Community Participation in Political Development:

A Study of Political Engagement in General Election in Indonesia

Heryani Agustina*
Faculty of Social and Political Sciences
Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati
Cirebon, Indonesia
*heryaniagustina28@gmail.com

Ayih Sutarih
Faculty of Law
Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati
Cirebon, Indonesia
ayihsutarih07@gmail.com

Abstract—Legislative elections are a form of community participation in political development. Public participation in the elections is one of significant factors in the victory of a legislative candidate. This encourages a legislative candidate deciding manners to assemble public participation to win the election, includes by engaging methods that violate ethics and law. Community trend and participation in legislative elections in Indonesia have experienced a shift or different political approaches between new order regime and reforms era. The political power approaches do not result authentic community participation in legislative elections, whereas the mass society political approach produces genuine participation without unfavourable vote.

Keywords: general election, political development, political participation

I. INTRODUCTION

Reforms in Indonesia that began rolling in 1998 have changed the face of Indonesia a lot, including in the political field. The reforms spearheaded by the students carried six reform agendas, such as bring justice to Suharto and his cronies, amendments to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, abolition of dual of The Indonesian National Armed Forces (Indonesian: ABRI; the former name for Indonesia military power) functions, the implementation of regional autonomy as wide as possible, enforcement of the rule of law, and create a government that is clean from Collusion, Corruption and Nepotism (KKN).

Reforms in the political field were mostly carried out after the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (1945 Constitution) was amended. Reform in the political field is essentially a milestone in the development of new politics in Indonesia towards a more democratic direction. The general election (election) legislative is one form of community participation in political development. In the legislative elections, of course, public participation is needed. Referring to the opinion of [1], public participation in political development can be understood from the perspective of political development as mass mobilization and participation. Mobilization and mass participation itself is a very determining factor in winning a candidate in legislative elections. Development that includes all political, economic and social cultural life will only succeed if it is an activity that involves the participation of all people in a country [2]. Etymologically,

participation means involvement, contribution, cooperation. While participating means following and engaging [3].

Community participation is essential in all fields of development, including in political development. Community participation in political development can be understood from one view of political development itself. In that context, Pye has listed ten views on political development, one of which is political development as mass mobilization and participation [1]. According to Edwards Shills, the process of mass participation is an important part of political development in which the process is always faced with a variety of rigid emotionalism or dangerous instigators [1]. Both can drain community resources.

The community environment is a political infrastructure and is the first variable that influences the political system. The community variable consists of a number of sub-variables including the growth of support, participation and social mobilization. Communities in developing countries, including Indonesia, generally face the problem of loyalty, from twin and narrow loyalties towards national loyalty. If the development of community loyalty is directed through mobilization (which is more or less encouraged by the government), as a result it is as seen in the period of a guided democratic political system that leads to a totalitarian system [4].

Community participation in political development is commonly known as political participation. In political science, the concept of political participation is an important issue. Studies of political participation are mainly carried out in developing countries where political participation is still in its infancy [5]. In the literatures of political development based on modernization theory, political participation is a field of study of political development carried out by political science experts such as Gabriel A. Almond, Colleman, Lucyan W. Pye, and Samuel P. Huntington.

Political participation includes the voluntary activities of members of the community in which they take part in the process of electing rulers and, directly or indirectly, in the process of forming public policy [6]. Political participation is the activity of private citizens who aim to influence decision making by the government [7].

According to Huntington and Nelson, forms of political participation include lobbying, Organizational Activities,

contacting and acts of violence [7]. The concept of political participation has several core definitions [7]. The opposite of participation is apathy, i.e. citizens or community groups who do not involve themselves in political activities. Apathy is often seen as a problem in a number of countries that consider political participation as an indicator of public attention to the problem of statehood.

One form of political participation is public participation in elections [7]. General election can be classified as one type of people's participation in politics. Public participation is a decisive factor in every legislative election. Community participation in legislative elections in Indonesia can be seen from the percentage of people who use their voting rights as opposed to the white group (abstentions), namely people who do not exercise their voting rights.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

Research in the context of writing this article was carried out using qualitative methods. Qualitative research is a method for exploring and understanding meaning by a number of individuals or groups of people ascribed to social or humanitarian problems [8].

The data in this study are secondary data obtained from literature studies from various written sources such as books, written documents, and the internet. Data analysis is done through data reduction (selecting and sorting data), display data (presenting data), and verification (checking) and drawing conclusions. Checking the validity of the data is done by triangulation, namely by checking, rechecking and crosschecking from various secondary data sources obtained.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We employ a multi-method design incorporating content analysis of online political group pages and original survey research of university undergraduates (n = 455) to assess the relationship between online political group membership and political engagement - measured through political knowledge and political participation surrounding the 2008 election. We find that participation in online political groups is strongly correlated with offline political participation, as a potential function of engaging members online. However, we fail to confirm that there is a corresponding positive relationship between participation in online political groups and political knowledge, likely due to low quality online group discussion. [9].

Individuals with similar political orientations may find themselves in dissimilar social and political surroundings, with important consequences for the flow of political information among citizens. Analyses of data from the post-election survey

of the 2000 National Election Study show that some individuals reside within extensive networks of political discussion and communication, whereas others are politically isolated. With respect to presidential candidate preference in 2000, some citizens in networks were surrounded by discussants who agreed with their preference, others by discussants who held ambiguous and undetermined preferences, and still others by discussants who held politically divergent preferences [10].

Civic participation was perceived more favourably than political participation. Supportive family predicted intentions for civic participation; supportive community services predicted both types of intentions; and supportive friends and acquaintances had no significant effects. The mediating variables were subjective norms and perceived behavioural control, but not attitudes. All effects were controlled for sociodemographic variables, richness of the social network, and past experience of civic and political participation [11].

TABLE I. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS IN INDONESIA [12]

No.	Legislative Election Year	Community Participation	
		Voting	*Non-Voting (Abstains)*
1.	1955	91,4 %	8,6 %
2.	1971	96,6 %	3,4 %
3.	1977	96,5 %	3,5 %
4.	1982	96,5 %	3,5 %
5.	1987	96,4 %	3,6 %
6.	1992	95,1 %	4,9 %
7.	1997	93,6 %	6,4 %
8.	1999	92,7 %	7,3 %
9.	2004	84,1 %	15,9 %
10.	2009	70,9 %	29,1 %
11.	2014	75,11 %	24,89 %
12.	2019	70,32 %	29,68 %

This condition is different from the presidential election where the level of community participation is even higher. In the 2019 presidential election which was held in conjunction with the legislative elections, the rate of public participation was higher. This shows that people who come to the polling station (TPS) only elect presidential candidates but do not elect legislative candidates. In this case, the figure of the presidential candidates in the 2019 elections which is far more famous (Jokowi and Prabowo) strongly determines the participation of the public than unknown candidates for legislative members.

Community mobilization and participation through the power approach succeeded in making Golkar the winner in every election during the new order. However, after the reform era the conditions were different as can be seen in the table as follows:

TABLE II. NUMBER OF ELECTION CONTESTING POLITICAL PARTIES IN INDONESIA [13]

No	Election of the Year	Number of political parties	Election Winning Political Parties	Second place political party	Third party political party
1.	1955	172	PNI (22,17%)	Masyumi (22,17 %)	NU (17,51 %)
2.	1971	10	Golkar (65,55%)	NU (21,79 %)	Parmusi (9,33 %)
3.	1977	3	Golkar (64,44%)	PPP (38,52 %)	PDI (8,05 %)
4.	1982	3	Golkar (67,22%)	PPP (26,11 %)	PDI (6,66 %)
5.	1987	3	Golkar (74,75%)	PPP (15,25 %)	PDI (10 %)
6.	1992	3	Golkar (70,5%)	PPP (15,5 %)	PDI (14 %)
7.	1997	3	Golkar (76,47%)	PPP (22,25 %)	PDI (2,75 %)
8.	1999	48	PDIP (33,12%)	Golkar (25,97 %)	PPP (12,55 %)
9.	2004	24	Golkar (23,27%)	PDIP (19,82 %)	PPP (10,55 %)
10.	2009	38	Demokrat (26,79%)	Golkar (19,11 %)	PDIP (16,96 %)
11.	2014	12	PDIP (19,5 %)	Golkar (16,3 %)	Gerindra (13 %)
12.	2019	16	PDIP (19,33%)	Gerindra (12,57 %)	Golkar (12,31 %)

During the New Order era, there were only three political parties participating in the legislative elections, namely Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP), Golongan Karya (Golkar), and Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (PDI). Golkar is a government party and began to emerge victorious in the first legislative election in the New Order era (1971) by removing nine other political parties. After that, political parties were simplified from ten to three, namely PPP, Golkar and PDI.

In the 1971, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992 and 1997 elections, Golkar was always the winner of the legislative elections, followed by PPP in second and PDI in third. Golkar's victory in the six elections was inseparable from the massive mobilization and participation of the people to support Golkar. All political forces (government, military, bureaucracy and mass media) are mobilized to win Golkar. Even the Civil Servants (PNS) and their families are required to vote for Golkar in the legislative elections. If the civil servants and their families do not choose Golkar, then the civil servant's career will certainly not be smooth because it is labelled as anti-government.

The above conditions changed after the reformation era began in Indonesia in 1998. The number of political parties participating in the legislative elections increased dramatically in the 1999 elections from 3 to 48. Then in subsequent legislative elections the number of political parties fluctuated. The Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), a splinter of the PDI, emerged as the winner of the first legislative election in the reform era (1999), followed by Golkar and PPP. However, PDIP in the 2004 legislative elections was eliminated to second place but became the winner again in the 2014 and 2019 legislative elections.

In addition to the PDI-P, in the legislative elections in the reform era two new political parties emerged that succeeded in winning the second and third elections, namely the Democratic Party which won the 2009 legislative elections but were then eliminated from the top three in the 2014 and 2019 legislative elections. The other political parties are Gerindra Party, which ranked second in the 2009 legislative elections and then rose to second in the 2019 legislative elections.

One thing that is very interesting to note is Golkar. Political parties that are identical with the new order and Suharto in the legislative elections in the reform era always ranked in the top three, even in the 2004 elections won the legislative elections.

This is different from the PDI whose prestige was drowned by PDI-P. Likewise, PPP which was ranked third in the 1999 and 2004 legislative elections but was eliminated from the top three in the 2009, 2014 and 2019 legislative elections.

The success of Golkar which always ranks the top three in every legislative election during the reform era is inseparable from the strong Golkar mass base to the grassroots level that was built since the New Order era. The Golkar seal as the ruling party of the New Order which became the enemy of reform was apparently not defeated by the new political parties. The large number of Golkar cadres who migrated to other political parties during the reform era also did not have much effect on Golkar's victory.

Community mobilization and participation in legislative elections in Indonesia in the New Order era used a power approach. All channels of power (bureaucracy, military and mass media) are used by the authorities to win Golkar. It is not surprising that Golkar as the government / ruling political party always wins legislative elections during the new order with the acquisition of votes between 64% - 76%. While the other two political parties, namely PPP only gained 15% - 38% votes and PDIP only gained 2% - 8% votes, these two political parties are actually only political accessories so that Indonesia is not called an authoritarian state with a single political party (Golkar).

In the reform era, mobilization and public participation in legislative elections no longer use the power approach but the mass approach. In this case there is no term political government / authority and power channels (bureaucracy, military, mass media) must be neutral. Likewise, civil servants who during the New Order era must have a single loyalty to the government / Golkar, but in the reform era must be neutral, so that they are free to choose political parties and candidates in legislative elections without fearing that their careers will be hampered.

The mass approach has placed the constituency as a crucial factor in the victory of a candidate in the legislative elections in the reform era. This encouraged the candidate to do various ways to attract the sympathy of the people. But it is unfortunate that the methods used by candidates for legislative members are often in violation of ethics and law.

The most widely used mode is money politics that is, giving away money to voters to elect a candidate for a legislative member. This is usually done at dawn before the vote, so this practice is known as the "dawn attack". The money given ranges from ten thousand to one hundred and fifty thousand rupiahs. This is usually given to voters with a low economic level.

Voters who do not yet have a choice (floating mass) may receive a lot of money from a number of candidates for the legislature but the candidate to be chosen is usually the candidate who gives the most money. It is very ironic because one vote is only valued with such small money. Whereas voters who already have choices based on political party loyalty or other loyalties are usually not affected by the political money

In many elections, the practice of money politics has proven effective in winning a legislative candidate even though the costs are very large, reaching hundreds of millions to billions of Rupiahs. In general, for the purpose of money politics, a candidate for legislative member is forced to owe money to banks or to sponsors in large amounts. As a result, after the legislative candidate is elected, they will not think in the interests of the people who voted for it, but think about how to collect large amounts of money in a short time to pay debts. This has led to widespread corruption among legislators, both the DPR and the DPRD.

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In addition to giving money, some candidates also provide goods assistance with the aim that voters elect the candidate in legislative elections. But the funny thing is, when the candidates are not elected, some candidates shamelessly ask the public to return the aid for the goods. This is very unethical and shows the low morality of the candidates. It can be imagined how it would turn out if the candidate was elected as a member of the legislature.

Other modes used by legislative candidates and their success teams are intimidation of voters, spreading hoaxes, insulting and polluting the names of other candidates, conducting black campaigns and hate speeches to topple other candidates. Such practices in today's digital era are mostly done through various social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Such acts not only violate political ethics but also violate the law. According to Law Number 11 Year 2008 regarding Information and Electronic Transactions (ITE), those who commit such acts can be convicted, both imprisonment and / or fines.

Rational and critical voters may not be influenced by negative information on social media, but sceptic and politically blind voters will be easily influenced. This condition causes democracy in Indonesia which was built since the reform era will run backwards. Furthermore, the uncontrolled use of social media in elections can trigger nation disintegration because hostilities that occur in cyberspace can continue in the real world.

Other modes for winning elections are manipulating data in the voter list and the results of vote counting. Of course, such practice is carried out by bribing elements KPU (General Election Commission) and Bawaslu (Election Oversight Body). Such a method is considered to be very effective but high risk, so that it is usually only done by legislative candidates who have high access to power to the KPU and Bawaslu.

The methods outlined above are all intended to garner support, sympathy and community participation in order to win legislative candidates. In many cases, these methods are very effective for the victory of a legislative candidate compared to conventional methods such as the use of various campaign props (banners, posters, and the like). In some cases, the methods described above are also able to rule out three other determinants in elections, namely popularity (popularity), electability, and acceptability of a candidate in legislative elections.

IV. CONCLUSION

Legislative elections are a form of community participation in political development. Public participation in legislative elections is a very determining factor in the victory of a legislative candidate. This encourages a candidate for legislative member to take various methods to mobilize and mobilize public participation to win it in the legislative election, including by carrying out ways that violate ethics and the law. Community mobilization and participation in legislative elections in Indonesia experienced a shift from the power approach in the new order era to the mass approach in the reform era. The power approach does not result in genuine community participation in legislative elections, whereas the mass approach produces purer community participation because there is no compulsion to vote.

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