

# The Role of Local Wisdom in Local Election

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Abstract: Local elections (Pilkada) are a political process mandated by the constitution and an important part in the implementation of a modern democratic system. Although it is based on a modern democratic system, the process of implementing the Pilkada is certainly not separated from the social reality of the local community which is formed in a system of culture and values of local wisdom. From this study, there are 3 roles of local wisdom in the Pilkada process that emerged, namely local wisdom as a benchmark for leader characteristics, how the role of local wisdom creates local elites, and the emergence of identity politics from local wisdom.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The implementation of local elections, or Pilkada, is the implementation of democratic values in accordance with the constitutional paradigm (A. Usman, 2020). Through the Pilkada, society are re-constructed as the owner of the highest sovereignty in the state administration system. The existence of general elections, including Pilkada, is a principal and fundamental characteristic in the implementation of a modern democratic system (Satriawan, 2017).

Apart from viewing the Pilkada as a representation of the modern democratic system, a local cultural point of view is still needed. Politics as a social process that develops in society, of course, is closely related to the culture of the community, where the culture and values of local wisdom become a picture of the community to determine attitudes, political choices and community characteristics in politics. The discussion of the relevance between local elections and local wisdom, needs to be based on an understanding of culture and politics. This study will discuss how the values of local wisdom play a role in the Pilkada process.

## 2 RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach, as an effort to uncover and understand the phenomena that occur, which are expected to provide a clearer picture and

understanding of the phenomena studied. The data collection method used is the literature study method used to collect data sourced from the results of the study of literature and academic journals which contain theories and analyses, regarding the political system of local elections and explore the manifestations of local wisdom in the Pilkada process in several areas.

## 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The concept of local wisdom was introduced by Quatrich Wales (1951, in Mills, 1952) who put forward the term local genius to describe the basic personality possessed by community groups in responding to the entry of concepts of life from outside. A similar definition was also conveyed by (Soebadio, 1986) which states that local genius is a national cultural identity/personality that is used in absorbing and processing foreign cultures to suit their own characteristics and abilities. Local wisdom is the truth of the past culture which has become a tradition and is continuously used as a way of life in an area Gobyah (2003 in Sartini, 2008).

Meanwhile, Sartini (2008) mentions local wisdom as local ideas that are wise, full of wisdom, of good value, which are embedded and followed by members of the community. Keraf (2010) defines local wisdom as beliefs, knowledge, insights, ethics, and customary habits that are lived, practiced, taught and passed down from generation to generation to guide and shape behavior patterns. WhereasSibarani (2012)

defines local wisdom as a form of indigenous knowledge in society that comes from the noble values of the local culture to regulate the order of people's lives.

In society, the concept of local wisdom manifests in various forms. Sirtha (in Sartini, 2008) convey that local wisdom lives in society in various forms. The forms of local wisdom in society can be in the form of values, norms, ethics, beliefs, customs, customary law, and special rules. Haryanto (2014) states that the practice of local wisdom in the community is manifested in social rules in the form of values, norms, ethics, beliefs, customs, customary law, and special rules. In addition, local wisdom is also manifested through ceremonial rites in the form of rituals and traditional ceremonies as well as philosophy in the form of advice, proverbs, rhymes, poetry, and folklore.

Meanwhile, Wahyudi (2014) emphasizes local wisdom as an unwritten rule in the form of customs, words of wisdom, and proverbs. The embodiment of local wisdom in culture was also found by Ratna (2011), namely in the form of folk tales, songs, proverbs, sasanti, advice, slogans, and ancient books.

From this discussion, local wisdom can be understood as basic values that are inherent and characterize the life of a local community and are passed down from generation to generation through various forms of cultural expression in the form of customs, rules/norms, arts, languages, beliefs, and customs. daily habits.

### 3.1 Local Wisdom in People's Political Life

As a basic value of people's social life, the concept of local wisdom cannot be separated from the political aspect. According to the theory of political culture developed by Gabriel Almond, Sidney Verba & Lucian W. Pye, it is stated that a political process always occurs within a certain cultural sphere and within a certain period of time there must always be a dialectical process between political life and the cultural value system of society (Alamsyah, 2010). Furthermore, this theory states that psychological orientation to social objects in a community's political system will go through a process of internalization into the form of orientations that are cognitive (knowledge, understanding, and belief), affective (emotional bonding), and evaluative (judgments or opinions that are involve standard values).

Meanwhile, a more practical view on the role of local wisdom in the political life of the community was put forward by Sartini (2008) which states that

local wisdom has a role in providing political meaning in patron-client power. This can be interpreted that the values of local wisdom can also become guidelines that regulate the pattern of relations between leaders and local communities.

### 3.2 Local Wisdom as a Benchmark of Leader Characteristics

In the context of direct democracy, the political meaning of local wisdom is reflected among other things by the philosophy of the ideal leader. Local wisdom in various regions generally has a conception, either in the form of history, legend, or prophecy, about an ideal leader figure, who is wise, and able to create a harmonious society and a better life. Along with the journey of the political system in Indonesia, the concept of an ideal leader has undergone a transformation from a cultural concept to a guidance for the community in choosing the right figure or figure to become a leader according to the characteristics possessed by the ideal leader.

For example, in Javanese culture, the characterization of an ideal leader has been described in hasta brata principle which describes a leader as having 8 characteristics that represent objects in the universe (Utomo, 2009), that is:

- 1) Pindha Jaladri, A leader must be like the sea which means he must have a broad heart and view, can accommodate all aspirations from anyone, with patience, compassion, and understanding towards his people. Placing all people on the same level and with the same dignity so that they can act fairly and wisely;
- 2) Pindha Chandra, A leader must act like the moon, which is bright and cool, able to care for the hearts of his people with a firm attitude and his decisions do not cause conflict. Able to provide motivational encouragement to raise the spirits of the people, in joy and sorrow;
- 3) Pindha Kartika, A leader must be able to become a star, who emits bright rays, and has a fixed place in the sky, so that he can be a guide and should be an example. Do not hesitate to carry out the decisions that have been agreed upon, not easily influenced by misleading parties;
- 4) Pindha Surya, A leader must have qualities like the sun, like the ray of life needed by the whole universe, the energy of a leader must give guidance and solutions to the problems faced by his people;
- 5) Pindha Arga, A leader must have a character like a mountain, who is firm and sturdy, has

firmness, physical and psychological strength, and does not easily give up defending the truth and defending his people;

- 6) Pindha Dahana, A leader must have properties like fire, the energy of a leader is expected to be able to warm hearts and burn the spirit of his people to do good and fight evil;
- 7) Pindha Bayu, A leader must have traits like the wind, a leader must be able to travel and be present anywhere, regardless of place and time. Therefore, a leader must be able to blend in at all levels of society and be fair, not discriminatory or discriminate between races, groups and religions; and
- 8) Pindha Buwana, A leader must have characteristics like the earth, a leader must try to always be ready and able to be a source of necessities of life for anyone, understand what is needed by his people, and provide assistance to anyone without favoritism.

The value of local wisdom in determining the ideal leader is also found in Sundanese culture which is contained in the parigeuing conception (Permana et al., 2020). One of parigeuing's elaboration narratives is that the qualities of an ideal leader are as follows:

- 1) Cangingan, a leader must be skilled and agile;
- 2) Emét, the leader must have a 'non-consumptive' nature, spend money according to his needs;
- 3) Gapitan, the leader must be willing to sacrifice for his confidence and the community or his subordinates;
- 4) Imeut, the leader must be thorough and careful in dealing with a problem or policy;
- 5) Karawaléya, is the trait of 'generous' or called "beréhan";
- 6) Langsitan, a leader must be ready to do all kinds of work (rapékan);
- 7) Leukeun, must be diligent, diligent, and patient;
- 8) Morogol-rogol, a leader must have a high enthusiasm for work;
- 9) Paka Pradana, a leader must dare to appear polite, courteous and ethical;
- 10) Purusa ning sa, the leader must have the spirit of a hero, honest, brave for the sake of truth;
- 11) Rajeun, the leader must be diligent; and
- 12) Widagda, the leader must be wise, rational and have a balance of taste, do not be arbitrary.

### 3.3 Local Wisdom Creates Local Elite

In addition to acting as a guide in determining the characteristics of the ideal leader figure or figures that must be chosen, local wisdom in several regions has a further political role, namely determining which

group or groups may become leaders. The political elite created by local wisdom can be based on the classification of historical social strata, namely the nobility, as happened in Bugis society where the Assajireng cultural concept has placed the Ajjoreng (noble) group as the only source of potential leaders. In addition, political elites can also come from certain social roles, such as in the politics of champions that occur in Banten society. Furthermore, local wisdom can also produce a political elite based on a certain lineage, as exemplified by the Trah Kyai Kholil political elite in the Bangkalan Madura region.

### 3.4 Assajireng in Political Practice

Assajireng or known as kinship is something that is considered important in achieving success and success for the Bugis. The existence of the family plays a very important role in achieving and maintaining success. In Bugis society, the role of descendants of Ajjoreng (nobles) in government in the Regency is very influential, even at the top level as regional officials, and is still highly trusted by some people to be successful in leading the region. Likewise in the Bone area, descendants of nobles to local sons have influence in the government system. The practice of prioritizing kinship in the distribution of positions is also still very strong, and becomes the basic principle to maintain and maintain power with whitewater authority as dignity in its implementation. Besides that, The embodiment of maintaining power is also carried out in the form of marriage or better known as political marriage. This activity is carried out by the regional head who marries his biological son to the daughter of an official in the local government. The people of Bone consider that those who can build a region are those who have noble blood. The status of arung owned by government power holders can be created through political marriages to maintain their power when their period has ended and will be continued by their descendants, through candidacy for Regent. Carrying political colleagues from marriage also plays an important role in sustaining power so that it becomes stable and solid. They feel more confident that they are supported by their families because they are considered more pure and eternal. According to Changnon (1983), the highest political stability is a strong biological kinship ties. Kinship is defined as a system consisting of relations to oppositions in the family, such as husband and wife, father and son.

One of the successful teams from the candidate for Regent of Bone Regency stated firmly that the candidate for regent is a son of the region with a

whitewater title and has the ability in his field. Based on this expression, the election of the Regent is greatly influenced by the purity of a person's nobility. Reality on the ground also confirms that noble descent is one of the conditions for winning in the election of the Regent of Bone (Hijang & Amelia, 2019). Candidates for leaders with the title of whitewater are still highly trusted by the community. This is motivated by the administration of government based on humanity and deliberation, so that people are still guided by customs and culture, as well as various advices from the Kingdom of Bone. Someone from noble descent is also considered to have more understanding of the criteria for a leader, such as Lempu' (behavior); Getteng (istiqamah); and ada tongeng (told right). The principle of life of the Bone people, which came from the message of Kajaolaliddong, a bone scholar (1507-1586) who had been conveyed to the King of Bone, namely that there were four factors that raised the kingdom, namely (1) Seuwani, Tematinroi matanna Arung MangkauE mitai munrinna gauE (The King's eyes were not closed thinking about result of all actions), (2) Maduanna, Maccapi Arung MangkauE duppai ada' (The king must be smart to answer questions), (3) Matellunna, Maccapi Arung MangkauE mpinru ada' (The king must be good at making words or answers), dan (4) Maeppa'na, Tettakalupai surona mpawa ada tongeng (Duta don't forget to convey the right words).

The cultural system in Bone Regency is basically a testament to local wisdom which is interpreted in the present context. Cultural will with a symbol of power that can limit the participation of the people of Bone. Participation in this case is a step for the community to be more democratic in realizing the development of the Bone Regency towards a better direction. In addition, the author also observes the situation in the community which seems monotonous and limited in accessing policies from the government. The system of government and family is almost inseparable, both policies and decisions are also inseparable from political interests. The opinion of the leader's family also influences every decision of the Regent. The practice of political marriage, as well as placing someone in a government position on the basis of kinship not performance, to dismissing an employee because it is not in line with the leader's decision, is contrary to the advice that is a requirement for leaders in Bone Regency, where the standard of leader according to the people of Bone is a leader who has a positive attitude, honest and fair (Lempu').

The history of the Bone kingdom and local customs created a local elite in this context, namely

the descendants of arung who were believed to be able to become regional leaders. This leads to efforts to maintain power through a kinship system that does not escape the attitude of pragmatism for the interests of certain individuals and groups. Today, the interpretation of history and customs has become biased, where during the reign of the kingdom the leadership was still purely honest in running its government, while the current government system which is very close to the kinship system is prone to causing cases of nepotism. This is influenced by the orientation of the interests of kinship leaders who are no longer in accordance with the cultural value system, as well as the motto of the Bone community, namely, Lempu', Getteng, and ada tongeng.

### 3.5 Banten Champion Politics

The political process in Banten in terms of politics and government bureaucracy is closely related to the two informal leader entities, namely kiyai and champions. This is influenced by the culture of the people who are thick with Islam. It is not surprising that candidates who want to advance in regional elections must embrace the two entities. The existence of a champion in Banten is closely related to the nature of courage, physical strength, mastering mystical things and being obedient to the kiyai. With these personality characteristics, Jawara is considered the leader of a certain group in society. Jawara is one of the mutid of kiyai who has self-defense ability in processing the body, knowledge of brajamusti, kanuragan, magical power, and authority of charisma, besides that he also carries out social activities with a spirit of struggle (Irfani, 2011).

The role of the champion as a social element has a strong influence in Banten and is often able to support local and central government policies. Previous research, such as Kartodirdjo (1984), Hamid (1987) and Tihami (1992) explained that the champion had long been a social element that had influence, even being a leader in the fields of economy, religion and politics.

The existence of a champion as an influential local elite in the community shows participation in political participation. Jawara is able to continue to exist in the midst of the political arena in Banten because it has the ability to mobilize mass, of course by adapting local culture which still strongly believes in the power of the champions. According to (Irfani, 2011) based on the results of his research, it shows that the pattern of political behavior of the champions is included in the pattern of pragmatic behavior. This behavior is motivated by knowledge and belief that leaders must



be respected, and believe that leaders are legally valid because they are elected through elections.

The source of legitimacy for the leadership of the champions is obtained from local culture, with the traditional type of authority leadership capable of controlling strategic institutions in various fields, thus obtaining structural legitimacy. Elite champions are also strongly supported internally, where subordinates are easily mobilized by promoting a pattern of patrimonial relationships that make subordinates bond with the leader.

The power of the champions in the context of local politics in Banten is influenced by political culture, traditional authority, control over strategic institutions, structural legitimacy, patrimonialism of leaders, and symbiotic relationships with other elites. With their power, they try to control the institutions they control, the non-governmental organizations that are opposite to them and against critical groups.

### 3.6 Trah Kholil, Bangkalan

Trah in the Madurese tradition is a descendant name which contains a family lineage. But today, it has changed to the name of a large family association based on the order of the genealogy of the extended family. The figure of a kiai for the Madurese community, especially in Bangkalan, is a charismatic person and full of authority. Most of the kiai in Bangkalan still have a lineage from Syaikhona Moh. Kholil is a cleric descended from Sunan Gunung Jati whose market is in Martajasah Bangkalan, and sent down almost all kiai in Bangkalan (Rifai, 2013).

Today, the existence of Trah Kholil is directly or indirectly involved in practical politics in Bangkalan. This is shown, among other things, by the Regent who was elected by the Bangkalan community as individuals who have direct ancestry or the Trah Kholil.

### 3.7 Identity Politics in Local Wisdom

In the history of democracy in Indonesia, local culture and wisdom tend to be forgotten. The centralization policy during the New Order era had narrowed the space for local economic, social and cultural values to appear, and finally gave birth to uniformity, which from the interests of power meant facilitating control (S. Usman, 2003). The role of local culture in democracy has only attracted interest after the era of decentralization. The issuance of Law Number 22 of 1999 concerning Regional Government and Law Number 25 of 1999 concerning Financial Balance between Central and Regional Governments have

been considered a "helping god" for the revival of regional culture (Pranoto, 2005). Along with the rise of local politics in this era of decentralization, the phenomenon of "sons of the region" has also emerged, which is often based on local cultural values.

One example of the concept of identity politics in the value of local wisdom can be seen in the Dalihan Na Tolu principle in the Batak community. The similarity of ancestors and history creates solidarity among the Batak people. One of the principles of solidarity that is firmly held by the nomad Batak community who also has an important influence in the political field for individual and group political decision making is Dalihan Na Tolu. This principle is used as a political force for ethnic Batak political actors who advance in political contestation. Dalihan Na Tolu contains the principle "dang tumago tu halak adong do hita" which means why should someone else, if there is a family from us. This principle also shows a Batak ethnic fanaticism, which puts their ethnicity first in providing support for political power.

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