

SERVING THE POOR WHILE SECURING THE VOTE ISLAMIC PARTIES AND WELFARE PROGRAM IN DECENTRALIZED INDONESIA

Luthfi Makhasin, Burhan Yahya, Indaru Setyo Nurprojo and Ahmad Rofik

Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Jenderal
Soedirman, Jl. H.R Boenyamin 993 Grendeng, Purwokerto, 53122

Corresponding author: luthfi.makhasin@unsoed.ac.id;

burhan.y@mhs.unsoed.ac.id; indaru.nurprojo@unsoed.ac.id; ahmad.rofik@unsoed.ac.i

ABSTRACT. Indonesia is a Muslim-majority country with complex and diverse social and economic welfare problems. These welfare issues sometimes become sensitive electoral issues used to mobilize electoral support in elections. One of the welfare problems experienced by its citizens is the issue of inhospitable housing (Rumah Tidak Layak Huni / RTLH). This article seeks to explain how RTLH has become an electoral issue through the conceptual framework of political linkage. It begins with the question of how Islamic parties contribute to overseeing welfare programs in general and, more specifically, the handling of RTLH at the local level. In contrast to much of the existing scholarship that frames contemporary Indonesian politics primarily in terms of patronage and clientelism, this article starts from the perspective that Islamic parties face various opportunities and constraints in responding to and overseeing welfare policy agendas. By focusing on two Islamic parties—PKB and PKS—in Banyumas Regency, and by adopting the process-tracing analytical method commonly used in comparative politics studies, this article shows that Islamic parties adopt different approaches in supporting the RTLH program at the local level. On the one hand, PKB does not treat the RTLH program as a priority because the policy is considered to offer limited electoral incentives. On the other hand, PKS is more serious in supporting the RTLH program for more ideological reasons. Moreover, PKS maintains a programmatic and strategic political linkage, whereas PKB tends to maintain a pragmatic and tactical political linkage.

Keywords: Islamic parties; political linkage; electoral incentive; welfare; housing program

ABSTRAK. Indonesia adalah negara mayoritas Muslim dengan problem kesejahteraan sosial dan ekonomi yang kompleks dan beragam. Problem kesejahteraan ini kadang menjadi isu elektoral yang sensitif untuk menggalang dukungan elektoral dalam pemilu. Salah satu problem kesejahteraan yang dialami warganya adalah masalah Rumah Tidak Layak Huni. Tulisan ini mencoba menjelaskan bagaimana RTLH menjadi salah satu isu elektoral melalui kerangka konseptual tautan politik (political linkage). Tulisan ini berangkat dari pertanyaan bagaimana partai Islam berkontribusi dalam mengawal program kesejahteraan secara umum dan khususnya penanganan RTLH di daerah. Berbeda dengan studi kesarjanaan yang mengkerangkai politik Indonesia kontemporer dalam kerangka patronase dan klientelisme, tulisan ini berangkat dari pandangan bahwa partai Islam dihadapkan pada kesempatan dan kendala yang beragam untuk merespon dan mengawal agenda kebijakan kesejahteraan. Dengan memfokuskan pada dua partai Islam, PKB dan PKS di Kabupaten Banyumas serta mengadopsi metode analisis pelacakan proses yang jamak digunakan dalam studi perbandingan politik, artikel ini menunjukkan bahwa partai Islam memiliki pendekatan berbeda dalam mendukung program RTLH di tingkat lokal. Di satu sisi, PKB tidak menjadikan Program RTLH sebagai prioritas karena kebijakan ini dianggap tidak menawarkan insentif elektoral yang signifikan, sedangkan PKS lebih serius dalam mendukung program RTLH karena alasan yang lebih ideologis. Lebih dari itu, PKS mempertahankan tautan politik yang programatik dan strategis, sedangkan PKB justru mempertahankan tautan politik yang pragmatik dan taktis.

Keywords: Partai Islam, tautan politik; insentif elektoral; kesejahteraan; program perumahan

INTRODUCTION

Islamic parties are not a dominant, yet an influential force in modern Indonesian politics. Its existence represents the sociological reality of its Muslim-majority society and the historical reality in which Islam played an important role in the formation of post-colonial nation-states. Studies on Islamic politics in Indonesia are divided into several different approaches. First, those who view Islamic parties as political forces that are not ideologically solid, characterized by internal conflict and poor electoral performance (Aclandea et al., 2024; Fox & Menchik, 2023; Herdiansah, 2021; Lili Romli,

2004; Nurjaman, 2023; Romli, 2013, 2014). Some other scholars see Islamic parties as representing ideological tenets with strong ties to civil society movements that pose themselves as a counterpart to the secular state (Bush, 2009; Hefner Kit, 2019; Sjadzali et al., 2005). Of the few comparative studies on political parties in the Muslim world (Amin, 2016), there are surprisingly very few systematic studies that focus on Islamic parties and their effectiveness in overseeing a welfare policy agenda in Indonesia.

This article will address the welfare problems caused by a large number of inhospitable houses (RTLH) under a decentralized political system in Indonesia. There are about 26 million inhospitable

houses and 35% households living in those houses across Indonesia. With a Muslim majority population, it is very likely that most of inhospitable houses belong to Muslim household. As a region with a majority Muslim population, the contribution of Islamic political parties to this problem is worth investigating further. It is particularly important to test whether there is a political linkage between Islamic parties and welfare policies, especially programs for dealing with inhospitable housing problems. The political linkage framework helps us explain the mechanism of the causal relationship between parties and the policy preferences they espouse. The study of political linkage has attracted a lot of interest from social scholars and political scientists alike because political linkage shows how the relationship between political parties and their voters is built within the framework of representative democracy (Cheeseman, 2016; Dommett, 2020; Kitschelt, 2000; Kitschelt & Kselman, 2013; Nanou, 2012; Poguntke, 2002, 2023; Rasmussen & Lindeboom, 2013; Romeijn, 2020; Webb et al., 2022; Wineroither & Seeber, 2018).

By using a political linkage framework, this article offers a different perspective from most studies which tend to view Indonesian politics from the perspective of material transactions and the persistence of personal networks to gain political support (Allen, 2014; As'ad et al., 2023; Aspinall, 2014; Aspinall & Sukmajati, 2015; Berenschot & Aspinall, 2020; Fossati, 2016). Similar studies in Indonesia show strong political linkage at both local and national levels. Existing studies show the existence of party-political linkage with religious organizations (Nailing, 2023), party constituent bases (Cahyati et al., 2019; Prianto & Suharnoko, 2022) and political linkage to explain party responsiveness to oversee the policy agenda (Lay, 2017). This study attempts to explore further Lay's findings on the importance of political linkage and policy responsiveness.

Meanwhile, the study of political parties and their role in generating welfare programs owes much to comparative political studies of welfare states. The ideological roots of the welfare state come from social democratic ideas about equality and redistribution and related ideas of moral values, solidarity and shared responsibility that are rooted in the traditions of Christian democratic parties in Europe. According to Kersbergen (1995), the welfare state should maintain a balance between individual freedom and collective responsibility in society. Moreover, instead of relying on state redistribution, religion and religious organizations play an important role in

maintaining the values of solidarity, social justice and siding with marginalized groups. Kersbergen's view is relevant to understanding the role of Islamic parties in overseeing welfare programs in Indonesia.

The relationship between Islamic parties and welfare programs they seek for opens an inquiry on responsiveness and policy preferences of political parties that cannot be simplified solely within the framework of patronage and clientelism. Instead, this article offers the electoral incentive as an alternative and additional framework to complement the political linkage. Electoral incentive refers to motivation and strategic considerations that shape the behavior of politicians and political parties and policy makers aiming at gaining votes, winning elections and maintaining office (Boix, 2003). In the context of strengthening Indonesian democracy today and in the future, a new framework of thinking that gives balanced attention to party institutions and their responsiveness to policy agendas will offer a more nuanced and comprehensive explanation of Indonesian politics in general and especially Islamic politics and the social welfare agenda.

The Islamic parties referred to in this article are political parties that are Islamic-oriented, have an Islamic political platform, adhere to Islamic ideology, and/or have a main constituent base from within the Muslim community. In the contemporary Indonesian political map, the parties that fall into the category of Islamic political parties are PKB, PKS, PAN and PPP (Makhasin, 2016). This research itself limits its focus to two Islamic parties, namely PKB and PKS. Focusing on PKB and PKS because both PKB and PKS voter bases have different understandings of Islam, so that they both have different perspectives in looking at problems that occur in society. PKB and PKS are also the two Islamic parties with the most national votes in the 2019 Election. PKB obtained 13,570,097 votes or the equivalent of 9.69 percent of the total valid votes, while PKS obtained 11,493,663 or the equivalent of 8.21 percent of the total valid votes. More importantly, both Islamic parties successfully manage to secure policy-making agenda with an exclusively Islamic color at national and local government levels.

Like any other parties in democratic setting, Islamic parties function to articulate political interest in a concrete policy making agenda. In fact, PKB and PKS represent the interests of Muslim community and become the policy channels to encourage the government to make policies/programs for addressing a wide range of welfare problems, including the problem of inhospitable housing. Along with other welfare issues, inhospitable housing is a

basic human need which, apart from functioning as a place to shelter and carrying out daily activities in the family, also plays a major role in forming the family's character. So apart from having to meet technical health and safety requirements, the house must also provide comfort for its residents.

Looking for the relationship between Islamic parties and welfare programs at the local level can be analyzed through process tracing to explain the causal mechanism that connects the two. Political linkage and electoral incentives are causal mechanisms that can be traced to explain party preferences on a particular policy issue. Political linkage connects Islamic parties to their main social basis through which programs and policy preference are strategically framed, whereas electoral incentive provides a precondition to secure opportunities for party candidates during electoral competition against its contender.

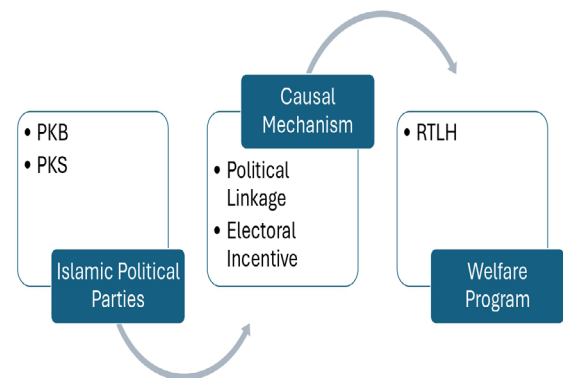
This article addresses the question on how Islamic parties deal with welfare problem in general and particularly inhospitable housing problems at local level. By focusing on the two Islamic parties (PKB and PKS) in Banyumas region, this article argues that Islamic parties would likely to support and be responsive over welfare programs because there are programmatic political linkage and electoral incentives to secure re-election for party candidates during the election.

METHOD

This article is based on the results of secondary data mining through document and online or printed news as well as primary data through field observations and in-depth interviews with several key sources conducted in Banyumas, Central Java. Yin explains that 'there are three types of research in case studies, namely single case studies, multiple case studies, and intrinsic case studies. In a single case study, the researcher focuses on one issue, then selects another thing to focus on (Yin, 2018). In a multiple case study, the researcher focuses on one issue, but then takes several cases to illustrate the focus of the research. There are times when the variations emphasized by researchers are regions, topics within the same issue area. Sometimes researchers deliberately choose several cases within one umbrella topic to show various perspectives on that topic. In an intrinsic case study, the focus of the study is on the case study itself. Of the three types of case studies, this research uses the multiple case study type.

The method used in this research is qualitative research with a case study approach, especially

process tracking analysis. The process tracing analysis method is one of the approaches in case studies to test or develop causal mechanisms (Beach & Pedersen, 2019; George & Bennet, 2005). By tracing the process, this paper wants to examine the mechanisms that form the link between Islamic parties and welfare programs at the local level. This paper tries to test two key mechanisms that form a causal relationship between Islamic parties and their responsiveness to support welfare programs: political linkage and electoral incentive.



Picture 1. Tested Causal Hypothesis for Process Tracing Analysis

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following section deals with research findings obtained through library studies and interviews with key informants who are either party ranks or ordinary members. This began with the general mapping of local political landscape and particularly the position of Islamic parties in the Banyumas district. Then, it explains housing problems faced by poor families. Next, it examines how Islamic parties formulate and execute programs pertaining to housing problems and finally, it discusses how welfare programs of Islamic parties are relevant through the lens of political linkage and electoral incentive.

Political Landscape and Islamic Parties in Banyumas: The Case of PKB and PKS

Banyumas is a district located in the southern part of Central Java. It has an area of 1327.60 square kilometers. Banyumas is located in a route crossing area that connects the North Coast regions and the South Coast areas of Central Java Province. Demographically, Banyumas has 1.86 million residents with the majority of the population having lower middle school education. Politically, the Islamic Parties are not a dominant force, but it is also not an insignificant political force in the local political landscape of Banyumas. As seen in the national

sphere, Banyumas local politics is characterized by the dominance of nationalist parties. Since the election in the 1950s, the nationalist parties have dominated local politics of Banyumas.

Since the reform era, PDIP has consistently been the winner in legislative elections and as a result, succeeding to control local parliament. Except in the early period of the reform era (1999-2013) when Golkar's candidates won the race, PDIP has also managed to secure executive positions through the head of district or *Bupati*. In fact, a PDIP-nominated candidate has been winning the local election since 2013. This fact strengthens the opinion that Banyumas is a 'kandang banteng'. Even though nationalist parties (such as PDIP, Golkar and Gerindra) dominate the local political landscape, the influence of Islamic parties in shaping the dynamics of local politics cannot be underestimated. Even though no single Islamic party has succeeded in becoming the winning party in the election and dominating the legislative seats, the combined votes and number of seats of the existing Islamic parties can be a major political force to match the strength of the nationalist camps.

PKB and PKS are two political parties that represent two major currents of Islamic politics in Indonesia. PKB maintains its identity as a principal political representation for Nahdliyyin community. Likewise, PKS manages to remain ideologically aligned with Jamaah Tarbiyah community and expand its political appeal beyond its traditional constituent. For both Islamic parties, maintaining an Islamic identity would ensure their distinctiveness compared to their nationalist counterparts. Meanwhile, supporting welfare programs like RTLH would provide sustainable electoral incentives for both Islamic parties in the long term.

As shown in table 1, PKB is the largest Islamic party and second largest party in Banyumas in terms of the number of seats in the local assembly. In the 1999 Legislative Election, PKB even came second out of a total of 47 parties participating in the election and was entitled to 8 seats in the Banyumas local assembly. In two consecutive elections (2009 and 2014), PKB's seats went down due to the impact of internal conflicts but it managed to survive in the local assembly. In the 2019 election, PKB's vote share increased again and the party managed to secure 8 seats out of a total of 16 political parties participating in the election. In the 2024 election, PKB achieved its best achievement as a political party by securing 9 of 50 seats available in the Banyumas local assembly.

On the other hand, PKS, which started from a very modest beginning, gradually grew into a

strong Islamic party over years. PKS only secured one seat in the 2004 legislative election. In the 2014 election, PKS experienced an increase in votes, but the number of seats fell to 4 seats. In the 2019 election, PKS retained its four representatives in the Banyumas DPRD as the party's votes increased quite significantly. In the 2019 election, PKS retained its 4 representatives in the Banyumas DPRD as the party's votes increased quite significantly compared to the 1999 election, but in the last two elections (2019 and 2024), PKS succeeded in matching PKB and PAN by securing 5 representatives in the DPRD as the number of votes obtained increased. In fact, the 2024 election is the highest achievement in the history of PKS by placing 6 representatives in the Banyumas DPRD, accompanied by a significant increase in the number of votes.

Table 1. Banyumas DPRD Seat and Party Origins (1999-2024)

Party	Legislative Seats					
	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019	2024
PDIP	20	16	13	16	17	17
PKB	8	8	5	7	8	9
Golkar	6	8	7	6	6	5
PKS		1	5	4	4	6
Gerindra			4	6	7	7
Nasdem				1	2	1
Hanura			1			
PAN	3	5	5	4	3	2
P. Demokrat		4	7	3	1	2
PPP	2	3	3	3	2	1
PBB	1					

Source: Banyumas KPU data, processed

Inhospitable House and Welfare Problem

Welfare problems cover a broad aspect of economic and social indicators that limit people's ability to have a quality of life such as poverty, unemployment, healthcare, education, income, food security, and housing. The inhospitable house is one of the most problematic ones. Nur Hadi Kurniawan, Head of the Housing Development Division of the DINPERKIM Banyumas explained that poverty begins with houses that are uninhabitable. This is because a residential house is the biggest burden in life for a person or family. Therefore, government assistance is urgently needed to overcome this problem. When an uninhabitable house is rebuilt or renovated into a habitable house, this will have a positive domino effect for aid recipients. Economically, after the house they live in becomes habitable, the concentration of the aid recipient is no longer on the house, but instead shifts to improving

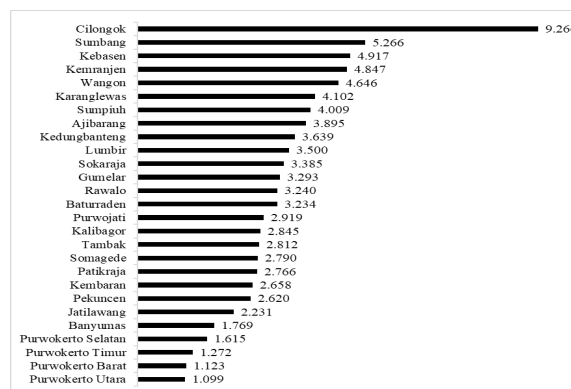
the quality of life and that of their family (Interview with Nur Hadi Kurniawan, 2023).

This statement was supported by Wahyono as a Housing Analyst at the DINPERKIM Banyumas, saying that when the quality of the house has improved, the quality of health will automatically also improve. If health quality improves, it is hoped that social and economic quality will also improve. Thus, RTLH assistance is very effective in becoming a way out and eliminating poverty (Interview with Wahyono, 2023). The Banyumas Housing and Settlement Area Service (DINPERKIM Banyumas) through its official website states that ‘livable houses can be achieved either through new construction on mature land whose status is clear or through improving quality by repairing uninhabitable houses’ (DINPERKIM Banyumas, 2019).

All the programs related to housing are designed to fulfill the requirements for a habitable house as a residence that can improve the welfare of program recipients. The program is also carried out in cooperation to create conditions for a house that is suitable as a place to live by taking into account the needs and accessibility of program recipients. Shortly speaking, the program has several purposes. *First*, restore the social function of social assistance recipients through improving housing conditions. *Second*, improving the quality of uninhabitable houses to become habitable. *Third*, increasing the comfort of residence for social assistance recipients. *Fourth*, foster the values of cooperation, participation, care and social solidarity among recipients of social assistance and local community members. *Fifth*, increase the empowerment of social assistance recipients by providing business premises in the home (Interview with Samsudin, 2023).

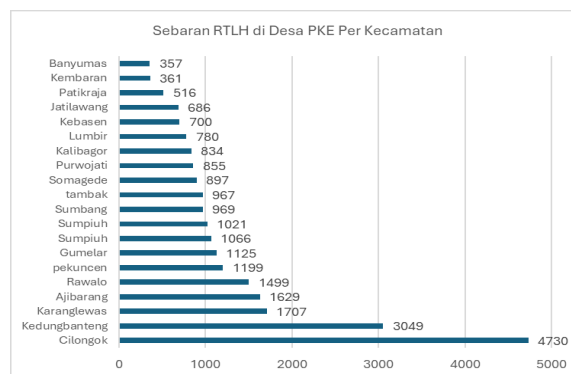
The existence of RTLH or inhospitable houses is a common problem found in almost all regions of Indonesia, including Banyumas. Based on the data from the Banyumas Disperkim in 2015 which is presented in Figure 1, the number of RTLH in Banyumas totaled 116,977 houses spread across 331 villages in 27 sub-districts (DINPERKIM Banyumas). Cilongok is the sub-district with the largest number of RTLH (9,266 houses), while North Purwokerto is the sub-district with the lowest number of RTLH (1,099 houses). This large number poses a difficult challenge for the local government due to limited resources in its disposal. To address it, the number of RTLH is classified into 3 categories: Priority I, Priority II, and Priority III based on the poverty level where and in which village the houses are located. Priority I is RTLH located in villages with extreme poverty level, the second priority is RTLH

located in villages with a moderate poverty level, and the third Priority is RTLH located in villages with a low poverty level.



Source: DINPERKIM Kabupaten Banyumas, data diolah
Figure 1. RTLH distribution data per sub-district in Banyumas

Due to limited resources, the three priority categories are then filtered into the so-called Extreme Poverty Priority (PKE) category. Of 27 sub-districts and 331 villages across Banyumas, there are 24,947 inhospitable houses spread across 60 villages and 20 sub-districts that require assistance and urgent upgrade. The Banyumas local government is targeting to renovate 1,800 of this number by 2024. Figure 2 shows the number of inhospitable houses in 60 villages spreading in 20 sub-districts across Banyumas. Of the 60 villages classified as PKE in Banyumas for example, the village with the largest number of RTLH is Panusupan in Cilongok sub-district with a total of 1,249 inhospitable houses. Eighteen other villages have between 500-1000 units, 38 villages have RTLH between 100-500 units and the remaining 3 villages have RTLH less than 100 units.



Source: DINPERKIM Kabupaten Banyumas, data diolah
Figure 2. RTLH data in 60 PKE Villages in Banyumas

Even though a total number of RLTH that has been fixed is relatively large, the scale and complexity of the problem have not been completely resolved yet. As shown in table 5, for almost 10 years, the local government would have only been

able to realize around 2,491 within Priority I, 9,774 in Priority II villages, and 14,954 in Priority 3 villages.

Table 5. Targets and Realization of RTLH Handling According to Priorities

Handling Priority	Target	Realization	Remaining targets	Realization percentage
Priority I	10.041	2.491	7.550	24,8%
Priority II	45.724	9.774	35.950	21,4%
Priority III	56.135	14.954	41.181	26,6%

Source: DINPERKIM Kabupaten Banyumas, data diolah

Islamic Parties and Housing Development Program

Inhospitable houses or RTLH certainly pose a developmental challenge and consequently require systemic intervention from the government and policy makers. The government and all political parties in local level seem to agree that the RTLH program should be addressed through systemic intervention and regular budgeting. As a matter of fact, the policy makers at legislative and executive branches in Banyumas have allocated quite a large amount of money to address the problems over the years. While nationalist parties such as PDIP and GERINDRA play a dominant role in shaping the RTLH program and its implementation, Islamic parties also involve in the process, including PKB and PKS.

As shown in table 3, in the last 9 years (2016-2024) funding for the inhospitable house renovation program mostly comes five sources: district budget/APBD Kabupaten (8907), Central Budget/Ministry of Public Works (6058), Provincial budget/APBD Provinsi (5566), Dana Desa (2132), and DAK (697). This budget source includes additional financial support for covering a total number of 799 and 301 houses in 2021 and 2022 from APBD Kabupaten respectively and the New Development (PB) Backlog from the Provincial budget of 45 houses in 2023 (Interview with Wahyono, 2023). In 2024, the local government set record by allocating approximately IDR 21.3 billion for handling 1,421 RTLH. The total commitment for the RTLH rehabilitation program in 2024 is 3548 houses with total funds of IDR 63.3 billion (Sakty Suprabowo, Head of the DINPERKIM Kabupaten Banyumas).

Apart from the government budget, funding support for the RTLH program also comes from non-government sources: BASNAS, CSR, and LAZISNU. As can be seen in table 4, BAZNAS is a major source of funding for the house renovation program (820) along with CSRs (256), and LAZISNU (12).

Table 3. The RTLH Program and Funding Sources

year	APBD Kab	APBD Prov	APBN	DAK	Dana Desa
2016	3129	240	1026		
2017	681	718	302		1472
2018	712	903	566	185	351
2019	671	903	795	178	
2020		468	1230	195	
2021	1146	487	420	139	243
2022	532	491	485		66
2023	115	825	1234		
2024	1921	531	NA	NA	NA
Total	8907	5566	6058	697	2132

Source: DINPERKIM Kabupaten Banyumas, data diolah

Table 4. Handling of RTLH Non-Governmental Fund Sources

Year	BAZNAS	CSR	LAZISNU
2017	301	104	
2018	82		
2019	228		
2020		5	
2021		2	5
2022	48	3	7
2023	36		
2024	125	142	
Total	820	256	12

Source: DINPERKIM Kabupaten Banyumas, data diolah

PKB is an Islamic political party that pays attention to basic human needs such as housing and it can be seen in the PKB's Outline of the Political Program (GBPP). One of the issues contained in the document is the issue of infrastructure and transportation. In its statement, PKB promised to 'build cheap housing for the people by encouraging an increase in the self-help housing assistance budget and the realization of a public housing savings model' (Indonesian Landscape study team, 2020). Abdul Muhaimin Iskandar then followed up on this by giving his views so that 'every Indonesian has a house can be realized in three ways.

First, the government budget must be able to subsidize housing construction. *Second*, there must be loan relief provided by the government. PKB encourages the government to give a zero % down payment for home ownership to public housing. *Third*, banking and the Ministry of PUPR must carry out plans to build cheap and affordable public housing'. PKB's track record regarding RTLH can be seen from the activities of its cadres who are members of parliament, both at the regional (DPRD) and central (DPR-RI) levels, in distributing RTLH program assistance in various regions in Indonesia.

Tabel 6. Elected Legislative Candidate in 2024 Election from PKB

No	Candidate	Vote	Vote Dapil	Dapil
1	Imam Santosa	6786	17256	Dapil 1
2	Dukha Ngabdul Wasih	9917	36805	Dapil 2
3	Tati Irawati	9305		
4	Imam Ahfas	13121	33876	Dapil 3
5	Mustofa	9778		
6	Ahmad Darisun	7804	18412	Dapil 4
7	Mugiharti	7691	19563	Dapil 5
8	Dwi Asih Lintarti	11458	37744	Dapil 6
9	Woro Sulistiyono	10326		

Source: KPU Banyumas, data diolah

In the 2024 election, PKB gained enough popular votes to secure nine seats at DPRD. Of these nine, eight members are incumbents who get re-elected. As shown in table 6, Dukha Ngabdul Wasih is the only new coming member. While there are many factors for this political achievement, the RTLH program plays a quite significant part of it. In fact, the 2024 government budget includes an additional amount worth IDR 7.5 billion from Dana POKIR of DPRD members in which each incumbent at DPRD allocated IDR 150 million for addressing RTLH problem. Tati Irawati, an incumbent at DPRD, said that she considered RTLH is an important program that needs to address and therefore she personally supports it.

Interestingly, not all serving members of PKB at DPRD regard the RTLH program as a priority issue. For instance, one of the internal sources within the party said that it would be much more useful for the community if legislative members' discretionary funds (POKIR) were used for general sectors. While maintaining a small amount for the RTLH program, other PKB's members mostly preferred to allocate discretionary funds for public needs such as community empowerment, building roads, electricity, etc. He even elaborated that the RTLH program would only cause social jealousy, because its main beneficiary is individuals rather than a community. Therefore, he never provided RTLH assistance during his tenure (Interview with Aman, a pseudonym, 2023).

Lack of attention toward the program is also acknowledged by another PKB who said that during his terms in office, he only distributed the RTLH assistance for 3 households valued about IDR 75 million, in which the funding source came through Muhammad Fauzan Nurhuda Yusro, member of Commission III DPR-RI (Interview with Imam Ahfas, 2024). Another PKB member claimed that

he only employed his political authority to address the RTLH program through an official channel, DINPERKIM's budget. Nevertheless, he did not remember the exact amount of the budget and how much money was spent or how many units were rehabilitated. However, this cannot be seen as a party program and is not an initiative of the Banyumas PKB council members.

On the other hand, PKS shows a relatively consistent view regarding the housing sector as a basic human need which needs to be addressed seriously. This can be traced through the PKS Development Policy Platform, as stated in the social and cultural sector platform, 'PKS fully supports the construction of simple flats for the lower classes (workers, traders, teachers and low-level employees). But PKS seems to take a different approach because housing is addressed through a comprehensive solution rather than a separate issue. For example, PKS considers that access for economically weak groups must be widened to owning a home by opening a soft credit scheme.

This vital housing program is also hampered by policies in other sectors, such as the availability of adequate land (National Land Agency and Regional Government), adequate financing (National Banking Authority), and the readiness of public infrastructure (Department of Public Works and agencies that handle water needs, electricity, telephone and other important facilities). Residents not only need good and healthy houses, but also safe and comfortable environments and settlements. Therefore, building good housing means arranging residents' settlements so that they are in line with strategic development plans (MPP PKS, 2008). This means that PKS is one of the political parties that place livable housing as an important and strategic issue. PKS also proves this with the track record of its cadres who are members of parliament, both at the central and regional levels.

At the regional level, PKS's track record in distributing house renovation assistance can be seen, as demonstrated by PKS Banyumas through the financial resources of its cadre board members who serve in the DPRD. Atik Luthfiyah, Chair of the Women and Family Resilience Division of the DPD PKS Banyumas and Member of Commission IV of the Banyumas Regency DPRD, has distributed RTLH assistance for 16 housing units or the equivalent of 240 million rupiah which came from her financial resources. Of the 16 units, all are intended for the area with the largest number of constituents, namely Karangendep Village, Patikraja District (Interview with Atik Luthfiyah, 2023).

Table 7. Tabel 6. Elected Legislative Candidate in 2024 Election from PKS

No	Caleg	Suara Caleg	Suara Partai Dapil	Dapil
1	Atik Luthfiah	7038	17656	Dapil 1
2	Eko Pramono	4399	14097	Dapil 2
3	Dedi Supriyanto	6727	16807	Dapil 3
4	Sutrisno Rudiyanto	3420	10944	Dapil 4
5	Joko Pramono	6679	14206	Dapil 5
6	Slamet Sukoco	4111	13237	Dapil 6

Source: KPU Banyumas, data diolah

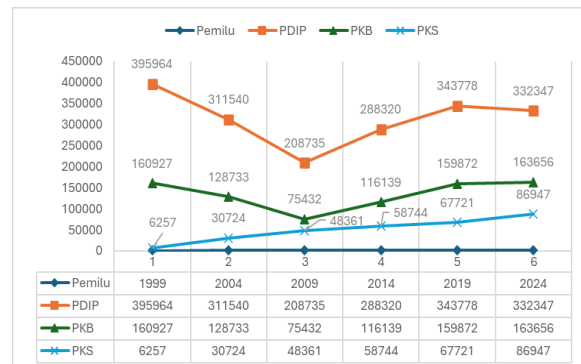
If Atik Luthfiah, who has only served for one term, has provided RTLH assistance for 16 housing units, then Setya Arinugroho, Chair of the Banyumas Regency PKS DPD and Chair of the Banyumas Regency DPRD PKS Fraction during his 3 consecutive terms in office has provided for more than 100 houses with different nominal values, the number varies depending on the provisions of each period, starting from 5 million rupiah per house, 10 million rupiah per house, up to now 15 million rupiah per House. Most of RTLH’s assistance, which amounts to more than 100 houses, comes from its financial resources which are intended for areas with its largest constituents, namely Karangtengah Village and Panusupan Village, Cilongok District (Interview with Setya Arinugroho, 2023).

Political Linkage and Electoral Incentive

Islamic parties and their preferences over welfare programs shape the way state’s budget resources are distributed and determine the election results. While patronage and clientelism stay in place, the causal relationship between Islamic parties and welfare policy cannot be fully understood without investigating further and deeper on political dynamics that connect the two. The case of PKB and PKS in advocating the RTLH program shares common features and have some differences. While both parties claimed to be the best representation of Islamic aspiration, PKB tends to maintain clientelist linkages that target short-term political incentives. On the other hand, PKS is more effective in using the issue of handling RTLH as a basis for mobilizing vote beyond its traditional constituents. Through the RTLH program, PKS succeeded in building a more strategic, programmatic political linkage by targeting long-term electoral incentives. Different to PKB which solely relies on traditional constituents of Nahdliyyin community, PKS keeps expanding beyond its traditional constituent. Interestingly, the political linkage between PKB and NU is relatively weak, while PKS keeps maintaining strong political

linkage with *Jama’ah Tarbiyah* from which the party originated.

Though PKB considers itself an integral part and even an official political wing of NU, political linkage between NU and PKB to secure welfare policy agendas tend to be limited and even institutionally weak. The lack of attention to the RTLH issue by PKB was confirmed by several NU activists. According to Imam Hidayat, Chairman of NU Banyumas, the push to fight for the handling of RTLH by NU was not carried out institutionally through PKB. NU even did not know the official procedure to access funds sourced from APBD. NU’s aspirations for handling RTLH are individual and are usually carried out through funding sourced from BAZNAS and LAZISNU. Indra Kusuma, another administrator in charge of this matter, added that although the RTLH problem was mostly experienced by NU members, PCNU did not have an institutional mechanism to overcome it through organizational linkage with PKB. PKB legislators do contribute to NU through their POKIR funds, but this contribution is usually more personal than programmatic. In 2022, for example, PKB will contribute greatly to the renovation and repair of PCNU office space.



Source: KPU Kabupaten Banyumas, data diolah

Figure 3. Election Result of Islamic Political Parties in Banyumas (1999-2024)

PKB is indeed a competitive contender in the election, but the vote that the party manages to collect is much smaller than the actual number of NU communities from which it relies on support. One source confidently said that 75% of Banyumas population are Nahdliyyin, a popular term to address NU members. PKB fails to garner a larger support because it never maintains continuous communication with NU (Interview with Muhammad Roqib, 2023). However, some sources said that this failure was because the nationalist parties such as PDIP and GERINDRA managed to outmaneuver their Islamic parties’ counterparts to maintain their dominance by securing all resources to their disposal (Interview with Omar Udaya, 2024). Apart from internal conflict that

occurred among its top ranks, this partly explains, as seen in figure 3, why PKB's vote tends to fluctuate in the election.

Unlike PKB, PKS takes more strategic and programmatic approaches in dealing with the RTLH program. Atik Luthfiah, DPRD member from PKS, stated that improving RTLH is important and strategic because it concerns family welfare in a broad sense. In several cases, for example, RTLH contributed to the rise in incidents of domestic violence. Inadequate housing conditions are more likely to encourage physical and sexual violence. For example, sexual violence against children and cases of incest between fathers and their daughters in Banyumas occurred within families living in RTLH. Repairing RTLH therefore has ideological value because it is not just physical but also to improve the quality of life of poor families (Interview with Atik Luthfiah, 2023).

As a matter of fact, PKS Banyumas plays an important role in being a channel for aspirations to deal with welfare problems and especially RTLH. PKS's consistency in overseeing welfare programs, including RTLH, has contributed significantly to the party's electoral gains which continue to increase in every legislative election. Figure 3 clearly shows that, in terms of election record, PKS is the party with a consistent increase in votes compared to PKB and even when compared to PDIP which is the party with the largest vote acquisition in Banyumas. House renovation assistance distributed by Setya Arinugroho and Atik Luthfiah contributed significantly to the party getting chairs and ushered both to sit in the DPRD. Setya Arinugroho was a member of the PKS council for three terms (2009-2024) and Atik Luthfiah was a member of the council for two consecutive terms (2014-2024). Both were also re-elected in the 2024 Legislative Election with the first changing his position to become a member of the Central Java DPRD and the latter returning to his third term of office in the Banyumas DPRD. Atik Luthfiah even listed herself as one of the legislative candidates with the largest number of votes in DAPIL 1 Banyumas with a total of 7038 votes.

Atik Luthfiah admitted that in the PKS mechanism, no cadre asked to be nominated in the election, but rather the party nominated the cadre. Atik Luthfiah himself was nominated as a legislative candidate from Dapil 1 Banyumas. Atik Luthfiah, who has moved several times, according to political calculations, has a very small chance of being able to run as a legislative candidate. He does not have strong political capital to campaign in the elections, considering his status as an immigrant who does not

have a family network in Purwokerto or Banyumas. He also never attended any level of education in Purwokerto, so he does not have an alumni network at any school or college in Purwokerto. According to Atik Luthfiah, the only political capital he has is the network of taklim assemblies supported by PKS. Atik Luthfiah himself is a material filler in studies of the taklim assembly assisted by PKS Banyumas which is also often called *the league* or *halaqah* (Interview with Atik Luthfiah, 2023).

The nomination of Atik Luthfiah by PKS Banyumas has at least two important meanings for PKS as a political party. *First*, as a devout PKS cadre, Atik Luthfiah submitted and obeyed the instructions of the party that nominated him as a legislative candidate. *Second*, the appointment of Atik Luthfiah emphasized that PKS Banyumas is a *da'wah* party. This is in line with the statement of Joko Pramono, Deputy Treasurer of the DPD PKS Banyumas branch and Member of Commission II of the DPRD, who admitted that among PKS cadres, it is normal to call themselves (PKS) a *dakwah* party. Through its cadre, PKS maintains institutionalized political linkage to its main social base. This means that, to date, PKS is the same political party as when it was first declared, namely a political party whose cadres and sympathizers mostly come from the Movement/Jama'ah Tarbiyah circle and relies on *usrah* as a party cadre formation system.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, housing is one of several welfare policy issues not only because of its economic ramifications but also because of its ideological importance for Islamic parties. Decent and affordable housing is the biggest component that determines whether a person and their family are in the prosperous or poor category. Ideologically, the house also has a vital role in upholding the basic principles of sharia (*maqashid syari'ah*): maintaining religion, nurturing the soul, nurturing the mind, nurturing offspring and preserving property.

With the number of RTLH still very large and most of the population being Muslim, it turns out that Islamic parties have not yet made handling RTLH to be one of the welfare policy priorities that is monitored in legislative work. Attention to the RTLH issue is not solely based on ideological considerations but rather pragmatic considerations to secure electoral incentives. The RTLH issue is only considered to represent the interests of a few people who do not have much impact on gaining votes in the election.

The case of PKB demonstrates a more intricate and ambiguous relationship because while advocating welfare policy certainly provides electoral incentive to get re-elected, PKB maintains tactical and pragmatic linkages to its main social base (NU community). However, the case of PKS shows that Islamic parties could contribute significantly through their consistency in advocating strategic and programmatic approaches in shaping welfare policy. PKS also consistently maintains its political linkages to their social base (*Jama'ah Tarbiyah*) while securing its candidate to get re-elected.

Through process tracing analysis, this article thus only partly confirms the causal relationship between Islamic parties and welfare policy. Findings of this article clearly demonstrates that electoral incentive is much more influential in shaping welfare policy preference of Islamic parties than political linkage. By examining causal mechanism that connects Islamic parties and welfare policy and through tracing the process to other policy agendas in other local settings, this article opens new opportunities for deeper and more nuanced understanding of Indonesia beyond material transaction and personal networks. However, the findings and analysis do not necessarily address the whole intricate relationship between Islamic parties and welfare issues because this article only touches upon one single policy in one region. For a comprehensive analysis, one needs to compare similar cases in other regions to validate the process tracing method adopted in this article.

GRATITUDE

The author would like to thank the Political Science Post-Graduate Program, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, for facilitating the research and dissemination of the research findings. Gratitude was also addressed to the numerous friends and colleagues which provided an invaluable insight into this article from its early draft until the final one.

REFERENCE

- Aclandea, R., Elyta, E., Al Qadrie, S. R. F., & Almunawar, M. N. (2024). Factors Causing the Decline of Islam-Based Political Parties Existence on General Elections 2014. *Journal of Modern Islamic Studies and Civilization*, 2(02). <https://doi.org/10.59653/jmisc.v2i02.618>
- Ai Fatimah, N. F. (2015). Islamisme dan dakwah di Indonesia: Perspektif dan pengalaman dakwah gerakan Tarbiyah. *Komunika*, 10(1).
- Aidulsyah, F. (2023). Kampus, Islam, dan Politik: Dinamika Elite Politik dan Kegagalan Identitas Gerakan Tarbiyah Pascareformasi. In *Kampus, Islam, dan Politik: Dinamika Elite Politik dan Kegagalan Identitas Gerakan Tarbiyah Pascareformasi*. <https://doi.org/10.55981/brin.591>
- Allen, N. (2014). From Patronage Machine to Partisan Melee: Subnational Corruption and the Evolution of the Indonesian Party System. *Pacific Affairs*, 87, 221–245. <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:55879161>
- Amin, F. (2016). *Social Welfare Program of Islamic Political Party: A Case Study of Bangladesh Jama'at-E-Islami* [PhD Thesis]. University of Western Sydney.
- As'ad, U. M., Sobirin, B., & Hergianasari, P. (2023). Oligarki dan Jaringan Patronase: Dinamika Kebijakan Pertambangan Batu bara di Kabupaten Tanah Bumbu. *Politika: Jurnal Ilmu Politik*, 14(1), 1–17.
- Aspinall, E. (2014). Indonesia's 2014 Elections: Parliament and Patronage. *Journal of Democracy*, 25, 110–196. <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:154672264>
- Aspinall, E., & Sukmajati, M. (2015). *Politik Uang di Indonesia: Patronase dan Klientelisme pada Pemilu Legislatif 2014 [Money Politics in Indonesia: Patronage and Clientelism in the 2014 Legislative Election]*. <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:155922731>
- Basyir, Ach. (2014). Ideologi Politik Dilematis Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS) Antara Gerakan Tarbiyah dan Pragmatisme. *Jurnal Agama Dan Hak Asasi Manusia*, 3(2).
- Beach, D., & Pedersen, R. B. (2019). *Process-Tracing Method: Foundations and Guidelines 2nd Edition*. University of Michigan Press.
- Berenschot, W., & Aspinall, E. (2020). How clientelism varies: comparing patronage democracies. *Democratization*, 27, 1–19. <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:210533820>
- Boix, C. (2003). *Democracy and Redistribution*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bush, R. (2009). Nahdlatul Ulama and the struggle for power within Islam and politics in Indonesia. In *Nahdlatul Ulama and the Struggle for Power within Islam and Politics in Indonesia*. <https://doi.org/10.1355/9789812308795>

- Cahyati, D. D., Fimmastuti, D. R., & Abheseka, N. M. R. (2019). Women Leader and Political Linkage: Case Studies in Kutai Kertanegara and Bolaang Mongondow. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pemerintahan*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.14710/jiip.v4i2.5426>
- Cheeseman, N. (2016). Patrons, Parties, Political Linkage, and the Birth of Competitive-Authoritarianism in Africa. In *African Studies Review* (Vol. 59, Issue 3). <https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2016.79>
- Dommett, K. (2020). Parties, linkage and participation. In *The reimaged party*. Manchester University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7765/9781526150257.00009>
- Fossati, D. (2016). Electoral Dynamics in Indonesia: Money Politics, Patronage and Clientelism at the Grassroots. *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs*, 38, 321–323. <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:268255553>
- Fox, C. A., & Menchik, J. (2023). Islamic political parties and election campaigns in Indonesia. *Party Politics*, 29(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/13540688221091656>
- Fuad, A. F. N. (2020). Kajian Literatur tentang Perkembangan Historis dan Transformasi Dakwah Gerakan Tarbiyah di Indonesia. *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan*, 17(2). <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlk.v17i2.744>
- George, A. L., & Bennet, A. (2005). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. MIT Press.
- Hefner, R. W. (2019). Whatever Happened to Civil Islam? Islam and Democratisation in Indonesia, 20 Years On. *Asian Studies Review*, 43(3). <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2019.1625865>
- Herdiansah, A. G. (2021). Intra-party Conflict and the Emergence of Islamic-Based Parties in the post-2019 Election in Indonesia. *Journal of Governance*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.31506/jog.v6i2.12700>
- Kees van Kersbergen. (1995). *A Social Capitalism: A Study of Christian Democracy and the Welfare State*. Routledge.
- Kitschelt, H. (2000). Linkages between citizens and politicians in democratic polities. *Comparative Political Studies*, 33(6). <https://doi.org/10.1177/001041400003300607>
- Kitschelt, H., & Kselman, D. M. (2013). Economic Development, Democratic Experience, and Political Parties' Linkage Strategies. *Comparative Political Studies*, 46(11). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414012453450>
- Lay, C. (2017). Political linkages between CSOs and parliament in Indonesia: a case study of political linkages in drafting the Aceh Governance Law. *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 25(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/02185377.2017.1297243>
- Lili Romli. (2004). Partai Islam dan Pemilihan Islam di Indonesia. *Jurnal Penelitian Politik*, 1(1).
- Machmudi, Y. (2008). Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). In *Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)*. <https://doi.org/10.22459/ii.11.2008>
- Mahfudhi, M. A., & Perdana, A. (2022). The Relationship between Civil Society Organization and Political Party in Legislative Election: The Case of of Fatayat and PKB in Indonesia. *JISPO Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.15575/jispo.v12i1.17554>
- Makhasin, L. (2016). Orientasi Ideologi dan Pragmatisme Politik Model Pembentukan Koalisi dalam Pilkada Serentak di Jawa Tengah 2015. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik*, 19(3). <https://doi.org/10.22146/jsp.15685>
- Naleng, A. Y. (2023). *Partai Politik dan Gereja: Melacak Tautan Politik Partai Sekuler dan Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa* [Disertasi]. Universitas Diponegoro.
- Nanou, K. (2012). Political Parties and Democratic Linkage: How Parties Organize Democracy. *West European Politics*, 35(5). <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2012.706423>
- Nurjaman, A. (2023). The Decline of Islamic Parties and the Dynamics of Party System in Post-Suharto Indonesia. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik*, 27(2). <https://doi.org/10.22146/JSP.79698>
- Poguntke, T. (2002). Parties without firm social roots? Party organisational linkage. In *Keele European Parties Research Unit* (Issue January 2002).
- Poguntke, T. (2023). Party Organizational Linkage:

- Parties Without Firm Social Roots? In *Political Parties in the New Europe*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780199253227.003.0003>
- Prianto, B., & Suharnoko, D. (2022). Linkage Between Political Parties and Constituents in Malang Raya, Indonesia. *Public Policy and Administration Research*. <https://doi.org/10.7176/ppar/12-1-02>
- Rasmussen, A., & Lindeboom, G. J. (2013). Interest group-party linkage in the twenty-first century: Evidence from Denmark, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. *European Journal of Political Research*, 52(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2012.02069.x>
- Romeijn, J. (2020). Do political parties listen to their public? Public opinion–party linkage on specific policy issues. *Party Politics*, 26(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068818787346>
- Romli, L. (2013). Crescent and Electoral Strength: Islamic Party Portrait of Reform Era in Indonesia. *International Journal of Islamic Thought*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.04.2013.005>
- Romli, L. (2014). Partai Islam dan Pemilu 2009. In *Partai Politik dan Peserta Demokrasi 2009*.
- Saifullah Fatah, M. F., & Akim, A. (2022). The Translocalization of the Muslim Brotherhood's Ideas to the Tarbiyah Congregation in Indonesia. *Jurnal Global & Strategis*, 16(2). <https://doi.org/10.20473/jgs.16.2.2022.285-306>
- Sjadzali, Munawir., F., A. G. A., Hidayat, K., & Kamal, Z. (2005). Islam, Negara & Civil Society: Gerakan dan Pemikiran Islam Kontemporer. In *Islam, negara, dan civil society*.
- Webb, P., Scarrow, S., & Poguntke, T. (2022). Party organization and satisfaction with democracy: inside the blackbox of linkage. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, 32(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/17457289.2019.1698047>
- Wineroither, D. M., & Seeber, G. U. H. (2018). Three worlds of representation: A linkage-based typology of parties in Western and Eastern Europe. *East European Politics and Societies*, 32(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325418756990>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (6th ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.