

Election and Political Participation: Case Study - Regional Head Election of Labuhanbatu Regency in Simultaneous Regional Head Election in 2020

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Keywords: Regional Head Election, Voters, Political Participation.

Abstract: Referring to a definition, the characteristic of a democratic state is how much the state involves the community in planning and implementing the cycle of leadership change in the context of political participation. Because the political participation of the people (voters) is an important aspect in a democratic state order. This study uses the theory of Robert Dahl which says that the size of a democratic election is the existence of general elections, rotation of power, open recruitment and public accountability. To obtain information and data as the basis for problem analysis, this research uses two methods, desk study and field study. From the results of research in the 2020 simultaneous local elections, democracy in Labuhanbatu Regency states that the level of community political participation is very dynamic, but the problem is related to motivation. Most of the people admit that he chose to be driven by the transaction factor and the element of emotional closeness to the candidate and the winning team. The candidate's vision and mission is not a measure in choosing. Several things that are suggested in this research are that the electoral law needs to be revised, especially in relation to candidate requirements. So far, the law has not limited which people are eligible to become candidates and which are not. Because there is no limit, people often choose wrongly or don't want to vote because they don't like the candidates proposed by channels through political institutions, namely political parties. Institutional strengthening of political parties needs to be done because it affects the performance of political parties in conducting regeneration. Poor cadre of political parties causes candidates from political parties to lack quality so that candidates cannot avoid money politics to influence people in voting. The quality of the organizers, especially at the ad hoc committee level, needs to be maximized. There are people who do not vote due to technical problems. KPU socialization to the public also needs to be intensified. Many did not vote because they were not registered in the DPT or did not receive clear information regarding voter obligations. Some people still think that the community must accept the invitation as a condition to cast their ballot as a challenge that must be answered together towards a progressive democracy.

1 INTRODUCTION

Democracy is one of the systems used in Indonesia. Democracy is the voice of the people. That is, the people determine sovereignty and determine the direction of a country's political journey and government. Democracy explains the principle that every human being has the same rights and obligations under the laws of government. Elections are the most important means of democracy. It is not only an understanding of a process of real realization of people's sovereignty but also as an instrument of social and political change and ongoing succession. Elections are considered as a real form of sovereignty

that is in the hands of the people and the most tangible form of people's participation in the administration of the state. Because with the general election, the community individually has the right to choose a leader or representative of the people.

The hallmark of a democratic state is how much the state involves the community in planning and conducting general elections. Because the political participation of the people (voters) is an important aspect in a democratic state order. In relation to democracy, political participation affects the legitimacy by society of the running of a government. In general elections, for example, political participation affects the legitimacy of the community towards the elected candidate or pair of candidates.

Every society has their own preferences and interests to make their choice in elections. It can be said that the future of elected public officials in an election depends on the preferences of the people as voters. Not only that, public political participation in elections can be seen as an evaluation and control of the community over the leader or government, the sovereign community as the holder of sovereignty over its leader.

Therefore, efforts to increase public political participation must be based on strong analysis and arguments. This is due to the need to realize strategic steps in increasing the quantity and quality of public political participation in elections and improving the electoral system for the better in the future. That means that the arguments and analyzes that are born must be based on, first, the right methodology or framework to understand the dynamics of political participation, and second, based on a strong sensitivity to the dynamics that develop in the economic, administrative, political, and social and economic areas. cultural. With that awareness, the entirety of this report has been systematically compiled, where at the beginning the substance of public political participation in elections in a democratic country will be discussed.

That the election is a mechanism adopted in a democratic system to produce leaders or public officials. Therefore, the basic principles as a conscious society to participate in elections must be formed in the community. The purpose of the discussion in this section is to try to place the essence of the community (voters) in a democratic government system. Furthermore, it will be revealed in the next step how the research methods and analysis flow used in this research will be. This section is formed from academic awareness that the right methodology and analytical framework will determine the accuracy of the findings and recommendations in this research.

Labuhanbatu Regency, in the 2020 post-conflict local election, is a special concern for the journey of democracy in North Sumatra, because it runs with two revoting (PSU). The five candidates who competed in the local elections of Labuhanbatu Regency are figures who are fighters, competitive and never give up. The re-voting leaves the two strongest candidates, namely: the Asri Pair and the Era Pair, both have the opportunity to be elected as Regional Heads in Labuhanbatu Regency, the community is faced with two choices, namely, continue or change. Political participation in the regional elections of Labuhanbatu Regency in 2020 exceeded the target of 76% (target) while the final result reached 79.30%

(exceeded the target) with a total of 297,682 voters. This figure represents the total political participation of the people of Labuhanbatu Regency when compared to the previous post-conflict local election in 2015 which was only 72% (Labuhanbatu Regency KPUD, 2020). The presence of PSU which was held twice in several sub-districts in Labuhanbatu Regency became one of the variables that determined the increase in political participation in Labuhanbatu Regency.

Furthermore, to construct an appropriate analysis and remain standing on the context (geopolitics and sociocultural in the Minahasa space), this research also underlies it with an in-depth discussion of the background section of the Labuhanbatu Regency context as the scope of this research. The goal is that the dimensions of the context can be included as a unit of analysis that participates in influencing voter participation so that it will produce a more comprehensive analysis. After completing the analysis method and flow, and contextual setting, the next step is to try to explore voter participation in the legislative and presidential and vice presiden elections based on field findings that occurred in 2019. In the end, the results of the elaboration will produce conclusions and recommendations as action steps.

Further for the parties, namely candidates, political parties, KPU, and the winning team. Elections are globally recognized as an arena for establishing representative democracies and carrying out periodic changes of government. According to the theory of minimalist democracy (Schumpeterian), elections are an arena that accommodates competition (contestation) between political actors to gain power; people's political participation to make choices; liberalization of civil and political rights of citizens (Larry, 1986). Democracy also underlines that elections are an opportunity for opposition parties and the people to carry out checks and balances against the ruling party.

Although many people think that this conception of democracy tends to be minimalist, the minimalist practice of democracy has formed a system for determining/filling public positions in all democratic countries. This means that elections have been institutionally institutionalized and become a universal mechanism in the political system in democratic countries (Robert, 1971). In the context of elections, the election mechanism is said to be democratic if it meets several Robert Dahl parameters:

1. General election
2. Rotation of power

3. Recruitment openly
4. Public accountability.

Referring to this view, it is increasingly clear that the spirit of democracy demands a wide participation space and has constructed our democratic system on direct democracy where the people directly participate in making their political choices without being represented (Prihatmoko, 2015). In modern democracies, the implementation of direct elections is not just a procedure but also a necessity to correct and correct mistakes in the implementation of government. Quality elections must have criteria that provide opportunities for the people to;

- a). Choosing between different policy bids and competing parties or candidates
- b). Hold elected officials accountable for their actions
- c). Transforming the symbolic conception (people's sovereignty)

Into real real action at this point the conception of the universality of the individual in a democracy (having equal rights) must be upheld. That all citizens have the same opportunities and opportunities in evaluating and determining their leaders. So that political participation in this case the participation of citizens in elections becomes important. At the same time, a good understanding of the strategic roles of citizens will encourage the quality of democracy.

2 METHOD

To obtain information and data as the basis for problem analysis, this research uses two methods, namely:

1. Desk Study. A desk study was conducted to examine various published materials (mass media news and literature) related to the process of organizing the regional head and deputy regional head elections in Labuhanbatu Regency in 2020. Both in the form of library theory, statistics, monitoring results, official documents from other institutions, research results from other institutions, and others. This method is important to provide perspective and secondary data in understanding public participation in elections. In addition, this method can provide a basic map of community political participation in elections in Labuhanbatu Regency. The results of this desk study will be reviewed using framing analysis and content analysis (Alemika, 2006).

2. Field Study. Field Study is intended to collect primary data through in-depth interviews with relevant institutions and stakeholders. This method has advantages, namely in its ability to explore the

details of issues that are not covered in the desk study or considering the complexity of the problems that exist in elections, it is almost impossible for this study to cover in detail aspects of public participation in elections. Furthermore, this research is a library research, using a descriptive approach and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2010). The data collection technique is carried out by utilizing literature and online data searches, as well as in-depth interviews with the community and community leaders in Labuhanbatu Regency, who are competent in answering political problems. The research data were then analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques, the stages of which consisted of data reduction or data reduction; data presentation or data display; and drawing conclusions (Bloor, 1997).

Even with a strict method, it must be admitted that it is very possible that there are dimensions of the problem that are not recorded properly. This means that there are limitations to the scope of this study.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Participation is essential in a democracy. Therefore, to realize political participation, there are at least three things that must be considered. First, there must be competition in the sense that public positions must be competed. Second, participation in order to influence government policy. Third, freedom of opinion, in this case the government must not hinder the movement of community groups or organizations. Thus, participation has an important role, both for each individual to control and supervise government policies in order to avoid abusive actions that can harm society, as well as for the government to measure the high or low level of the democratic system in a country.

In the implementation of the 2020 Labuhanbatu district election, participation has several types and patterns, including: 1) Autonomous, namely conscious participation intended to influence the government, 2) Conventional, direct participation such as elections, local elections, etc., 3) Non-conventional, participation is carried out such as petitions, democracy, and reform, 4) Driven, participation is carried out or driven in an institution that moves, one of which is a political party (political party) which is used as the main institution and central institution to organize the residents of Labuhanbatu Regency to participate.

One indicator of the success of the implementation of the Election can be seen at the level of Community Participation. One of the

challenges in carrying out the 2020 Pilkada is because it is carried out in parallel with the Covid-19 pandemic which is still engulfing all regions in Indonesia. The challenge is how to convince voters to attend and participate in the implementation of elections, especially on voting day. All elements must work together to ensure that the public can attend and participate in every stage without fear of contracting Covid-19. This is also a test stone for the implementation of discipline, because the implementation of the regional elections in the midst of the current pandemic not only guarantees the safety of citizens, but also the quality of the elections.

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Community participation at the moment of the election is not only seen from the high number of voters who attend using their voting rights at polling stations. However, it is measured by the level of public awareness and active involvement in all stages of the election administration. Participation aims to actively encourage democratic activities for all electoral processes. The importance of focusing on participation is an indicator of improving the quality of democracy and the nation's political life. Therefore, public political participation, both in formal and extra-formal forms in participating in supervising or monitoring the course of the election, should not be underestimated. Because, its existence can prevent counter-democratic actions that can tear and degrade people's loyalty to the democratic system in Indonesia, such as the political participation of the people of Labuhanbatu Regency in 2020 in the following table:

Table.1: Level of Community Participation in Regional Election of Labuhanbatu Regency in 2020

No	District	Numbers of Voters (DPT)	Voting Rights User	Un-chose	Participation Rate
1	Bilah Barat	23.902	20.183	3.719	83,3%
2	Bilah Hilir	36.906	28.557	8.349	75,6%
3	Bilah Hulu	39.150	32.165	6.895	76,9%
4	Panai Hilir	26.878	19.447	7.431	75,3%
5	Panai Hulu	24.808	18.953	5.855	76,1%
6	Panai Tengah	25.739	18.847	6.892	78%
7	Pangkalan	23.080	18.652	4.428	73,9%
8	Rantau Selatan	44.654	36.727	7.927	81,2%
9	Rantau Utara	60.651	46.788	13.863	72,3%
Result		240.316	297.682		79,3%

Source: Labuhanbatu Regency KPU official website, 2022.

From this data, the essence of public political participation is a form of embodiment of a democratic state. Countries without public political participation tend to be authoritarian and centralized. Political experience during the new order showed the arbitrariness of political decision makers in every policy formulation and program planning. As a result, the policies or decisions that are made are often not in accordance with the needs of the community. Community political participation is a form of self-giving in the form of participation, presence, ideas, involvement in policy formulation and self-giving in supervision when the policy is about to be implemented.

In achieving democracy, political participation is an important element that must be present in every regional head election. Freedom in expressing opinions and choosing a candidate absolutely must exist in a country characterized by democracy in it, and Indonesia is no exception. The existence of people's freedom in carrying out political participation is a benchmark for seeing the existence

of democracy in a country. According to Conyers (1994:154), there are three main reasons why community participation has a very important nature. First, community participation is a tool to obtain information about the conditions, needs and attitudes of the local community, without which development programs and projects will fail. Second, the community will trust a development project or program more if they feel involved in the preparation and planning process, because they will know more about the ins and outs of the project and will have a sense of ownership of the project. Third, there is an assumption that it is a democratic right if people are involved in the development of their own society. It can be felt that they also have the right to participate in providing advice in determining the type of development to be implemented.

The political participation of the people in the General Election also greatly determines the direction and progress of a nation. The quality of political participation will be largely determined whether all people who have fulfilled the obligation to vote can vote, whether the community is given access or convenience in voting and whether the community can choose a truly qualified leader based on belief and trust in the candidate he chooses.

The real election problem is not only limited to the technical process where many violations are often found, but the main problem is that the results or substance of the election are still far from being expected. The final result that is actually expected from the election is to produce an ideal leader. The fact so far is that in addition to the implementation process that is still amateurish and unprofessional, the elected regional heads produced through the election process are still considered to have low quality, ranging from limited leadership professionalism, legal problems and no progress from the regions they lead until the time they end their positions.

One of the reasons for the weakness of the election is caused by the regulation itself. Law No. 22 of 2007 concerning the election of Regional Heads states that the requirements to become a Regional Head candidate must be supported by political parties, a combination of political parties and supported by the percent provisions for candidates who wish to nominate through an independent channel. It also includes a 30-year-old statement, devoted to God Almighty, fluent in speaking, reading, writing in Indonesian and loyal to Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution and the ideals of the Proclamation of August 17, 1945. You must also attach a photocopy of your diploma, a statement that you have never been sentenced to a crime, a statement from the prison that

explains that the prospective candidate in question has finished serving his prison sentence based on a court decision, and a certificate of being physically and mentally healthy and free from drugs from a doctor at the puskesmas or hospital. government. Candidates are also required to attach proof of registration as a voter or a certificate from the PPS Chair, a statement of willingness to work full time, an irrevocable resignation letter for regional heads, deputy regional heads, members of the TNI, members of the National Police, BUMN/ BUMD.

The requirements mentioned above are only limited to the normative provisions regarding the requirements for regional head candidates, not to the provisions of substantive requirements. The law has not yet been designed to screen and produce quality leaders. To produce quality leaders, it should be started from the regulations that govern them. There must be rules that not only include formal normative requirements as stated above but must also include special requirements, especially regarding leadership experience. That is why election participants are mostly followed by candidates who are not yet established in terms of leadership so that they become easy targets for entrepreneurs who have large capital to hold them.

Therefore, the election law needs to be revised by requiring special requirements for regional head candidates, namely leadership experience such as experience in leadership of government, mass organizations, political parties, companies or other leadership experiences that can strengthen their experience as regional heads. The Election Law should be drafted to limit those with minimal experience from becoming members of Regional Heads. In addition to strengthening election regulations, another thing that needs to be addressed is the strengthening of election management institutions. Experience in a number of regions, the low quality of the electoral process is due to the unprofessionalism of the election organizers themselves, especially at the level of the ad hoc committee.

Many election organizers at this level, namely PPK, PPS, and KPPS, have the status of civil servants and the recruitment mechanism is carried out by involving (recommendations) village officials so that they are so young to be intervened by competing political forces, especially when one of the post-conflict local election contestants is an incumbent regional head. As a result, many violations occurred as a result of conspiracy (intimidation) between the organizers and one of the political forces. Operators at this level often do not have experience in terms of

the work they are dealing with. Recruitment that was done when the election process was already underway was one of the reasons for their limited experience. In some cases, voting has been carried out at the polling stations, but the organizers have not had time to follow the technical guidance (Bimtek) for the administration of elections, so that their main tasks and functions are carried out to a minimum.

The results of the study as described above stated that one of the factors that caused the community not to participate was the weak socialization of the ad hoc committee to the community regarding the provisions for voting by the community. And one of the reasons for the increase in public participation is because of the figures and money politics carried out by the candidates. Some people still think that the provision for voters is to wait for a written invitation from the committee. The results of the study stated that one of the factors that the community did not vote in the 2020 Election in Labuhanbatu Regency was due to distrust of regional head candidates who did not appear to be generational according to regeneration in the region, both distrust of campaign promises, not being interested in the vision and mission offered until there was a the uncertainty of the community whether when he chooses he will have an influence or change for the community.

Community participation in Labuhanbatu Regency which is dominated by participation in voting and total apathy is certainly influenced by several factors. In explaining the factors of high and low political participation, this paper refers to Ramlan Surbakti by dividing five factors that are considered to influence the level of political participation, as follows (Surbakti, 2010): (1) Political Awareness. (2) Trust in the government. (3) Social Status and Economic Status. (4) Parents' Political Affiliation. (5) Organizational Experience. This theory explains that someone has high political awareness and trust in the government, political participation tends to be active, on the contrary, political awareness and trust in government is low, political participation tends to be passive. These two factors do not stand alone, but are also influenced by factors of social and economic status, political affiliation of parents and organizational experience.

4 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION FACTORS IN LABUHANBATU REGENCY

From the research findings, KPUD's efforts to increase participation in the Regional Head Election of Labuhanbatu Regency which will take place in 2020. The explanation is as follows:

1. Socialization What needs to be done is to maximize the socialization process about the importance of general elections in a democratic country, not just technical socialization of general elections. Although the provisions of the law state that the socialization is carried out related to the technical implementation of the election, it is necessary to socialize all things behind the implementation of the election.

2. Volunteer Democracy The volunteer democracy program is a social movement intended to increase the participation and quality of voters in exercising their right to vote. This program involves the widest possible participation of the community where they are placed as pioneers of democracy for their communities. Democracy volunteers become KPUD partners in carrying out the district/city-based voter socialization and education agenda. This form of community participation is expected to encourage the growth of high awareness and full responsibility of the community to use their rights in elections optimally.

3. The Role of Social Media Creating people to follow the development of the election process through the mass media, this has become a form of socialization to the community, so that people know for sure about the Pilkada process. Related to improving the performance of election organizers, it is not only related to the technical performance of the implementation, but also in terms of raising awareness about the importance of community participation in the implementation of elections, so that the public can understand what participation can be done and what are the outputs of that participation.

The next factor is seeing the territory of Labuhanbatu Regency close to the border of Riau Province as an environment for oil palm plantation business actors, giving rise to the problem of social inequality status. The lack of awareness of the public and immigrants to apply for a domicile certificate of residence, resulted in the election of people not using their right to vote because the location of the polling station was not in accordance with their place of residence. A similar opinion was expressed by Mr. Hanafi as a community leader in Labuhanbatu Regency who said: "Some people are still low in some

sub-districts, their awareness to exercise their right to vote and are lazy to apply for a residence certificate, it can be seen that in Labuhanbatu Regency there are many people who administratively live here but do not live here, so that at the time of the election they did not use their right to vote, but because the Labuhanbatu KPUD and the winning team were proactive in picking up the ball so the data for the right to vote was recorded.

The increasing awareness of the people of Labuhanbatu Regency, which is 76% in exercising their right to vote and managing their population status, is one of the causes of the increased participation of the people of Labuhanbatu Regency in the 2020 post-conflict local election. The public's assessment of the government's performance from policy making and implementation of the promised program, will give confidence to the candidate for regional head to be given the mandate. However, until now the people of Labuhanbatu Regency are still difficult to give a positive assessment of the Regent and Deputy Regent Erik-Ellya who are considered to be able to fix problems in Labuhanbatu Regency.

One's organizational experience in influencing the community to participate in the 2020 Labuhanbatu Regency election can be proven by the statement of Mr. Shah Alam as Chairman of Baharuddin Rambe said: "Al Wasliyah seeks to influence the community to participate, by providing understanding to the community in choosing leaders based on their religion, education and attitude". Organizational experience affects community participation in participating in the 2020 Labuhanbatu Regency post-conflict local election activities, this factor is influenced by better understanding and attention to politics which tends to try to contribute to the community environment to participate in the 2020 Labuhanbatu Regency post-conflict local election, one's organizational experience in political participation activities applies on political and quasi-political organizations that are run on the framework of community political participation.

5 CONCLUSIONS

In this study, researchers found that the political participation of the people of Labuhanbatu Regency in the 2020 post-conflict local election was dominated by participation in voting and total apathy. The factors that influence the high political participation of the people in Labuhanbatu Regency in 2020 are: (1) Political awareness of the people of Labuhanbatu Regency in the Pilkada cannot be separated from

family ties in exercising their right to vote, (2) High public trust in the government and candidates greatly affects behavior the people of Labuhanbatu Regency to exercise their voting rights against the flow of change in Labuhanbatu Regency, (3) Social status and economic status of the upper middle and lower middle class using the right to vote are influenced by the majority of jobs in agriculture, goods and services. Furthermore, other factors, namely: (1) parental political affiliation has a role in influencing the community to participate, (2) Organizational experience has a better understanding and concern for politics and tends to try to influence the community to participate.

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