ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND POLITICAL STABILITY: IMPLICATIONS FOR PEOPLE'S WELFARE

Era Purike
Prodi Perhotelan Politeknik Pajajaran ICB Bandung
era.purike@poljan.ac.id

Abstract
The electoral system plays a vital role in determining the quality of a country's political governance and stability, which in turn affects the welfare of the people. The choice of system, whether proportional, majoritarian, or mixed, has implications for political representation and the accountability of the elected government. An effective system encourages political stability by ensuring fair representation and a non-centralised distribution of power. Strong political stability allows the government to focus on sustainable development policies, create a healthy investment climate, and improve public services, all of which are important for the welfare of the community. However, stability must be in harmony with inclusiveness so as not to marginalise certain groups and maintain the essence of democracy. The balance between political stability and inclusiveness is the key to ensuring sustainable development and equitable welfare across all levels of society.
Keywords: Election System, Political Stability, Implications for People's Welfare.

Introduction

The electoral system is one of the fundamental elements in a democracy that functions as a mechanism to form a legitimate and representative government. The existence of an effective and fair electoral system is not only important to maintain public trust in the democratic process, but also plays a role in ensuring political stability in a country. Political stability is an important prerequisite for creating an environment conducive to social and economic development, which ultimately has a direct impact on the welfare of the people (Chen, 2023).

The electoral system is the main pillar of democracy that determines how the people's voice is translated into a functioning government. As a mechanism that regulates the process of selecting leaders and people's representatives, the electoral system ensures that power comes from the will of the majority while respecting the rights of minorities. This system creates an accountability mechanism in which elected officials must be accountable to the people who give them their mandate (Bedford & Martin, 2023). The creation of a fair and transparent electoral system is essential to maintain political stability, reduce social conflict, and encourage public confidence in the democratic process, which ultimately contributes to the welfare of the people and sustainable national development (Simmons & Hernandez, 2023).

Various countries in the world implement different electoral systems, ranging from majority (first-past-the-post) to proportional to mixed systems. Each system has

advantages and disadvantages, as well as different implications for political and governmental dynamics. Several studies show that proportional electoral systems tend to create more inclusive representation and better political stability, while majority systems often produce more stable but less representative governments (Lee, 2022).

Political stability is a state in which the political and governmental mechanisms run smoothly without significant disruptions such as internal conflicts, constitutional crises, or pressure from groups that feel unrepresented. Political stability is very important to ensure the smooth implementation of public policies aimed at improving the welfare of the people. When political stability is maintained, the government can focus more on implementing development, education, and health programmes, as well as various other initiatives that have the potential to improve the quality of life of the community (Garcia, 2023).

However, in many developing countries, an electoral system that is not ideal is often a source of political problems and instability. Unhealthy political contestation, electoral manipulation, and lack of representation of minority groups can trigger social conflict and public dissatisfaction. As a result, governments become more focused on resolving political conflicts than on implementing development programmes (Norris, 2004).

In reality, development programmes play an essential role in improving people's quality of life and accelerating a country's economic and social progress. By establishing and implementing initiatives covering various sectors such as education, health, infrastructure, and economic empowerment, these programmes help reduce social inequality and alleviate poverty (Kim, 2023). Development programmes are designed to optimise available resources, expand employment opportunities, increase national competitiveness, and encourage innovation. Furthermore, the success of these programmes often requires the active participation of local communities and cooperation between the government, the private sector, and civil society organisations. Overall, effective development programmes can create an environment conducive to sustainable growth and equitable prosperity for all citizens (Taylor & Johnson, 2022).

Indonesia, as a country with a large population and high diversity, also faces challenges in its electoral system. Although democratic reforms since the late 1990s have brought positive changes in the conduct of elections, challenges remain in ensuring that the existing system is capable of producing political stability and welfare for all people (Birch, 2001).

Based on this background, this study is important to understand how the electoral system implemented can affect political stability and the extent of its impact on the welfare of the people. By understanding this relationship, it is hoped that more effective policies can be formulated to improve the quality of democracy and community welfare.

Research Methods

The study in this research uses the literature method. The literature research method is a systematic approach to collecting, assessing, and analysing information that has been published by previous researchers in various sources, such as books, journal articles, research reports, and other documents related to the research topic under discussion. This method aims to understand the development of existing theories, identify gaps or unsolved problems, and gather relevant empirical evidence to support or refute certain hypotheses (Paré & Trudel, 2007); (Snyder, 2019). In literature research, researchers must be careful in choosing credible and up-to-date sources and summarise information critically and holistically. In addition, researchers also need to use technical tools such as academic databases and reference management software to organise and synthesise the findings obtained, resulting in a deep and comprehensive understanding of the research subject (Kitchenham, 2004).

Results and Discussion
The Influence of the Election System on Political Stability

The electoral system has a significant influence on political stability in a country because it determines how the people's votes are translated into political representation. Political stability can be realised when the majority of the people feel represented and the accountability mechanism is maintained. Some electoral systems, such as the majoritarian or plurality system, tend to strengthen political stability by producing a strong and cohesive government (Smith, 2002). This system usually gives victory to the party with the most votes, which often facilitates the decision-making process and policy implementation. However, on the other hand, majoritarian systems can sometimes ignore the interests of minorities, which can lead to dissatisfaction and potential conflict (Albano, 2022).

In contrast, the proportional representation system seeks to produce a proportion of seats that is comparable to the number of votes obtained, thus better reflecting the will of the overall population. This system increases the inclusiveness and representation of various minority groups and small parties, which is an important step in maintaining socio-political harmony and stability in a pluralistic society. However, the proportional system can also produce coalition governments that are often unstable and require protracted compromises between various parties, which can slow down the policy-making process (Yuan & Hunt, 2009).

Political tensions can increase in electoral systems that are not transparent or are rife with fraud, such as voter manipulation, intimidation, and bribery, which tend to undermine the legitimacy of the government and exacerbate community polarisation. Public confidence in the electoral process is crucial to political stability; when elections are considered fair and free, citizen participation increases, which in turn strengthens democracy. Strong institutions and a clear legal framework are also important to ensure

that elections run smoothly and the results are recognised by all parties (Patel & Singh, 2023).

Political stability depends not only on the electoral system itself, but also on the political culture of the people and the ability of government institutions to respond to socio-economic dynamics. For example, countries whose people have a high level of political education and strict law enforcement tend to be more politically stable. On the other hand, countries experiencing high economic inequality and social injustice are more vulnerable to political instability, regardless of the type of electoral system (Dubois & François, 2023).

The flexibility and adaptability of the electoral system also play an important role. In many countries, electoral reform is a strategic tool for addressing political dissatisfaction and improving the system of representation. For example, implementing measures such as adjusting the parliamentary threshold or introducing elements of a proportional system into a majoritarian structure can help create a balance between the need for a stable government and the inclusiveness of political representation (Martinez, 2022).

Overall, the influence of electoral systems on political stability is highly complex and multidimensional, encompassing technical, sociopolitical, and cultural aspects. A well-designed electoral system can strengthen the democratic process, enhance political legitimacy, and promote citizen participation. Thus, choosing and adapting an electoral system that suits the unique characteristics of each country is a key factor in maintaining long-term political stability.

Implications of Political Stability on People's Welfare

The implications of political stability for the welfare of the people:

First, Law Enforcement and Security: Political stability plays an important role in law enforcement and security. When a country is politically stable, legal institutions can function more effectively without political intervention that causes legal uncertainty. This creates a safe environment for citizens and encourages them to participate in economic and social activities without fear of disruption or chaos (Kamel, 2023).

Second, Economic Growth and Investment: Political stability provides a strong foundation for economic growth. Investors, both domestic and foreign, tend to feel more confident about investing their capital in politically stable countries. This stability ensures that economic policies will not change drastically and suddenly, which can disrupt business activities and harm investors. This economic growth ultimately has a positive impact on the welfare of the people through increased employment and income (Gerring & Thacker, 2004).

Third, Consistent Public Policy: Political stability allows the government to formulate and implement consistent and long-term public policies. These policies can include reforms in education, health, infrastructure, and other social services that are

essential for improving the quality of life of the community. When these policies are implemented consistently, the results will be more effective and sustainable for the welfare of the people (Smith, 2002).

Fourth, Poverty Reduction: With political stability, poverty reduction programmes can be implemented and monitored more effectively. The government can focus on providing basic services for the underprivileged, such as education, health, and housing. In addition, political stability also enables the government to cooperate with international institutions and non-governmental organisations in assistance programmes, which can directly reduce the poverty rate (Jensen, 2015).

Fifth, Community Involvement and Democracy: Political stability is often followed by better community involvement in the democratic process. When people feel that their government is stable, they are more likely to participate in the electoral process and other political activities. This active participation in turn strengthens the legitimacy of the government and ensures that the policies adopted are in line with the needs and desires of the people (Wang & Zhou, 2023).

Sixth, Quality of Life and the Human Development Index (HDI): The final noteworthy implication of political stability is an improvement in overall quality of life. With security, economic growth, consistent public policy, and poverty reduction, countries can significantly improve the Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI includes measures of health, education, and living standards that are directly related to people's well-being (Miller, 2023).

Thus, political stability has far-reaching implications for the welfare of the people. It forms the foundation necessary to create an environment in which citizens can live more safely and prosperously, and contribute positively to the development of the country.

Conclusion

The electoral system plays an important role in shaping political governance and influencing the political stability of a country. The design of the electoral system, whether it is proportional, majoritarian, or mixed, can determine how representative and accountable the elected government is. The suitability of the electoral system to the local social and political context is very important to ensure that all groups in society have a voice and that the distribution of political power is not unfairly concentrated. Fair representation and strong political legitimacy can strengthen stability by minimising socio-political tensions and reducing the risk of internal conflict.

The political stability that results from an effective electoral system can have positive implications for the welfare of the people. When political stability is maintained, the government can focus more on the formulation and implementation of sustainable and development-oriented policies, without being distracted by prolonged political turbulence. Stability also contributes to a conducive business environment, promoting

investment and economic growth, which ultimately increases employment and community income. In addition, stable governments tend to be better able to provide quality public services, such as education and health, which are the foundation for improving people's welfare.

However, stability that is not balanced with political inclusiveness can backfire. A good electoral system must be able to accommodate changes and demands of society over time. If political stability is only achieved by suppressing opposition voices or marginalising certain groups, this can create dissatisfaction and potential for conflict in the future. Therefore, the balance between stability and inclusiveness is the key to ensuring that the political system is not only stable but also effective in improving the welfare of the people. While political stability is an important element, the essence of democracy must be maintained so that the development achieved is sustainable and meets the needs of all levels of society.

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