot be entirely done by Islamic political parties. They are challenged to increase their quality since without good quality they will be abandoned by their voters, and this is the only alternative. Without the Islamic political party, the Moslems can still vote for the other political parties.

The quality of an Islamic political party is also related to the questions about the general election. Are Islamic political parties actively involved in designing and preparing more equitable political systems and electoral systems? Do they have an institution that studies and evaluates every general election? Do they have the capability of seeing the implications of political policy on the general election and party on vote acquisition and victory in the next general election? Have they prepared for anticipation measures, identified their defeats and any political tricks toward the current condition, and known the way to solve them? These questions explain how far Islamic political parties plan to participate in general elections. Of course, these questions need more profound study.

Probably it is slightly different from Islamic political parties in Malaysia, which historically have a strong relationship between party performance and party competition. In a certain period, the powerful political party has done his tasks. Issues on development in the political issue become uninteresting to be considered by the Moslems in Malaysia in a general election unless UMNO fails to do the development, or it is attacked by an issue which makes people disappointed such the issue of corruption. However, the question is directed to PAS: Is PAS as the Islamic Political Party able to be better than UMNO in handling the problem of development?

It seems that PAS, which tends to talk about religious morals in attracting the sympathy of its voters, becomes one of the issues which confirm that it is challenged to be ready for the concept of development from the perspective of morals and religion. The problem is whether this concept of development can be accepted by Muslim voters who did not vote for it previously. Only can the study on the program of Islamic political parties or a survey on the behavior of Muslim voters answer this problem. It is interesting to note the uniqueness of the cases in Malaysia. When UMNO lost public trust, the voters did not automatically shift their political votes to the other Islamic political parties. The fact was that they changed their votes to the coalition of new parties, which were not the coalition of Islamic political parties.

All the problems that exist in Islamic political parties in Indonesia and Malaysia ultimately have a direct impact on the decline in votes. KikueHamayotsu (Hamayotsu, 2011) has explained that the failure of political parties in strengthening institutions will affect their ability to compete in elections. Election data in Indonesia (Table 3) has illustrated the condition that Islamic political parties have decreased votes. Islamic political parties must adapt to technological developments. For example, in the digital age, Islamic political parties need to innovate to strengthen organizations, programs, and strategies.

From a democratic perspective, every political party has a goal to win the election. As participants in the general election, Islamic political parties also have the same purpose. The challenge for Islamic political parties is to improve the quality of political parties because this can be done internally. Problems that are influenced by external factors require several conditions to be solved. For example, handling the issue of the political situation will depend on the ability of political parties to lobby the existing political forces.

Regarding ideological issues, Islamic political parties in Indonesia experienced a stagnation of votes when they proposed Islamism during the general election. In other words, the existence of Islamic political parties in Indonesia and Malaysia has tested the issue of Islamism in elections with negative results. But what will happen when there is a reverse condition? Of course, in-depth research is needed to answer this problem. The fact is that the existence and participation of Islamic political parties in general elections in Indonesia and Malaysia has become a critical channel for political participation in every election, especially for Muslim voters.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

It was a study on Islamic political parties in Southeast Asia. Even though the scope was Southeast Asia, this study was done in two countries: Malaysia and Indonesia, considering that the Islamic political parties in other Southeast Asia, such as Singapore and the Philippines were insignificant. The questions in this study were as follows: first, why did Islamic political parties emerge? Secondly, what problems were faced by Islamic political parties concerning their existence in general elections? It was found that the emergence of Islamic political parties was influenced by six main factors: the factors of demography such as the population of Moslems, political system, political ideology, contagion, international political economy, and political competition. Some parts of this finding confirmed the viewpoint of Lili Romli on the emergence of Islamic political parties such as political and ideological systems.

This study also had some findings on the problems faced by Islamic political parties in winning the general election. First, it was the problem of splitting identity of local culture; secondly, it was the problem of the unfavourable political situation for Islamic political parties; thirdly, it was the problem of political ideology; and fourthly, it was the problem of the quality of Islamic political parties. These findings confirmed the viewpoint of Husain Haqqani and Hillel Fradkin about the issue of Islamism, which adhered to Islamic political parties. However, the challenge of Islamism is not applicable in all Islamic political parties, especially in the Islamic political parties in Indonesia.

This study also had a theoretical implication on the harmony between Islam and democracy. It revealed that there was no problem between the existence of Islamic political parties and democracy. The result of the study showed that it was

different from the viewpoint of Samuel P. Huntington, who was worried about the awakening of Islamism. The fact was that there was the phenomenon of the strengthening of Islam in the practice of political democracy which involves Islamic political parties (this was also alarmed by Husain Haqqani dan Hillel Fradkin); however, the phenomenon was not effective because there was still a dilemma faced by Islamic political parties in influencing voters in a general election. PAS did not have any other issue except religious morals, which could attract its voters' attention.

LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

This study analyzes Islamic political parties in several Southeast Asian countries, but with limited focus on Islamic Political Parties in Indonesia and Malaysia. It is because the existence of Islamic political parties only exists in these two countries. This study recommends some interesting questions for further research: First, how do Islamic political parties in Indonesia and Malaysia respond to the issue of Islamism, which is considered threatening democracy, but always regarded as identical with Islamic political parties? Second, do Islamic political parties in Indonesia and Malaysia have symptoms of being the pioneering political parties of the rise of Islamism in the Southeast Asia region?

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