

# Political Education for Novice Voters Through Students' Democracy Jamboree Program

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*Abstract*—Political education for novice voters has tended to be dominated by the delivery of formal information both directly and indirectly. This condition often feels boring and ineffective in exploring creative ideas that characterize novice voters. The presence of the student democracy jamboree program initiated by the General Election Commission (KPU) of Padang City for the socialization of regional elections is an alternative to present more intensive, creative and participatory political education. This article aimed to elaborate the students' democracy jamboree program and also

adopt the value of participatory education so that the political education can be more transformative. This research uses a qualitative approach. The data was collected through documentary studies, depth interviews, and focus group discussions (FGD). The results of this study illustrated that the implementation of the student democracy jamboree program has been succeeded in creating new creativity in teaching elections and democracy even though there are still some lacks in their implementation and evaluation.

*Keywords*—Political Education, Novice Voter, Jamboree Democracy

## I. INTRODUCTION

Political education for novice voters has so far been dominated by formal information delivery and also this is often indoctrinative. This method is less effective in increasing knowledge, attitudes and skills in political activities, especially in elections. The urgency of political education for novice voters is related to political behavior that is still unstable, apathetic, lacks political knowledge and experience. As a result, their political preferences are unstable or easily change according to the information or preferences that surround them. But if they are well educated, this

has an implications for rational political behavior in elections [1].

There is also a research by [2] and [3] revealed the seriousness of developed countries in implementing voter education for beginner voters marked by the availability from: (1) management of standardized political education; (2) learning tools; (3) local government supervision of the political education process; (4) cooperation networks of various parties; (5) relies on the special needs of novice voters; and (6) continuous evaluation system. And also there is a research from [4] on political education for German youth through an election

simulation program he called the "U-18 Program", aimed at arousing teenagers' interest in discussing electoral themes more attractively.

In the implementation of political education for novice voters, the KPU from Padang rolled out a new strategy that are the student democracy jamboree program by involving high school students for three days at the campsite. Based on the results of interviews with the KPU from Padang, it was revealed that the implementation still faces several obstacles such as the unavailability of lighter and more practical material content and is in demand by novice voters, effective methods, and media used as tools in political and democratic learning.

Beginner voters are voters who are doing the first vote in elections and have reached the age of 17 or have been married. Novice voters become a potential market in the election because it is assumed to have a unique behavior. Research on *voting behavior* in America shows that novice voters are more interested in political issues and carry out political actions that are qualitatively different from other groups. Potential beginner voters have "two eyes". On the one hand it is positive, if only we could use it well. But on the other hand this group also contains vulnerabilities that have a negative impact [5].

The political behavior of novice voters in learning about democratic life is also revealed in the article of [6]. According to his research, political socialization and individual experience moreover as a young generation is a complete process in which democracy is only a jargon and very little is their concern. Therefore it is necessary to improve the political education provided to this group so that increased participation as a basic principle of democracy is realized.

Political education according to [7] is a process of civilizing political ideals, norms, values and rules of the political system methodologically. Political education is seen as a process of political awareness (*political consciousness*) in the form a process of living up the normative rational and dialogical ethical values [8].

The implementation of political education is very dependent on the state authority. There are several countries that already have sufficiently advanced political education such as Australia and India. In Australia there is ongoing collaboration from the general election commission with indigenous people through *indigenous electoral participation programs* that involve civil society on an ongoing basis and become a means of learning citizenship political education to achieve a better democratic life. As the essence of democracy essentially teaches how different groups can peacefully argue, how to realize goals in good ways without violence and how to live side by side and cooperate with all differences. In India there is also a political education program as an effort to increase voting participation through *systematic voter education and electoral participation (SVEEP)* which is a systematic voter education, in collaboration with *civil society*, educational institutions and volunteers from the young group. SVEEP has specific target audiences such as women, young people, marginalized groups, and people with disabilities, and indigenous groups [9].

Furthermore [10] suggested their research in three countries namely America, Denmark, and Sweden proving that the influence of political education on the level of public political participation, especially in pre-voter children and new voters who first chose. Meanwhile [11] through his research also proved that political education can increase students' ideological levels, psychological qualities

and their usefulness in constructing better careers.

The student democracy jamboree program is aimed at socializing democratic elections and education. This program is a new strategy for the KPU from Padang to approach beginner voters in order to understand election problems and democratic life in general. As the goals of political education itself, namely: (1) cognitive aspects to build citizens' knowledge about the basic concepts of politics and government; (2) affective aspects to shape the character of citizens who favor democracy and their identity as holders of people's sovereignty; and (3) psychomotor aspects to build intellectual and moral skills in realizing a democratic Indonesia [12].

The student democracy jamboree program is expected to provide more intensive, creative and participatory political education. Therefore this article aims to: (1) further clarify the student democracy jamboree program; and (2) analyzing the development of student democracy jamboree programs by adopting participatory educational values so that transformative political education can be implemented.

## II. METHOD

This article is part of the applied product research that the author conducted with the title *Political Education Model for Beginner Voters Through Student Democracy Jamboree*. This study uses a qualitative method. The informants of the research were determined purposively, namely the Commissioner of the General Election Commission (KPU) of Padang City, the teacher scoutmaster, Branch Kwartir (Kwarcab) of Padang City Scouts, and randomly selected school messenger students. Data was collected through *in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGD)*, and documentation studies. Data analysis was carried out through

qualitative data analysis steps that began with data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The validity of the research data is obtained through *credibility, transferability, and dependability*, as well as *cofirmability* [13].

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Student Democracy Jamboree Program as a Tool of Beginner Voter Political Education

Novice voters are very reasonable targets for political parties because they have at least two important meanings, namely: (1) being a battleground for votes in elections; and (2) this segment is a determinant of whether or not political party general meetings have significance for publication and influence other voter candidates[14]. Beginner voters are often described through the following behavior: (1) voters who are still unstable; (2) voters with relatively low political knowledge; (3) voters who tend to be dominated by groups (*peer-group*) ; (4) voters make choices because of the aspect of popularity of political parties or candidates proposed by political parties; (5) voters who come to the polling station (TPS) only to register or abort their rights [15]. From this description, it can be understood that novice voters are a group of people who need to be educated continuously to become smart and rational voters.

The Student Democracy Jamboree Program initiated by the KPU from Padang in 2017 is a form of political education that aims to create an atmosphere of learning that is direct (applicable) and fun and also can motivate jamboree participants to become agents of political participation in their environment for the future. The student democracy Jamboree was attended by 387 participants representing senior high schools in Padang City (SMA / SMK and

MA). Each school sent a delegation of seven students and one tutor. The number of schools that participated was 43 schools. The Jamboree was held on 6-8 October 2017 at Lemdadika Padang Besi Padang City. The purpose of implementing this jamboree activity is to increase voter participation, and increase public confidence in the democratic process itself. The findings of the study show the enthusiasm of students to practice the process of electing regional heads, ranging from selecting candidates, election organizers, polling groups (KPPS) officers, and polling stations (TPS) to vote counting, and determining the selected candidates. Political education with a pattern like the jamboree is expected to increase student literacy in understanding elections. Political literacy according to Bernard Crick as quoted by [15] relates to a practical understanding of various political problems that depart from the real experiences of oneself and others. Political literacy is closely related to political knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Not only related to political literacy, the jamboree program is also expected to make active students become electoral ambassadors for family, peers, and their environment.

The research findings also indicate the participation of participants in simulating various roles such as election organizers, KPPS, election supervisory committees (panwaslu), candidates, success teams, supporters and as people who participate in elections. As a means of political education for novice voters, the student democratic jamboree in the city of Padang is considered as one of the pilot projects to become a national democratic jamboree. Political education according to [16] provides knowledge to young people about politics, society, assessment of political events, allows one to claim their rights and responsibilities and how to create a democratic society.

Therefore in this study, there is also found some notes for the improvement of the student democracy jamboree program for future implementation. The *first* is recruitment of participants. The research findings show that 8 (eight) people were chosen to represent a high school level in Padang. From the numbers of the delegates can be increased to 20 representatives from each school, 10 men and 10 women. This is caused by the effect of *snowball* will be more effective if they are more influential to their friends in class, in the family, and the surrounding environment.

*The second* is the recruitment of the organizing committee. From the organizer of the jamboree they need to be recruited from the Department of Education, the policy maker (local government) concerned with the budget, and the reporter. If possible, it can be added from academics who understand how the concept of elections is given practically so that voters have a variety of skills in managing elections in their respective homes.

*The third* is strategies, materials and methods of the Jamboree. The research findings show that the strategy of implementing a student's democratic jamboree is quite good but there are matters of concern such as the voting and counting strategy that should be regulated in more detail so that all participants know and participate as voters and observers, as well as supervisors in counting votes. While related to the material, the research findings indicate a lack of study of elections and the ins and outs of their management. Although it has been tried as practical as possible, but the essence and essence have not been fully displayed. While related to the delivery method, the research findings show that various methods have been used in this

activity, such as candidate debates and *games* electoral.

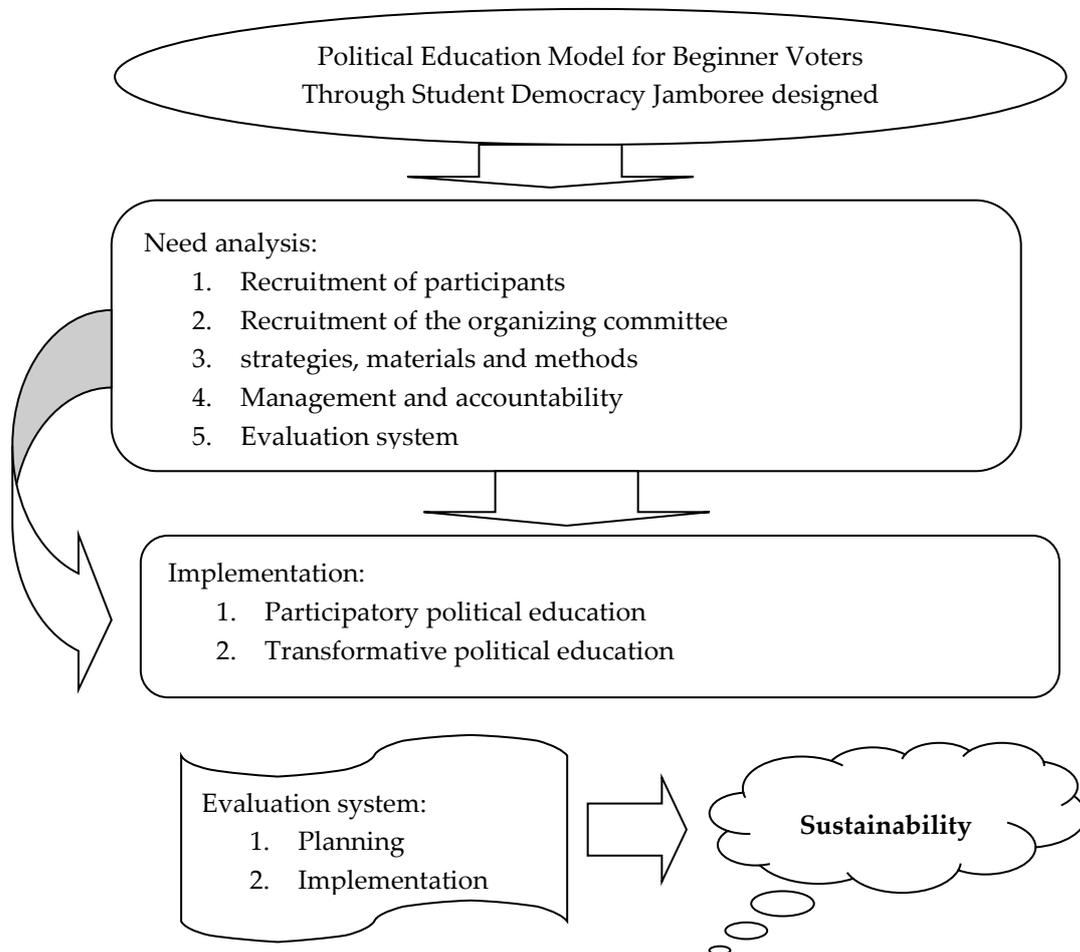
The fourth is management and accountability. In this section the research findings show that the management of student democratic jamborees is quite good. Likewise with the responsible program. It is expected that in the future the management of program implementation will involve more parties such as regional governments, education offices or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

The fifth is the evaluation system includes how to measure program planning with its realization, both regarding preparation (recruitment, standard operating procedures, human resources, and budgeting), as well as those concerning implementation (election management mechanisms,

content (material), strategies and methods in program delivery).

The sixth is the sustainability or *sustainability*. This is a post-evaluation process where good things about program implementation can be continued and improved such as developing material through various forms of *games* election, candidate debates, or other methods that can enhance the active role of participants, as well as program management and accountability issues.

After all the things above have fulfilled in the needs analysis, the implementation of the democratic jamboree program students must rely on theories of participatory political education and transformative political education. The following can be stated that how the construction (design) of the student democratic jamboree model as a means of political education for novice voters.



## 2. Development of Student Democracy Jamboree Program Through Participatory Political Education

The model of political education through the student democratic jamboree adopts a participatory education model. The participatory education model is an educational model that emphasizes the activeness, criticism, and creativity of students and values the process more than the results. This learning process opens up opportunities for everyone to look active and interactive in learning. This educational model was initially offered by the American philosopher of pragmatism, John Dewey, who emphasized the educational model by prioritizing activeness and creativity that was based on democratic values, pluralism, and student independence. Learning by applying participatory methods means learning from reality or experience, not patronizing and dialogical. While [17] identified four principles of participatory learning, namely: (1) based on learning needs (*learning need based*); (2) oriented towards learning goals (*learning goals and objectives oriented*); (3) *participant centered*; and (4) departing from experience (*experiential learning*).

Then, it also explained about the use of participatory learning techniques starting with: *First, the stage of fostering intimacy*. This coaching stage when associated with a student's democratic jamboree aims to create an atmosphere of mutual acquaintance in order to foster familiarity. *Second, the identification phase of needs, sources and possible obstacles*. At this stage *brainstorming, group discussion, nominal group process, requirement sheet* and so on. *Third, the stage of formulating learning objectives*. Learning objectives are formulated to direct learning activities and also serve as benchmarks for learning achievement. With the learning objectives, students can know the extent of the

success of their learning. *Fourth, the stage of preparing the program of learning activities*. Through this stage students can analyze, propose and determine learning activity programs that are deemed suitable for their learning needs. *Fifth, the stage of implementing learning activities*. At this stage the learning process is carried out by exchanging experiences and opinions in discussing the material. Usually done through detailed answers (*itemized response, critical problem analysis, simulation, playing games, playing roles* and so on). *Sixth, the process of evaluating the process, results and effects of learning activities*.

Finally, political education provided through the participatory education model aims to form attitudes that support the political system, and make individuals aware of their role as political participants. In this connection Iris Frank in [18] explains:

*"It process where individual members of a state acquire their feelings and behavior attitudes about overment and politics generally, their sense of national, identification of loyalty to the government, allegiance to the leadership, and their understanding of roles they expect / or are expected to play as participants in the political system."*

It can be stated that in the process of political education the ultimate goal is political participants where someone with the knowledge, values, orientation, belief they have, has an awareness of the condition of the community and wishes to change it through their political activities and roles. Meanwhile the quality of political participation that becomes the final estuary of political education is highly dependent on political knowledge [19]. Thus the implementation of the Student Democracy Jamboree program specifically designed can improve the quality of the participation of novice

voters in elections as well as its role as an agent in democratic life.

If further elaborated participatory political education is included in transformative political education characterized by the following: (1) growing critical awareness; (2) futuristic insight; (3) the importance of skills; (4) oriented humanist values; and (5) quality assurance [14].

The political education program through the student democracy jamboree can also be regarded as a transformative political education pattern. Transformative political education is an educational process that builds awareness in the community, and at the same time they become facilitators and actors of political changing. In its implementation transformative political education uses content, strategies and media that are tailored to the characteristics of the target audience.

The same with the efforts to realize the student democracy jamboree as a

transformative political education, it is necessary to consider several key principles of transformative education. According to Tilaar (2012) [21] some of the main principles of transformative pedagogy are: (1) reviewing normative education processes; (2) the education process is an individual process; (3) forming individual identities; (4) transformative pedagogic is communicative pedagogic; (6) orientation toward the future; (7) respect for human rights; (8) proximate environment means that humans are born in the midst of a humanitarian environment, not born in an isolated state; (9) the process of development from the inside out; (10) the process of development from the outside in; (11) harmonization between internal and external forces; (12) the educational process is the process of giving *meaning*; (13) lifelong education; and (14) humanization process.

The differences between traditional pedagogic and transformative pedagogic as revealed in the following matrix:

**Differences in traditional pedagogic and transformative pedagogic**

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Traditional Pedagogical</b>	<b>Transformative Pedagogic</b>
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learner Centered</li> <li>● Potential Development</li> <li>● Humanistic</li> <li>● Sterile from culture</li> <li>● Evolution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Individualin participatory at society.</li> <li>● Awareness and development of individual potential in the community of</li> <li>● Socio-cultural humanism cultural</li> <li>● Drivers.</li> <li>● Third <i>way</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Teachers instructors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Investors didactic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learning partners.</li> </ul>
<b>Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As a subject</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As a subject of participatory in social change.</li> </ul>
<b>Educational learning process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Autistic Mechanistic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participatory Dialogical</li> </ul>

Source: Tilaar (2012) [21].

Referring to the differences matrix between traditional pedagogic and transformative pedagogic above, it can be understood that how crucial it is if the packaging of political education for novice voters through the student democratic jamboree uses a transformative pedagogic approach. This is caused by the target audience being novice voters belong to the millennial group and requiring a special approach so that the implementation of the student democratic jamboree can carry out the appropriate and effective political education for them.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the previous presentation, it can be concluded the following points:

1. Political education through the jamboree of student democracy is a new breakthrough in the education of novice voters in studying elections. This program can make students have political literacy but also can become election ambassadors for their family, peers, and the environment.
2. The development of the student democracy jamboree program through electoral practical materials, improvement of learning strategies, and intensive evaluation can be used as a means for the realization of transformative participatory political education.

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