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<https://www.journal.unrika.ac.id/index.php/jurnaltriaspolitika>**Coalition Without Ideology: Political Motives of the Kebangkitan Bangsa Party (PKB) to Join the Indonesia Maju Coalition Post the 2024 Indonesian Elections****Dimas Subekti**^{1*}, **Arissy Jorgi Sutan**², **Aditya Romadhon**³, **Jefri Al-Kautsar**⁴, **M Wira Anshori**⁵¹ Department of Social and Political Science, Universitas Jambi, Indonesia^{2, 4} Government Science Study Program, Universitas Jambi, Indonesia^{3, 5} Political Science Study Program, Universitas Jambi, Indonesia* Corresponding Author: dimassubekti05@unja.ac.id

Abstract: This study examines the political motivations underlying the National Awakening Party's (PKB) decision to join the Indonesia Maju Coalition following the 2024 presidential election by integrating insights from coalition theory, particularly office-seeking and policy-seeking frameworks, as well as party institutionalization theory. This research adopts a qualitative case study approach to uncover micro-level motivations through the analysis of multi-source data, including credible online news reports, official party documents, and elite public statements. The findings demonstrate that PKB's realignment is not merely a general pragmatic shift but reflects a calculated balance between office-seeking and policy-seeking behavior. Empirically, PKB's maneuver is evidenced by its targeted pursuit of strategic cabinet positions, indicating a structured effort to secure institutional access to executive power. At the same time, the study finds that PKB actively negotiates policy influence, particularly in socio-economic and religious-based welfare programs, to maintain alignment with its traditional voter base. Furthermore, the role of Muhaimin Iskandar is identified as a decisive factor, where leadership consolidation and personal political survival shape party strategy. The research also reveals that long-standing relational ties with Prabowo Subianto function as informal political capital, facilitating smoother coalition entry and reducing transactional costs. This study contributes to the literature by providing a micro-level empirical explanation of post-election coalition realignment in Indonesia, highlighting how ideological narratives are strategically embedded within pragmatic power calculations. Unlike previous studies that treat coalition shifts as purely opportunistic or structurally determined, this research demonstrates that PKB's decision reflects a hybrid model of political behavior, where institutional interests, leadership agency, and policy aspirations interact simultaneously.

Keywords : Political Parties, Post-2024 Election, Coalition, Political Motives.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This research is motivated by the joining of the Kebangkitan Bangsa Party (PKB) into the Indonesia Maju coalition. In the 2024 elections, three coalition axes carry a presidential and vice presidential candidate pair. First, the Indonesia Maju coalition (KIM), comprising political parties, includes the Gerindra Party, Golkar Party, Amanat Nasional Party (PAN), Gelora Party, and Bulan Bintang Party (PBB). Solidaritas Indonesia Party (PSI), Garuda Party, and Democratic Party. This coalition has agreed to endorse Gerindra Party chairman Prabowo Subianto and President Joko Widodo's son Gibran Rakabuming Raka as President and Vice President candidates in the 2024 elections. Second, the Perubahan untuk Persatuan Coalition comprises the Nasdem Party, the Kebangkitan Bangsa Party (PKB), and the Keadilan Sejahtera Party (PKS). This coalition agreed to support Anies Baswedan to become a candidate for

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President, accompanied by the Chairman of the Kebangkitan Bangsa Party (PKB), Muhaimin Iskandar, to become a vice presidential candidate. Third, the coalition supporting Ganjar Pranowo comprises the Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP), the United Development Party (PPP), the Perindo Party, and the Hanura Party. This coalition endorses PDIP cadre Ganjar Pranowo and former Minister of Political, Legal, and Human Rights Coordination Mahfud MD (Ayu, 2023).

In the 2024 elections, the candidate pair promoted by the Indonesia Maju Coalition (KIM), Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka, was elected president and vice president, beating two other candidate pairs in a single round. Based on the determination of the General Elections Commission (KPU) of the Republic of Indonesia on the recapitulation of the results of the counting and acquisition of votes at the national level of the 2024 Presidential Elections, the Prabowo-Gibran pair was declared to have obtained 96,214,691 votes. Meanwhile, the candidate pair of Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar pocketed 40,971,906 votes. Furthermore, the Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud MD candidate pair received 27,040,878 votes. In percentage terms, the Anis Baswedan-Muhaimin Iskandar pair received 24.95%, the Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka pair received 58.58%, and the Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud MD pair received 16.47% (KPU RI, 2024). Based on these results, the Indonesia Maju Coalition (KIM), with candidate pairs Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka, has the right to form a government cabinet from 2024 to 2029.

After the 2024 elections, the coalition became very dynamic, and political parties tried to move independently to get a favorable position. The most pronounced dynamics occurred in the Perubahan untuk Persatuan coalition. After the Presidential Election, the political parties that supported Anies Baswedan slowly withdrew and joined the Indonesia Maju coalition that would formulate the government's cabinet (Wiryono, 2024). Of the three political parties, the most interesting movement is the PKB. The reason is that, long before joining this coalition, PKB committed to working with the Gerindra party in the 2024 elections to pair Prabowo Subianto with Muhaimin Iskandar (Zaki, 2022). However, this goal was not realized when the PKB saw that Prabowo did not choose Muhaimin Iskandar as his companion. Therefore, PKB suddenly withdrew from cooperation with the Gerindra Party and joined the Change for Unity coalition. In this coalition, PKB chairman Muhaimin Iskandar was invited to be Anies Baswedan's running mate (Saputra, 2023).

After losing the 2024 presidential election, PKB moved again by leaving Anies Baswedan and joining the coalition led by President-elect Prabowo Subianto. This is even though in the 2024 election, the Indonesia Maju coalition and Prabowo are the opposition (Muliawati, 2024). In fact, in the formation of the Prabowo government's cabinet, PKB received two allotments, namely Muhaimin Iskandar as Coordinating Minister for Community Empowerment and Abdul Kadir Karding as Minister of Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers (Sutrisna, 2024). Therefore, this research will discuss the PKB political movement, with a particular focus on its political motives for joining the Indonesia Maju coalition.

Furthermore, research on PKB has been conducted by several researchers. Research from Dewanti et al., (2022) focused on the factors that led to the defeat of incumbent candidates from PKB in the 2019 legislative elections in the Yogyakarta electoral district. Meanwhile, research from Dewi & Sholahuddin, (2020) explains PKB in Responding to Multicultural Challenges in Indonesia. Then, research from Rofieq (2011) discusses the function of political recruitment in the 2009 PKB legislative candidates. Research from Dhakhiri & Djafar, (2015) focuses on discussing the political structure of the PKB within the context of the Nadlatul Ulama community. Furthermore, research from Suryani & Azmy, (2023) explains the election strategy of female legislative members from PAN and PKB in the 2019 elections. Research from Ekawati, (2016) explains the institutionalization of PKB after the 2009 general election.

Based on the existing body of scholarship, it is important to acknowledge that studies on coalition politics and party realignment are already well established, both in comparative

politics and within the Indonesian context. Foundational works in journals such as *Party Politics*, *Electoral Studies*, and *Journal of East Asian Studies* have extensively examined coalition formation through office-seeking and policy-seeking lenses, while Indonesian-focused studies (e.g., on cartel parties, presidential coalitions, and party pragmatism) have highlighted the fluidity and transactional nature of inter-party alliances. In particular, the cartel party thesis developed by (Katz & Mair, 1995, 2009), as well as its application in Indonesia by (Slater, 2004, 2018) and (Mietzner, 2013, 2016), has emphasized how parties tend to prioritize access to state resources over ideological consistency. Similarly, studies on presidential coalitions in Indonesia have shown that post-election alignments are often driven by executive power concentration and the absence of a strong opposition bloc.

However, this literature is not without limitations and ongoing debates. First, many studies rely on macro-level explanations such as institutional design, electoral thresholds, or presidentialism while underexploring micro-level party motivations and internal decision-making processes. Second, a recurring criticism is that coalition shifts are frequently interpreted as purely opportunistic or office-driven, thereby underestimating the role of policy considerations, leadership agency, and informal political networks. Third, existing research tends to generalize party behavior, offering limited insight into how specific parties with distinct sociocultural bases navigate coalition bargaining differently. These gaps are particularly visible in the case of PKB, which combines religious identity, grassroots networks, and pragmatic political maneuvering. In light of these debates, the novelty of this study is not in claiming that coalition shifts are unexplored, but in addressing specific unanswered questions within that broader literature. This research focuses on how the National Awakening Party (PKB) operationalizes its political motives in the concrete context of post-election bargaining following the 2024 presidential election. It asks not only *whether* PKB engages in office-seeking or policy-seeking behavior, but *how* these motives are prioritized, negotiated, and justified in practice, and how leadership dynamics particularly those of Muhaimin Iskandar shape the party's strategic recalibration. By situating PKB's decision to join the *Koalisi Indonesia Maju* led by Prabowo Subianto within these analytical concerns, the study offers a more fine-grained explanation of coalition realignment.

The theoretical contribution of this study is therefore threefold. First, it refines office-seeking theory by demonstrating that PKB's pursuit of executive positions is not merely reactive but involves strategic recalibration based on electoral outcomes, bargaining leverage, and anticipated policy returns. Second, it advances coalition bargaining theory by showing how a mid-sized party leverages asymmetric resources such as organizational networks, symbolic capital rooted in Nahdlatul Ulama constituencies, and prior electoral alliances to renegotiate its position within a dominant coalition. Third, it contributes to party adaptation theory by illustrating that adaptation is not only a response to structural pressures but also an internally mediated process shaped by leadership interests, ideological framing, and long-term survival strategies. By integrating these perspectives, this study moves beyond the dominant tendency in the literature to treat coalition shifts as either structurally determined or purely transactional. Instead, it demonstrates that PKB's coalition realignment reflects a layered interaction between institutional incentives, strategic agency, and policy aspirations. This nuanced approach provides a clearer understanding of how coalition-building operates in Indonesia's multiparty presidential system and highlights the need to bridge macro-level theories with actor-centered empirical analysis.

To guide the analysis, this study explicitly formulates the following research question: "What motivates PKB to join the Prabowo Subianto-led *Koalisi Indonesia Maju* after the 2024 presidential election?" Political motives refer to *the set of strategic considerations pursued by PKB including office-seeking incentives (desire for executive posts or political access), policy-seeking goals (influence over agenda and policy direction), and survival-seeking motives (party relevance and long-term positioning) that shape its decision-making during coalition*

bargaining. In this study, the concept of "motive" is identified through observable political behavior, public statements, negotiation outcomes, coalition agreements, and shifts in party strategy. Then, Coalition behavior refers to *PKB's observable strategic actions, preferences, and decisions related to entering, leaving, or renegotiating its position within political coalitions*. This includes PKB's coalition alignment before and after the election, its negotiation strategies, bargaining tactics, and public or formal justifications for coalition decisions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Political motives refer to the interests of a person, group, organization, or political party. There is an interest in producing a just and prosperous country, an interest in getting support from the community, and an interest in gaining political power (Earnhardt, 2013). In the concept of political motives, there are two, namely, "because of motive" and "to motive," which can be classified into several categories related to the factors that influence the emergence of political motives (Picazo-Tadeo et al., 2012). Political motives consist of several indicators. Ideology refers to the participation movement as an expression of one's views. Several factors that can influence political motives are related to the individual's background, including factors such as education, occupation, relationships, affiliations, organizational involvement, and personal political orientation (Jost et al., 2018).

According to Sorauf & Beck, (1988), the political motives are divided into three parts. First, the motive of material incentives is the political activities of a person or group to obtain personal or organizational benefits following what has been done. This can be achieved through becoming an official, gaining political power, obtaining material benefits, and receiving recognition and awards, thereby increasing his status in the community's eyes. Second, solidarity Incentive Motive. This motive is interested in exploring new social networks to strengthen the achievement of common goals by generating sympathy and emotional and moral feelings that are formed through the relationships between individuals and groups. Third, idealistic incentives motivate, as they inspire a desire to produce something more ideal. Prioritizing the people's interests over personal interests must be fought for. Party activists are required to be able to translate ideology, vision, and mission into work programs, so that they can attract voters, as they are considered to represent the same interests as them.

Beyond these general perspectives, contemporary political science offers a more sophisticated theoretical framework for understanding the political motives underlying coalition behavior, particularly in multiparty systems. Sorauf and Beck's (1988) distinction between material, solidarity, and idealistic incentives remains foundational; however, recent theoretical developments highlight the need to situate such motives within institutional bargaining and party strategy in coalition contexts. First, theories of coalition formation, as developed by Axelrod (1972); Schofield (1995) argue that parties join or leave coalitions based on utility maximization, minimal winning configurations, or policy distance. These theories emphasize that party motives cannot be separated from structural incentives within multiparty competition. For instance, Riker (1962) The concept of a minimal winning coalition suggests that parties will prefer coalitions that maximize office benefits while minimizing the number of coalition partners, indicating the primacy of office-seeking motives. Second, office-seeking versus policy-seeking theories Strom (1990) offer a more refined lens for assessing political motives. Office-seeking parties join coalitions primarily to access executive power, ministerial positions, and political appointments, whereas policy-seeking parties prioritize ideological alignment and programmatic influence. Third, theories of party behavior and the emergence of catch-all parties Kirchheimer (1966) suggest that parties in contemporary democracies often adapt their strategies to broaden their electoral appeal and maximize their political bargaining power. This includes ideological flexibility, coalition pragmatism, and prioritizing access to state resources.

Therefore, this research adopts the framework of political motives developed by Frank J. Sorauf and Paul Allen Beck (1988) as the main analytical tool. This framework categorizes political behavior into three core motives: material (office-seeking), solidarity (relational and organizational ties), and purposive or idealistic (policy-seeking). In the context of PKB's decision to join the Koalisi Indonesia Maju, these three motives provide a coherent and empirically grounded explanation of the party's strategic behavior.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative method with a case study approach to provide an in-depth understanding of the political dynamics surrounding the inclusion of Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB) in the Indonesia Maju coalition. The unit of analysis in this study is the decision-making process and strategic political behavior of PKB's elite during the coalition formation in the post-2024 presidential election. This unit of analysis was chosen because elite-level interactions constitute the primary locus where coalition bargaining, negotiation, and strategic alignment occur. Then, PKB is unique due to its contradictory coalition shifts.

Data were collected using multiple qualitative techniques to enhance depth and validity. First, the study conducted an extensive literature and document analysis, which includes credible online news platforms such as Kompas.com, CNN Indonesia, Tempo.co, Liputan6.com, and Detiknews.com. Second, this study incorporates official documents and primary political materials, including PKB's formal statements, party press releases, KPU announcements, and speeches or publicly available statements from PKB elites.

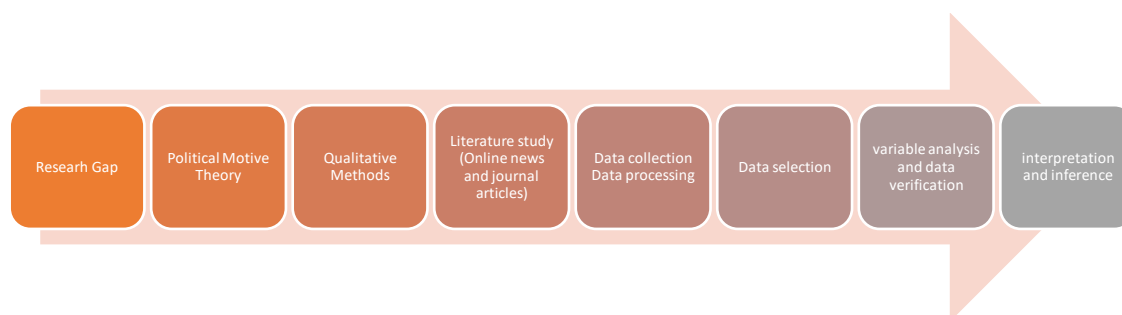


Figure 1. Research flow

The data analysis of this research used thematic with four stages: first, data collection and processing. Data collection was technically accomplished by searching for the keywords related to this research topic on each news portal and journal article that served as the data source. After some news and journal articles appeared, the links were downloaded and stored in one file. Then, data processing involves sorting the contents of news and journal articles by research topic. Second, data selection is performed by reading every news and journal article obtained to gather the data for analysis. Third, inter-variable analysis and data verification. This is done by matching the selected data with each indicator used. Fourth, interpretation and conclusion. At this stage, the analysis of in-depth discussions related to the data obtained through arguments based on previous research or existing concepts in this study. At the final stage, conclusions will be written to summarize the findings of this study, and research arguments will be compiled to explain the phenomena observed in this study using new information.

To ensure data validity, the study employs several verification strategies, including triangulation of data sources by comparing media coverage, official political documents, and elite statements, to reduce bias and ensure consistency. The selection of the qualitative case study approach is justified because coalition formation is a complex political process that

requires context-sensitive and interpretive analysis. Furthermore, the use of diverse data sources, including media reports, official documents, and elite statements, is intended to enhance analytical robustness and minimize methodological bias.

4. RESULTS

Material Incentives Motive

The material incentive motive is the reward for what the organization and the individual have done for others. This reward serves to increase individual and group morale. Thus, these rewards not only benefit the individual but also the organization (Sorauf & Beck, 1988). In the context of this case, two factors can be used to measure PKB's motives for joining the Indonesia Forward Coalition. The first is the pragmatic motive to gain benefits for PKB as a political organization, and the second is the personal benefit of PKB chairman Muhaimin Iskandar.

PKB has officially become a coalition party supporting the Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming government despite competing in the 2024 presidential election. This is part of the recommendations that came out of the 6th PKB Congress at the Bali Nusa Dua Convention Center on Sunday (25/8). Executive Secretary of the 6th PKB Congress, Syaiful Huda, stated that it consisted of both external and internal recommendations. "Now, for the internal recommendation, the Congress decides that PKB institutionally officially joins and supports the Prabowo Subianto government with Gibran Rakabuming Raka," he said in Bali on Sunday (25/8) (CNNIndonesia.com, 2024).

President-elect Prabowo Subianto admitted that he would welcome back PKB, which wants to work with Gerindra Party, and with him after he is determined to win the 2024 presidential election. The Gerindra Party Chairman also acknowledged that he is willing to collaborate with all parties under his administration. "Our country has extraordinary potential. It is a matter of management, a matter of improvement, a matter of completing what is incomplete and improving what is not yet good, and close cooperation; we will, God willing, achieve our goals of eliminating poverty, eliminating hunger, bringing prosperity and welfare to the people, eliminating corruption from our bodies," (Hikmatiar, 2024).

In this regard, a political observer from Esa Unggul University in Jakarta, Jamiluddin Ritonga, explained that the PKB's decision to join the Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka government coalition after the 2024 presidential election results were determined was not surprising, given this more pragmatic step. "PKB has the opportunity to enter the government because this party tends to be pragmatic. They will go anywhere as long as it is profitable," said Jamiluddin Monday (19/2/2024) (I. A. Hakim, 2024). Furthermore, a political observer from the National University, Selamat Ginting, said that there were historical reasons behind PKB's decision to enter the Prabowo Subianto government coalition. Ginting noted that historically, the PKB has been similar to the Golkar Party, which has never been outside the government. The character of the PKB feels more comfortable sitting in the government than in the opposition (E. H. Putra, 2024). Likewise, political observer Ujang Komaruddin assessed that PKB does not have the experience of being in opposition (Fajri, 2024).

Populi Center Political Observer Usep Saepul Ahyar sees that the attitude of PKB is what Prabowo wants, which is to create a fat coalition. One of the reasons is that the interests that his government will bring in the future can be quickly realized (P. M. S. Putra, 2024). Prabowo-Gibran wants to consolidate their politics quickly before they are officially inaugurated as president and vice president. All this can happen not only because Prabowo-Gibran opened his arms but also because the political culture in Indonesian parties is still too lazy to be a differentiator in this democracy. In Indonesian political culture, only a few political parties dare to be outside the government. Political parties are not confident in being the opposition because they are primarily concerned with numbers rather than fighting for their values or ideologies.

This broad coalition is neither healthy nor beneficial for Indonesian politics amid the

world's unpredictable geopolitical and geoeconomic conditions. In addition, there are many concerns about the loss of control and criticism mechanisms that have always been part of a democratic system (Bishop, 2010). This is because of the dominance of the ruler due to the large scope of power in a grand or fat coalition (Lowndes & Pratchett, 2012). In this form of coalition, the formation aims to include almost all political parties, resulting in a coalition that exceeds the necessary number to achieve a majority in parliament. This way, the government will have the support of an absolute majority of the political parties in parliament. Unfortunately, this form of coalition can lead to bargaining over interests and is difficult to reconcile. The reason for this is that there are too many political parties in the coalition (Lijphart, 1971).

A political researcher from the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), Aisah Putri Budiatri, believes that the Prabowo-Gibran coalition will get fatter if PKB and NasDem finally decide to join. The presence of the two parties is predicted to secure more than 70 percent of the parliament seats. So that only a few parties oversee the government. "Of course, this is not healthy because there is no balance in the parliament between the government coalition and the opposition. In fact, the existence of the opposition is important to keep the supervision of the government's work effectively carried out because this responsibility will not be easily carried out by those who are part of the government coalition, because there is a joint commitment between the party and the government." (P. M. S. Putra, 2024).

The phenomenon of political party jumping is increasingly eliminating idealism and showing the inconsistency and opportunism of a political party. Not only is democracy eroded, she continued, but the possibility of public interest is increasingly mortgaged because there is no one to balance the interests of the government. "The effects are widespread, starting from the work of political parties becoming ineffective, political checks and balances are reduced and even lost, public interests are increasingly mortgaged, and overall have an impact on the deepening regression of democracy" (P. M. S. Putra, 2024).

Similarly, Executive Director of the Association for Elections and Democracy (Perludem), Khoirunnisa Nur Agustyati, warned of the dangers of democratization. He also reminded the rulers, in this case Prabowo-Gibran, not to try to embrace all parties to share power. "Actually, in a democracy, checks and balances are also needed, and this can happen if there are parties that take that position. To ensure control over the government. In addition, the government is also formed by not trying to embrace all by sharing power". According to Khoirunnisa, with the ruler embracing political parties by dividing the power cake, it is feared that in running the government, there are no parties that oversee performance and even policies. "The concern is that there is no one to supervise the course of government," (P. M. S. Putra, 2024).

Furthermore, PKB's joining the Prabowo government is also related to the ministerial allocation that will be given. This seems to be one of the priority objectives of the PKB in Prabowo Subianto's coalition. According to a political observer from Al Azhar University Indonesia, Ujang Komarudin, explained that if the party joins the government, it will get ministerial seats and join the power (Farisa, 2024b). This political dynamic indicates that the Perubahan untuk Persatuan Coalition, formed by PKB in collaboration with the Nasdem Party and PKS, has dissolved ahead of the 2024 presidential election. In the end, the narrative of change that was once carried by the coalition became a mere narrative that was "sold" during the presidential election campaign. Once the winner of the presidential election is determined, each party has its own political interests, whether it is moving closer to the winning camp or being outside the government.

Deputy Chairman of PKB, Jazilul Fawaid, claimed that he did not expect a ministerial seat by joining the Prabowo-Gibran camp after his chairman lost the presidential election with Anies Baswedan. But PKB does not refuse if later its cadres are trusted by Prabowo to lead the ministry. Jazilul emphasized that the distribution of ministerial seats is the prerogative and

absolute authority of the president-elect Prabowo (Panangian, 2024). Political analyst at Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta, Adi Prayitno. He estimates that Prabowo will distribute ministerial seats fairly to his supporting political parties in the next government. The fair distribution of rations has been calculated for the political parties that support him, particularly for those that are members of the Indonesia Maju Coalition (KIM) and those that join after the 2024 presidential election. "So I am sure there will be no impact on the seats of other parties. All will definitely be divided equally," Adi said in Jakarta on Wednesday (1/5/2024)(Panangian, 2024). This is evident in the official announcement of the Prabowo administration's cabinet, which named PKB Chairman Muhaimin Iskandar as Coordinating Minister for Community Empowerment and its cadre, Abdul Kadir Karding, as Minister for the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers (Sutrisna, 2024).

Moreover, another reason for PKB's entry into the Indonesia Maju coalition is also related to the personal interests of its chairman, Muhaimin Iskandar. In addition to getting a ministerial seat for himself, it is also related to his existence as chairman of the PKB. Political observer Ujang Komarudin from Al Azhar University Indonesia explained that the PKB maneuver was Muhaimin's attempt to maintain his position as party leader. This is because, according to rumors, certain parties are eyeing the chair of the PKB General Chair. According to Ujang, there are several PKB cadres who often conflict with Muhaimin Iskandar, such as Saifullah Yusuf or Gus Ipul (general secretary of the Nahdatul Ulama Executive Board) and Yahya Cholil Staquf or Gus Yahya (Chairman of the Nahdatul Ulama Executive Board). Cak Imin's position as chairman is considered vulnerable if PKB becomes the government's opposition. "If Cak Imin becomes an opposition, is tricked by the government, he could lose his chairmanship. That is certainly detrimental to Cak Imin," said Ujang. Furthermore, Ujang said, if he joined the government, the party would get a ministerial seat and join the government. "And if you enter the government, of course, you can get a minister, be in power again, and the position of chairman can be safe. That is just rational in tactical politics," (Farisa, 2024b).

According to the data, PKB Chairman Muhaimin Iskandar is the longest-serving political party leader after PDIP Chairman Megawati Soekarnoputri (R. N. Hakim, 2019). Therefore, he has an interest in maintaining his position in PKB. Muhaimin Iskandar's move to join the government coalition and become Prabowo's Minister was an attempt to gain proximity and power from the ruling group. Thus, at the time of the election of the Chairman, Muhaimin Iskandar had a strong network in the government. This is evident from the organization of the PKB's 2024 Muktamar. Muhaimin Iskandar was re-elected as Chairman of PKB for the period 2024-2029 (Guritno, 2024). Cak Imin was elected by acclamation after 514 representatives of the Branch Leadership Council (DPC) and 38 Regional Leadership Councils (DPW), as well as the PKB Central Leadership Council (DPP) administrators, did not issue mandates to other figures. Thus, Cak Imin has led the PKB for 14 years since 2005 and will continue until 2024, with an additional five years.

In sum, viewed through the framework of political motives proposed by (Sorauf & Beck, 1988), PKB's decision to join the Indonesia Maju Coalition can be most convincingly explained by the dominance of material incentives, rather than purely ideological alignment. The empirical evidence shows that access to ministerial positions and proximity to executive power function as the primary drivers of PKB's coalition shift, while the role of Muhaimin Iskandar further reinforces this orientation through his interest in consolidating leadership and safeguarding internal party control. This indicates that PKB's behavior is not merely adaptive in a neutral sense, but strategically calculated to maximize organizational survival and elite stability within a highly competitive presidential system. Although solidarity ties and limited policy aspirations are present, they operate more as supporting justifications than as decisive factors. Therefore, the PKB case illustrates a distinctive pattern in which material motives structure coalition choices, while other motives legitimize them, highlighting how party

adaptation in Indonesia tends to prioritize access to power over programmatic consistency.

Solidarity Incentives Motive

This motive has an interest in getting new networks in social life and making it a strength to achieve common goals by generating sympathy, emotional and moral feelings formed from the relationship between individuals and groups (Sorau & Beck, 1988). In the context of this case, PKB, as a political party, actually has a close relationship with the parties that are members of the advanced Indonesia coalition. This is because most of these parties are coalitions formed during Joko Widodo's second term, from 2019 to 2024. Thus, the tagline built by this coalition is sustainability. Even Prabowo Subianto agreed with all the chairmen of the coalition parties to partner with Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Joko Widodo's eldest son. Therefore, PKB is emotionally close to the Indonesia Forward Coalition and has been working together for a relatively long time.

Furthermore, PKB and Gerindra, at the beginning of the preparation for the 2024 elections, have also established intense communication to plan a coalition. Before entering the Perubahan untuk Persatuan coalition, PKB had declared a coalition with Gerindra. Gerindra and PKB declared a coalition in 2022. At that time, the two parties signed a coalition declaration charter towards the 2024 presidential election at the Sentul International Convention Center (SICC), Sentul, West Java, Saturday (13/8/2022) (Permana, 2023).

The coalition declaration charter contains five points of cooperation agreed upon by the two political parties, namely: First, to achieve sustainable national development, Gerindra Party and PKB will work together in simultaneous elections in 2024. Second, the cooperation between Gerindra Party and PKB is based on a shared vision to accelerate development for a sovereign, just, prosperous, prosperous Indonesia, and actively encourage the creation of world peace. Third, the cooperation between the Gerindra Party and PKB is motivated by the desire to unite the two major forces in Indonesia, namely nationalists and religious people, to avoid polarization of society in the 2024 elections, and can open coalitions with other political parties with the agreement of both parties (Guritno, 2022).

Fourth, the presidential and vice presidential candidates to be promoted through the political cooperation of the Gerindra Party and PKB will be jointly determined by H. Prabowo Subianto, Chairman of the Board of Trustees / General Chairman of the Gerindra Party, and H. Abdul Muhaimin Iskandar, Chairman of PKB. Fifth, the cooperation agreement between the Gerindra Party and PKB will be followed up with joint political work to win the agreed pair of presidential and vice presidential candidates. In the meeting to sign the coalition declaration charter, Prabowo was accompanied by Gerindra Deputy Chairman Sugiono, Daily Chairman Sufmi Dasco Ahmad and Secretary General Ahmad Muzani. Meanwhile, Muhaimin Iskandar was accompanied by PKB Deputy Chairman Jazilul Fawaid and PKB Secretary General Hasanuddin Wahid (Guritno, 2022).

PKB Chairman Muhaimin Iskandar had revealed that there were parties that tried to prevent a PKB coalition with Gerindra. "Mr. Prabowo and all the staff that I love and am proud of, PKB, before leaving and going here, there were many who disturbed and hoped that we would not go here,". However, Muhaimin Iskandar said that PKB was determined to build cooperation with Gerindra in order to advance the nation in the future. According to Muhaimin Iskandar, it is this optimism that prevents the PKB from following those who try to obstruct it. "I am sure and optimistic that our togetherness today will carve out a more peaceful, more just, and more prosperous future for Indonesia. Therefore, for such noble goals, God willing, nothing will hinder the togetherness of PKB and Gerindra in the future,". Meanwhile, Prabowo expressed his gratitude to PKB for being the first political party to invite political cooperation. "I want to thank the PKB, especially Gus Imin and the PKB leadership. You are the first to invite cooperation with Gerindra," Prabowo said in his speech at SICC, Sentul, West Java, Saturday (13/8/2022) (Permana, 2023).

In fact, after a coalition declaration was built between PKB and the Gerindra Party, PAN and the Golkar Party were also included. The declaration was made on August 13, 2023. The declaration was held at the Proclamation Building, Menteng, Central Jakarta. Gerindra Chairman Prabowo Subianto, Golkar Chairman Airlangga Hartarto, PAN Chairman Zulkifli Hasan and PKB Chairman Muahimin Iskandar attended the declaration. They formed the Great Indonesia Awakening Coalition. Prabowo, at that time, said he was touched to get support from the Golkar Party, PKB, and PAN to run as a 2024 presidential candidate. Prabowo also felt honoured to receive this support. “I feel very touched, very encouraged by the great trust from these great parties and historic parties,” Prabowo said (Permana, 2023).

Daily Chairman of the Gerindra Party Central Leadership Council, Sufmi Dasco, explained the chronology related to the dynamics of political cooperation between the Gerindra Party and PKB after the addition of the Golkar Party and PAN to support Prabowo Subianto as a presidential candidate in the 2024 presidential election. “In practice, the political cooperation between Gerindra Party and PKB has not changed, especially in terms of determining the presidential and vice presidential candidates, because both the Golkar Party and PAN have left the selection of the vice president entirely to Prabowo Subianto,” (Khalida, 2023).

The PKB's entry into the advanced Indonesian coalition is also related to its good communication and relationship with Prabowo Subianto. In fact, after Prabowo Subianto was elected, he came to the PKB office to stay in touch. PKB Chairman Muhaimin Iskandar stated that his party has joined the coalition supporting President and Vice President-elect Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka. He said the support had been discussed since the Constitutional Court's ruling on the 2024 presidential election results. “PKB has held intensive talks since the decision of the Constitutional Court and the decision of the General Election Commission on the results of the presidential election. So Mr. Prabowo also came to the PKB office, and we agreed to solidify the upcoming coalition journey,”(Noviansah, 2024).

Political observer from Al Azhar University Indonesia, Ujang Komarudin, said that after the 2024 Presidential Election, political parties are trying to “save themselves”. This can be seen from the three political parties that were originally members of the Coalition for Change for Unity, namely PKB, Nasdem Party, and PKS, which are now signaling their intention to join the coalition of the presidential election winner, Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka. “Currently, political parties are saving themselves for their own interests. Because of the losing position, what can be done, all political parties turn right, and have their own agendas going forward,” (Farisa, 2024a).

The maneuvers of PKB, Nasdem, and PKS show that each political party calculates and works according to its respective political interests. This dynamic appears to suggest that the narrative of change carried by the three parties in the 2024 presidential election was merely a “selling” narrative. This is because, in contrast to the Coalition of Change for Unity, the Prabowo-Gibran camp carries the spirit of continuing President Joko Widodo's administration. “His name is also a slogan, his name is also a campaign to attract public sympathy and support,”. Ujang admitted that he was not surprised if PKB really joined the Prabowo-Gibran camp. Since the beginning, he had predicted that the party led by Muhaimin Iskandar would move closer to the winning camp (Farisa, 2024a).

This shows that the dynamics of PKB's entry into the advanced Indonesian coalition, when viewed from an emotional and historical perspective, are not too surprising. This is because PKB, as a political party, has a long-standing relationship and communication with the Indonesia Forward coalition parties. Moreover, the chairman, Muhaimin Iskandar, also has close ties with the chairpersons of the Indonesia Forward coalition parties who were formerly assistants in the Joko Widodo administration. The long-standing interaction between PKB and Prabowo Subianto beginning from earlier coalition negotiations and sustained through repeated political communication created a foundation of trust that made post-election alignment both feasible and strategically rational. However, this solidarity dimension should not be overstated

as an independent driver; rather, it functions as an enabling condition that legitimizes and facilitates materially driven decisions. In other words, PKB's coalition shift reflects a pattern in which relational proximity is instrumentalized to smooth bargaining processes and secure access to power, rather than serving as the primary basis of alignment. This highlights the distinctive feature of the PKB case: solidarity networks are not ends in themselves, but political assets that are activated to support pragmatic adaptation within Indonesia's coalition politics.

Idealism Incentives Motive

The idealistic incentive motive is having a desire to produce something more ideal. Prioritizing the interests of the people over personal interests is something that must be fought for (Sorauf & Beck, 1988). In this context, PKB also has several programmatic and substantial reasons in order to benefit the community in the future. As stated by Muhaimin Iskandar regarding the joining of the PKB to the Indonesia Maju coalition, "There are so many similarities in populism and the same vision of struggle, and this has been decided at the last national work meeting that the PKB will be in coalition with the government," he said. Muhaimin Iskandar stated that the PKB was prepared to support the Prabowo-Gibran program, including the free nutritious meal initiative. "For the PKB, it is a moral obligation to succeed Mr Prabowo and be part of Mr Prabowo's coalition because the PKB has determined itself to be in coalition with the Gerindra party and Prabowo, of course, morally, we will fulfill all of Prabowo's programs, including free lunches, which of course must be properly prepared." (Santoso, 2024).

Moreover, Muahimin Iskandar also instructed regional head candidates promoted by PKB that he was joining the Prabowo coalition to straighten out Indonesia's constitution-based economy. "One of the things that makes the two of us, PKB and Gerindra, compatible is that we both want to straighten out the constitution-based economy," he said. This proved to be a substantial focus of PKB in entering the coalition, specifically contributing to the economic development of the community (Santoso, 2024). Furthermore, the Daily Chairperson of the National Awakening Party, or PKB, Ais Syafiyah Asfar, revealed that her party has decided to join Prabowo Subianto's cabinet in the upcoming government because the challenges faced by the Indonesian people over the next five years are becoming increasingly tougher. "We see that Indonesia's challenges in the next five years are very tough, especially in the economic and social fields, so PKB decided to join Prabowo's cabinet as a form of collaboration of the nation's children in solving these challenges," (Tempo.co, 2024).

One indication that the nation's challenges are becoming more severe is the decline in prices of goods and services, or deflation, resulting from the limited circulation of money in the community over the past five months. "The purchasing power of our society is indeed worrying. Based on data from the BPS (Central Bureau of Statistics) over the past five months, there has been deflation starting at 0.03 percent in May 2024; then falling 0.08 percent in June; 0.18 percent in July; 0.03 percent in August; and 0.12 percent in September 2024," he said. He said that deflation over the past five months has caused millions of middle-class people to fall into poverty. He assessed that the situation could threaten state revenue from the tax sector because the middle class has been the main motor of taxpayers. "Middle-class income is eroded for basic needs, such as children's school fees, daily necessities, and transportation costs. If this condition continues, we could be worse off in the future," (Tempo.co, 2024).

He also explained that the current social situation is not good. He pointed out that various cases of bullying, sexual violence, and suicides tend to increase among young people. "We are concerned about the bullying case at the Jakarta As'Syafi'iyah Aagunng Court, which left the victim in a coma. We also strongly condemn the sexual harassment of dozens of students at a dormitory-based educational institution in Tangerang, as well as the number of suicides. This is a strong sign that there is a mental health problem in our society," he said. Therefore, he stated that the various objective conditions of the nation pose a significant

challenge for the Prabowo-Gibran government in the future. Thus, PKB appreciates Prabowo's desire to invite all children of the nation, including PKB, to solve these tough challenges (Tempo.co, 2024).

PKB's justification for joining the Indonesia Maju Coalition reflects an attempt to frame its political decision within a policy-oriented narrative, particularly in relation to socio-economic welfare and constitutional economic principles. Statements by Muhaimin Iskandar regarding support for programs such as social welfare initiatives and economic reform indicate that PKB seeks to position itself as contributing to national problem-solving rather than merely pursuing power. However, this idealistic dimension is better understood as a complementary motive rather than a primary driver. The timing and context of PKB's alignment—following electoral defeat and coinciding with opportunities for executive inclusion—suggest that policy commitments function more as normative justification to maintain legitimacy among constituents. Thus, the PKB case illustrates that while purposive motives are present, they are strategically articulated to reinforce and legitimize materially driven coalition choices, rather than independently determining them.

5. DISCUSSION

Based on the result data, it becomes clear that the PKB's entry into the advanced Indonesian coalition has two material motives: the PKB as an organization with its own interests and the interests of its chairman, Muhaimin Iskandar. In this context, PKB appears to be characterized as a catch-all party, as catch-all parties no longer rely on a single ideology or platform (Kirchheimer, 1966). Considering this tendency for catch-all parties, the spectrum of legitimacy of these political parties depends on the party's rationality. This type of political party prioritizes pragmatism over principle because the dispersed centers of power and authority render rational considerations the basis for political decision-making (Koole, 1996). The transformation of political parties reflects the development of modern political parties into catch-all parties, which aligns with the nomadic nature of political parties as a strategic approach (Dalton et al., 2011). The concept of “nomadism” has existed for a considerable time. It is often heard in references to words such as jumping, non-committal, two-legged politics, and politics without ethics, among others. Nomadism is known in the behaviour of political parties and politicians (Piliang & Adlin, 2005).

The results then show that PKB's relationship with coalition members is rooted in long-term solidarity incentives, supported by a history of cooperation with Gerindra, PAN, and Golkar since the early period of preparing for the 2024 election. This emotional closeness is consistent with Sorauf & Beck, (1988) notion that solidarity incentives stem from interpersonal trust, shared experience, and organizational culture rather than strictly material gains. PKB's early coalition attempts with Gerindra in 2022 and later within the Great Indonesia Awakening Coalition demonstrate that PKB's alignment is not sudden nor purely opportunistic, but rather emerges from sustained inter-party communication and a shared strategic vision. These findings align with the coalition formation literature, which highlights that parties often rely on long-standing networks to reduce coordination costs (Axelrod, 1972). The dynamics described in the Results show that PKB's political positioning is also shaped by elite-level personal ties—especially between Muhaimin and Prabowo which helps explain why PKB quickly gravitated toward the Prabowo–Gibran coalition after the election outcome was finalized.

More than that, although material and solidarity incentives dominate, the Results also reveal elements of idealistic incentives, such as PKB's emphasis on supporting programmatic policies (free nutritious meals, economic stabilization, constitutional economic reforms). These

statements serve as PKB's justification for entering the government under a policy-seeking coalition rationale (Axelrod, 1972). Muhaimin's repeated references to constitutional economic correction and tackling national socio-economic challenges indicate an attempt to embed PKB's decision in normative and programmatic grounds. While this may be secondary to pragmatic considerations, it remains relevant because political parties often articulate idealistic rationales to maintain legitimacy among their supporters and preserve their ideological identity. The economic indicators cited deflation trends, declining purchasing power, social problems serve as PKB's rhetorical foundation to situate its coalition choice as part of a broader national responsibility, in line with Heywood & Chin, (2023) notion of coalitions as a form of collaborative governance to address national threats.

The overall discussion demonstrates that PKB's entry into the *Indonesia Maju* coalition cannot be explained by a single incentive. Instead, PKB operates through three interacting motives: Material Incentives: access to political power, cabinet roles, organizational advantage, and leadership survival. Solidarity Incentives: longstanding communication, emotional closeness, shared coalition history. Idealism Incentives: programmatic claims, national policy challenges, ideological alignment through rhetoric. The evidence suggests that PKB functions as a pragmatic catch-all party with hybrid motives, where material incentives serve as the dominant driver, solidarity provides relational support, and idealism offers discursive legitimacy. This multi-layered explanation aligns with contemporary research on political party behavior (Kirchheimer, 1966), which emphasizes that modern coalitions are shaped by the interplay of office-seeking, policy-seeking, and relationship maintenance (Strom, 1990).

The findings of this study provide several crucial implications for understanding the behavior of political parties in Indonesia. First, the empirical evidence reinforces the argument that Indonesian parties particularly PKB tend to operate within a highly pragmatic political environment, prioritizing office benefits over ideological consistency. This confirms longstanding scholarly claims that Indonesian political parties have weak programmatic identities and strong tendencies toward patronage and coalition opportunism (Fionna & Tomsa, 2020; Hendrawan et al., 2021). The triple-motive model identified in this research (material, solidarity, and idealistic incentives) suggests that Indonesian parties rarely operate under a single rationality. Instead, they navigate a hybrid incentive structure that blends strategic survival, relational networks, and rhetorical policy commitments. This contributes to the debate on whether Indonesian parties are undergoing *cartelization*, *catch-all transformation*, or a unique hybridization shaped by post-authoritarian political structures. The findings also have implications for understanding the stability of coalitions and democratic accountability. The evidence suggests that political parties with weak ideological foundations tend to join ruling coalitions, regardless of their electoral stance, which contributes to the persistent weakness of the opposition. This pattern is consistent with concerns raised by (Mietzner, 2020; Ufen, 2008) regarding executive dominance, the erosion of checks and balances, and the difficulties in consolidating meaningful party competition.

6. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study explains that the PKB's entry into the advanced Indonesian coalition has multiple political motives. In terms of the pragmatism of PKB's interests as a political party, the goal of entering the government coalition is to secure a cabinet seat. Furthermore, Muhaimin Iskandar also has pragmatic goals, as a person interested in maintaining close ties with the government in order to secure his position as chairman of PKB. Furthermore, PKB also has a close emotional relationship with the parties that are members of the advanced Indonesian coalition. PKB and Muhaimin Iskandar also maintain good

communication with Prabowo Subianto, the president-elect of the Indonesia Forward coalition. Then, in terms of idealism, PKB also aims to safeguard the economic policies and programs that will be implemented by the Prabowo Subianto government, ensuring they have a positive impact on the Indonesian people. The implications of this research explain the phenomenon of the patterns of motives that political parties exhibit when forming or joining a coalition. It turns out that political parties do not have only one motive, but rather various motives, both for organizational and personal interests.

This study contributes to the literature by providing a micro-level empirical explanation of post-election coalition realignment in Indonesia, highlighting how ideological narratives are strategically embedded within pragmatic power calculations. Unlike previous studies that treat coalition shifts as purely opportunistic or structurally determined, this research demonstrates that PKB's decision reflects a hybrid model of political behavior, where institutional interests, leadership agency, and policy aspirations interact simultaneously. This study has limitations; the data largely rely on media reports and public statements, which may contain media framing biases, selective reporting, and incomplete accounts of elite bargaining. Future studies should address these limitations by: Conducting elite interviews with PKB leaders, coalition negotiators, and party strategists to uncover internal reasoning and unpublicized bargaining processes.

Author Contribution

D.S: Conceptualizing and designing research, A.J.S & A.R: collecting the data, writing original draft preparation and editing, J.A.K & M.W.A: managing literature, project administration.

Data Availability Statement

All data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflict of Interest Declaration

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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