Election Supervision: Identity Politics In Election Dynamics In Baubau City

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ABSTRACT

Democracy is perhaps the most commonly heard term in many parts of the world. Especially in countries where the people yearn for a government that reflects the will of the people. Democratic elections must be kept away from forms of identity politics that can undermine the value of democracy. Misused identity politics can be destructive, with this instrument is not fulfilled, it will interfere with the legitimacy of the election results. This research uses descriptive qualitative normative legal research with library data collection techniques. The author's data analysis technique in this research uses logical and systematic analysis. The organization of elections in Indonesia, especially regional elections, must be treated appropriately. In Baubau City, the possibility of identity politics will continue to grow. Given the difficulty of exploiting identity politics in the campaign slogans of election participants, the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) must also be pro-active in coordinating with the General Election Commission (KPU), especially related to unifying understanding of the dangers of identity politics, election organizers in Indonesia, must formulate firmer regulatory measures to control excessive negative impacts. At least strengthen restrictions that discuss the substance of campaign material and what can and cannot be strictly regulated.

Keywords: *Supervision, Election, and Identity Politics*

1. Introduction

Democracy is perhaps the most commonly heard term in many parts of the world. Especially in countries where the people are struggling for a government that truly reflects the will of the people, which according to the origin of the word democracy, means "the people rule". Looking at the values or basic principles of democracy stated above, how a country provides space for its citizens to openly and freely express their ideas becomes very important (Qodir & Latief, 2011). Democracy is closely related to elections. In the current situation and conditions of the country, indirect democracy or democracy through representatives can realistically be carried out. To elect representative representatives of the people, general elections are the means (Santoso & Budhiati, 2019). The purpose of election is to carry out popular sovereignty and the realization of the political rights of the people to produce leaders who will occupy important positions in the government (Anantya Prawira 2019)

Surbakti, (2015). Political scientists believe that elections have several very important functions in the political system. These functions include choosing the organizers of the State. One of the main functions of elections is to elect leaders and state organizers such as presidents, governors, mayors, legislative members, and so on. These elections allow the people to choose their leaders democratically, thus ensuring that they have control over the running of the government and public policy (Fukuyama, 2013).

Guaranteeing political change: Elections are also a mechanism that can ensure periodic political change. In a democracy, elections are held regularly, usually every few years, and provide an opportunity for the people to elect new leaders and replace those who are ineffective or unpopular. This allows for elite circulation and periodic changes in the pattern and direction of public policy (Sartori, 2012). The regulation has led to the emergence of several independent institutions to carry out judicial functions (Richard Zeldi Putra and Muhram Naadu 2021).

Conflict resolution tool: In addition, elections can also serve as a means of conflict resolution. In complex societies, differences and conflicts of interest may arise, and elections allow for a wide range of differences and conflicts of interest in society to be transferred into the legislative and executive branches for open and civilized

deliberation, debate and resolution. It allows people to express their opinions peacefully and democratically, and creates the political stability necessary for sustainable social and economic development (Diamond, 2010). In order to properly perform these functions, elections must be held regularly, openly and fairly, and must be governed by applicable rules and laws. Likewise, public participation in elections is essential to maintain the political balance and stability necessary for sustainable national development (MoJ, 2017).

Elections are expected to achieve the goals of the state must always be continuously pursued by the legitimate authorities as a translation of the implementation of state functions outlined by the 1945 Constitution (Isharyanto, 2016). Elections are a momentum that must involve all stakeholders of democracy in their respective capacities. Community participation, which is getting stronger both conventionally and non-conventionally in participating in elections, is an important catalyst for the consolidation of democracy (Heriyanto, 2024). The general norm in the conduct of elections is that there is no guarantee that elections are democratic. Democratic elections, in their implementation, must be based on the values of transparency, accountability, credibility and integrity, thus requiring additional instruments to fulfill these values. The institution in question is the electoral oversight system. If this instrument is not fulfilled, then the uncertainty of guaranteeing the implementation of democratic elections will undoubtedly interfere with the legitimacy of the election results.The discourse on oversight has a broad spectrum. Surveillance is limited to the function of Electoral Observation. International organizations usually carry out this monitoring system. They do not have the authority to intervene in the organization of elections in a country. They aim to collect data and information to assess the electoral process (Afifuddin, 2020).

Democracy requires succession of leadership through regular elections, but it is also a means of realizing popular sovereignty by electing legislative members. Given that elections are an opportunity for the people to elect political officials, supervision is needed to ensure that elections run honestly and fairly (Dede Sri Kartini, 2017). This guarantee is important because it has implications for public trust in the electoral process, election results and democracy itself. Effective electoral oversight is believed to be an instrument capable of providing guarantees for democratic elections. Electoral oversight practices have several different characteristics, depending on who conducts them, the extent of their authority and the scope of their oversight. In general, election supervision practices can be divided into the typologies of Election Monitoring and Election Supervision.

Bawaslu's position as a formal institution has a mandate to conduct supervision and follow up on the results of supervision. However, Bawaslu wants its management to be carried out by Bawaslu and involve many parties. In the midst of the transformation of the digital revolution, Bawaslu also approaches the community by utilizing social media to communicate with the wider community to take an active role in civic functions. Bawaslu builds voter education so that they can do two things. First, they use their voting rights in elections and local elections. Second, they want to play an active role in overseeing the elections and then partner with Bawaslu in reporting findings of alleged violations. To realize aspirational and democratic elections, participation is needed, which is interpreted as taking part or participation. JJ Rousseau in his book "The Social Contract", says that participation is significant for the self-development and independence of citizens (Iwan Satriawan, 2016).

Identity politics is used by emphasizing the differences between one group and another. Indonesia is a country with a pluralistic composition of society, as well as the conditions of the Baubau city community which until now has developed both in terms of development to the diversity of its people who come from different cultural backgrounds and beliefs. Moreover, the Baubau city community is inhabited by people from the Muna, Bugis, Wakatobi, Cia-Cia etc. tribes. In the development in question, it is often utilized in every political contestation, which tends to have implications for the General Election (DPD, DPR, Prov / City / Regency DPRD) and the Baubau City Election. However, we still hope that another trend is that people's choices of people's representatives and election candidates in 2024 will be determined more by credibility, integrity, and program factors (Fernandes, 2019).

Departing from the facts above, the current political elites prefer to use identity politics rather than campaign in accordance with the regulations. Campaign jargon by relying on self-identity is a form of identity politics that raises a variety of different responses in society (Wulan Dhani, 2019). Misused identity politics can be destructive, causing fanaticism, primodialism, and can even lead to SARA. SARA is a violation of the 1945 Constitution, especially Article 29 paragraph 2 regarding tolerance (Annisa & Satriawan, 2020). SARA can even complicate the realization of Indonesia's motto "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika". Therefore, it is necessary to have

maximum supervision of the implementation of elections so that identity politics that are misused do not harm the democracy that is expected through the means of elections.

Election supervisors cannot be separated from elections, so the two will go hand in hand because elections need supervisors so that the implementation process runs as expected, namely giving birth to fair and civilized leaders who can bring the Indonesian nation to prosperity (Jukari, 2021). Institutionally, through Law Number 7/2017 on General Elections, Bawaslu has also been equipped with a relatively stronger institutional structure, even to the lowest level, with adequate regulations. However, there are still many election violations that occur. Election violations not only disrupt the work of organizers, but also the political rights of citizens (Agam Primadi, 2019). Election Supervision by Bawaslu in the course of the election is very fundamental for Bawaslu of the Republic of Indonesia, which is a forum for many elements that participate in the implementation of elections, the method of implementing supervision by Bawaslu is present so that this institution can move as a structured and systematic election supervision function in the future (Muntuan, 2018). It is expected that in the implementation of elections and regional elections in Baubau City, violations in the form of black campaigns, with the image of identity politics, seem unavoidable to remain under surveillance. They will be dealt with in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

2. Method Research

This research uses normative legal research because it does not conduct field research. Methodologically, this research is descriptive qualitative. Secondary legal materials used are journals and related laws and regulations, Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning Elections and Law No. 10 of 2016 concerning Regional Elections. In this normative research, the author uses data collection techniques with library research. This data collection technique is carried out by reading, studying, and recording books and writings related to the subject matter of the research. The author's data analysis technique in this study uses logical and systematic analysis.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

In addition to problems in explaining identity politics, there are also obstacles in monitoring allegations of identity politics. Because Bawaslu oversees what is regulated by the General Election Commission Regulation (PKPU), Bawaslu needs a clear point of reference to organize campaigns without identity politics. In addition, the public hopes that Bawaslu can avoid and overcome alleged violations of the SARA campaign. The reasons that create identity politics must be overcome to maintain tolerance and the presence of any identity in the political space around us. There is carelessness or deliberateness of certain people or politicians in communicating that offends mass psychology, and the last is the media aspect (social media).

Self-identity campaigning is a form of identity politics that promotes the superiority of a candidate through an understanding of their identity. This influences people's choices in determining which candidate to vote for. This campaign raises a variety of public responses, from pro-candidate responses to contra responses. Finally, people's choices in determining which candidate to vote for may not be in accordance with the vision and mission carried by the candidate (Nguyen, 2021). According to Mardiana, D. (2020). Candidate pairs have used identity politics techniques by including vocabulary or campaign slogans that build their candidate identities containing ethnic, religious, racial, and intergroup (SARA) components".

The definition of identity politics or SARA politicization is very important. Furthermore, election organizers should make a clear report on this topic. Regarding Article 280 of Law Number 7/2017 on General Elections, the definition of identity politics needs to be explained in more depth. The provision stipulates that it is prohibited to insult, incite, pit against each other, and use violence during the election campaign. There is no term in the provisions of the Election Law that we can refer to as a formal definition.

The conclusion in identity politics is a political practice carried out by several groups or people who have physical and cultural similarities, ethnicity, religion, understanding, and other connections. Identity politics has developed in Indonesia with the regional head elections. Identity politics has more to do with ethnic, religious, ideological, and regional interests, which are generally expressed and represented by political elites with various articulations. People have used the technique of identity politics by including vocabulary or campaign slogans that build their candidate's identity containing ethnic, religious, racial and intergroup (SARA) components", according to the candidates in the election. This aims to win the election and get the most votes from the public. They

believe that the political communication they make to the public through messages and information in their campaign language will influence voters (Rakhmawati, E. 2018).

As a city with a pluralistic population, Baubau City is an urban area with a very diverse community. This diversity can then be used politically as a potential political force if it is packaged primordially, it can be imagined that between one community group and another group may have different regional origins so that politically it can be organized for the political interests of a group.

The fact that we can get every election moment is that the formation in the political arena always considers the origin of the group. Between candidates A to Z are formulated to represent their respective regional groups in order to ensure the strength of the voter base will be significantly raised. The formulation of identity politics above certainly also considers the best geostrategy, that in a certain area is inhabited by the dominant of a particular community group as well, so that this can be utilized by positioning our political "heroes" who have the same regional origins, so that a political movement initiated by primordialism is truly built.

The description above has positioned that identity politics is something that is often used in every period of political moments. On the good side, the dynamics of identity politics are a guarantee that the representation of the community is ensured to be accommodated due to emotional closeness, in the iconic language that is always used is "sakampo" which means one village or can be interpreted as having the same regional origin. The adverse impact of the dynamics of identity politics that we can find is that it always raises irritation in the community, so that community groups who feel as sons of the region feel sidelined and have no influence in their own environment.

Using identity politics in campaign slogans shows that it is incompatible with democracy, often creating divisions between groups, a symptom that democracy is no longer healthy. Election participants no longer convey their vision, goals and initiatives to gain public trust, but rather sell their identity to get the most votes. The emergence of identity politics is a sign of failure of civic education and democracy. The implementation of elections in Baubau City should have various positive implications for the progress and development of democracy. The post-reform democratic process has received much praise, because it took place peacefully without any bloodshed. The most encouraging assessment is Indonesia's inclusion as the third largest democracy, after India and the United States.

The rise of identity politics reflects the failure of civic and democratic education. Voters need to be helped to understand their function in government. They are elected as representatives of the people because they represent the voters, the people of Indonesia. Their visions, missions and plans must embody the aspirations and will of the people, which they must pursue and implement in their work. Convey in the vision and mission when they have solutions.

Then communicate the vision and mission to the audience, not through identity marketing in the form of slogans or buzzwords that demean opponents and are linked to real problems. Regarding the prohibitions that the Pilkada Law places on campaigns, the Pilkada Law lays out what is allowed and what is prohibited in campaigns. According to the Pilkada Law, campaigns are designed to convince voters by conveying the vision, mission, and programs of candidates for governor, regent, and mayor. However, the question arises whether highlighting the personal identity of election participants is included in campaign materials. The term 'campaign' in the election law does not mention the identity of election participants as a kind of offer to voters. This needs to be examined further because so far, election participants who participate in identity politics during the election campaign are not reprimanded or not classified as violators. Therefore, there is no severe punishment.

The General Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), which qualifies as part of the General Election Commission (KPU), mainly oversees the organization of elections and prevents and takes action against violations. It illustrates that the existence of Bawaslu institutions is not only a complement to the implementation of elections. In fact, Bawaslu institutions are very important in making legal decisions on special election wheels. In addition, they can also work together with the General Election Commission (KPU) as the election organizer to organize elections with sovereignty and integrity, which is expected by the community as the authority itself and is a strong commitment to the nation's identity as a state based on law in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

According to Indonesia's Election Law No. 10/2016, candidates are prohibited from insulting others based on their religion, ethnicity, race or political party during election campaigns. However, despite this regulation, many candidates still use campaign methods that focus on self-identity and can trigger SARA issues. As stated in a research article by Pradana and Perwira (2020), "campaign methods such as slogans and jargon that emphasize self-identity and lead to SARA are still widely used." Violations of these laws can lead to disputes and unfair competition among participants. As Yusuf (2019) notes, "violations of Pilkada Law No. 10/2016, Article 69 (b), will cause disputes between election participants for raising SARA issues." With the rise of identity politics in every election, racial and ethnic tensions become more widespread and can be used by opponents to destabilize the government. As mentioned in an article by Setiadi (2020), "when identity politics continues from election to election, it is believed that violence in elections will occur, deviant behavior that can endanger the democratic process and election participants, including voters." Effective communication skills are essential to avoid misunderstandings and misinformation, as noted by Kurniawan and Utami (2019), "communication skills are needed to avoid communication failures that can lead to misinformation."

Nuraini (2021) states that apart from the negative side of identity politics, there are positive things that can be taken, namely identity politics can be used to preserve the cultural values that characterize the group concerned so that the culture of the community group will be embedded strongly and firmly. Despite the times, it does not disappear quickly. In fact, this can be done considering that identity jargon can unite other groups, strive for the common good, and not cause group disputes. Meanwhile, identity politics can become dangerous if it is used to bring down opponents, insult and attack, and believe that the group is the most correct. This is where identity politics becomes a powerful tool for candidate pairs. To reduce the massiveness of identity politics, Bawaslu must also plan various tactics. Community group approaches include compiling a collection of six religious lectures on elections and rejecting SARA politicization, intelligence media management, and the Election Vulnerability Index (IKP).

3.2. Discussion

This study highlights the importance of safeguarding democratic elections from identity politics that can undermine the legitimacy of election results. These findings support previous theories regarding the negative impact of identity politics on democratic processes. Concrete steps from election institutions such as the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) and the General Election Commission (KPU) are necessary to address this challenge. Strict restrictions on divisive campaign materials should be implemented. References to previous studies strengthen the results of this research and provide deeper insights into identity politics and democratic elections. By implementing the recommendations of this study, Indonesia can enhance a fair and reflective electoral process that aligns with the will of the people.

4. Conclusion

The organization of elections in Indonesia, especially local elections, must be treated appropriately with historical rationale. The public must be fully aware of this. In a heterogeneous society like Baubau City, the possibility of identity politics will continue to grow. Therefore, a solution is needed to reduce it. Given the difficulty of exploiting identity politics in the campaign slogans of election participants, the Election Supervisory Body must also be pro-active in coordinating with the General Election Commission (KPU), especially the Baubau City KPU, especially related to unifying understanding of the dangers of growing identity politics, election organizers in Indonesia, must formulate firmer regulatory measures around campaign materials to control excessive negative impacts related to identity politics. At least strengthen restrictions that discuss the substance of campaign materials and what can and cannot be expressly regulated in the KPU law. In addition, election supervisors or the public must be vigilant to see and respond if one of the candidates, success teams, or individuals makes insults to bring down their political opponents. Election supervisors and the public must also play an active role in jointly overseeing this in order to maintain the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

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