

Exclusivity of Incumbent Candidate in the Pandemic of Covid-19 as a Political Resource towards Election 2020

Eka Suaib^{1*}Muh. Najib Husain² La ode Harjuddin³

^{1,2,3}Faculty of social and political sciences Universitas Halu Oleo, Kendari, Sulawesi Tenggara
*Corresponding Author. Email: muh.najib.husain@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The corona case in Southeast Sulawesi requiring political movements of each candidate to have a special strategy that breaks social restrictions would be more beneficial for detainees. Exclusion of incumbent candidates is also intended to likely utilize the position of regional head amid the social situation affected by the Pandemic touching various aspects of people's lives including the political side. Amid pandemic situation engulfing along with the political situation, incumbent candidates who are also regional heads "should" prioritize the management of people affected by the plague rather than political interests. Based on research, several regional heads who will also go forward as incumbent candidates are actively and massively involved in attracting public sympathy through distributing basic aid including masks and various kinds of personal protective equipment leading the two regional heads to be suspected of doing violation by Bawaslu. The subjects and informants in this study were the Chairperson of the Southeast Sulawesi Province Bawaslu, the head of East Kolaka Bawaslu and the Konawe Islands, the Regional Head Candidate and the online media covering the news. Data Sources used consisted of: (a) Primary Data constituting the data source directly obtained by the researcher directly from the source of the study by conducting interviews with predetermined informants, and (b) Secondary Data, a data source that indirectly provides data to researchers.

Keywords: *Exclusion of Incumbent Candidates, Covid-19 Pandemic, Political Resources.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of bureaucratic interaction is found in Southeast Sulawesi. The involvement of the bureaucracy in the momentum of the Pilkada is a recurring incident. In general, based on the findings and reports of Bawaslu, the types of Pilkada violations in Southeast Sulawesi consist of nine forms: the involvement of the State civil apparatus (ASN), the violations involving election organizers, the involvement of village heads and their apparatus, the campaign advertisements in the mass media, the money politics, the use of public facilities, politicization of religious groups, races and groups (SARA), campaign outside the schedule and election crimes. Of the nine types of violations, ASN involvement ranked first, in which there are 244 findings and reports, 58% or 142 cases involved ASN. Furthermore, in succession, violations involved election administrators (24%), village heads, village officials and village local assistants (9%), off-

schedule campaigns (3%), money politics (3%), use of public facilities (1%), election crimes (1%), campaign advertising in the media (1%) and politicization of SARA (racism) (0.01%).

Bureaucratic involvement in Pilkada is the type of violation most often occurring in Southeast Sulawesi. If classified in more detail, the bureaucracy involved consists of: State civil servants/Civil Servants (ASN/PNS) and village government officials (Village Heads, Village Officials and Village Local Assistants). The involvement of the two levels of the bureaucracy, if added up, contributed to the types of violations in the Pilkada in Southeast Sulawesi by 67.21%. This indicates that the bureaucratic apparatus in Southeast Sulawesi is very actively involved in the politics of regional head elections, as happened in two locations, namely Konawe Kepulauan Regency and Konawe Selatan Regency.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Concurrent Regional Head Elections (Pilkada) in Konawe Islands Regency (Konkep) which will be held on September 2020 will be fierce. There are four sons from the Wawonii native region who are ready to fight, namely Ir H Amrullah MT, Ir Abdul Halim, Musdar and Oheo. Amrullah was the incumbent, Abdul Halim was the former head of the Konkep Bappeda, while Musdar was the former chairman of the Konkep DPRD. As the incumbent, he is certainly always highlighted by the public, because he has many advantages. Referring to the understanding conveyed by Gelman and King [1], there are three components that can be seen in the concept of incumbency advantage: direct effect, scare-off effect, and candidate quality. The direct effect intended is related to how an incumbent has the advantage of the aspect of his/her resources so that he can provide services to constituents. Meanwhile, the scare-off effect is any form of benefit enjoyed to hinder the quality shown by its opponent or competitor. Finally, candidate quality is a personal quality possessed by the incumbent not only in the form of campaign skills, but also the ability to gain support from political parties in the candidacy process.

One of them was the spread of photos with Amrullah-Andi Muhamad Lutfi and five elite figures of political parties (Parpol) in Konkep. At a glance, in a photo that is also used as a news image for one of online media in Kendari, Amrullah-Andi Muhamad Lutfi is still in official uniform and is also wearing an official vehicle (Randis) with a DT 2 O plate. The Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) is currently investigating the alleged violations by the Regent and Deputy Regent of the Konawe Islands (Konkep), Amrullah-Andi Muhamad Lutfi. In fact, the bureaucracy is required to be neutral, and become a mediator between the interests of society and the state [2]. This understanding develops from the ideal type of Webber's bureaucracy, where the bureaucracy is filled by individuals who are personally free (Thoha, 2009). However, in reality, bureaucracy is difficult to be free. At the moment of Pilkada, the bureaucratic apparatus often faces a dilemma, is neutral or involved in politics. These two options do not provide certainty for the bureaucratic apparatus, being neutral or not neutral, the consequences can have bad implications, or vice versa make individual bureaucrats good (career).

The head of the Southeast Sulawesi Bawaslu, Hamiruddin Udu, stated that he had ordered the Bawaslu of Konawe Kepulauan Regency (Konkep) to search and to ask for clarification regarding a number of political elites

from the Democratic Party, Nasdem, PKB, PKPI, and Golkar in the photo seen holding a binder with the acronym "BERAMAL" meaning along with Amrullah and Andi Muhamad Lutfi in the 2020 Regional Head Election (Pilkada). Hamiruddin Udu said that his party could not confirm and determine whether the two of them had committed violations, because at this time they were still in the process of examining whether there was any use of authority, programs and activities that benefited or harmed one of the Candidate Pairs (Paslon). This also happened in Kolaka Timur Regency, the General Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) Southeast Sulawesi (Sultra) conducted a field investigation to confirm suspected Pilkada violations by members of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) by utilizing budgeted social assistance for residents affected by COVID -19. Head of Bawaslu Southeast Sulawesi, Hamiruddin Udu, revealed that reports related to allegations of a number of ASN individuals distributing basic food assistance in one of the districts in Southeast Sulawesi have been included in his team's investigation to be followed up. "It is true, in addition to the information that has been entered, the results of video recordings sent by the public have gone viral on social media. It is suspected that ASN in East Kolaka Regency (Koltim) clearly distributed aid on behalf of the incumbent official, who will return to the simultaneous regional elections 2020. Based on information from a number of parties, ASN who distributed the assistance, asked residents to choose the incumbent regent in the December 2020 Pilkada and not to choose another candidate in the upcoming Pilkada. Two officials, currently occupying echelon II seats in the East Kolaka Regional Government (Koltim), were declared by the Koltim Bawaslu to violate the neutrality of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN). Both were caught claiming basic food assistance from the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Government as assistance from Tony Herbiansyah, who is currently the Regent of Koltim. The status of the violation is based on a Bawaslu Koltim's letter Number: 001 / TM / PB / KAB / 2813 / VI / 2020. The two ASNs were not neutral, each named M. Ansarullah M.Si as the Head of BPBD, and H. Uddin as the Head of DPM-PTSP.

Previously, the two Koltim regional government officials distributed basic food assistance belonging to the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Government in Loka Village, Tirawuta District, on June 3, 2020. In the video with duration of 1 minute 26 seconds, Ansarullah said that the origin of the aid came from Tony Herbiansyah while providing basic necessities to residents, and asked the beneficiaries not to choose another candidate.

"This is the assistance of the regent, Pak Tony. His greeting. Don't choose something else because he paid

attention to Pak Tony. Have you met? Don't forget", said Ansarullah in the video.

In another 1 minute and 7 second-duration video, the invitation is repeated. Using the local language, Ansarullah did not forget to direct one of the aid recipients to tell his family to choose Tony Herbiansyah. Take this from him. Do you know who our regent is? Mother told the family, this is his contribution," he said. In another video, H. Uddin also entrusted a message from Tony Herbiansyah while giving groceries to one of the aid recipients. "This is Mr. Tony's help. His greetings are Mr. Tony, don't choose anything else, because he pays attention to people," said Uddin in the video. Based on the data obtained by Bawaslu Koltim, there are 5 similar videos, showing the action of the two ASNs claiming Tony Herbiansyah's name when providing basic food assistance from the Provincial Government of Southeast Sulawesi.

ASN provisions to maintain neutrality (not getting involved in politics) have actually been contained in various laws and regulations, including Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning State Civil Apparatus, Government Regulation Number 42 of 2004 concerning Corps Soul Development and Civil Servant Code of Ethics, Circular The Minister for Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform (MenPAN-RB) RI Number: B / 71 / M.SM.00.00 / 2017 regarding the Implementation of Neutrality for ASN at the 2018 Concurrent Election, 2019 Legislative General Election, and Presidential and Vice General Election President of 2019, as well as Government Regulation Number 53 of 2010 concerning Civil Servant Discipline.

Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning State Civil Servants explains that in carrying out their duties and responsibilities as ASN, one of the principles that must be upheld by the State Civil Apparatus is to uphold the principle or principle of neutrality. Article 2 letter f of Law Number 5 Year 2014 concerning State Civil Servants explains that what is meant by the Principle of Neutrality is that every ASN Employee does not take sides with any form of influence, and does not side with the interests of anyone. Deviation from the neutrality principle by the State civil apparatus is a form of ethical and disciplinary violations. Furthermore, Article 3 Letter b of the ASN Law states that ASN as a profession is based on the principles of the Code of Ethics and code of conduct. Furthermore, Article 5 paragraph (2) letter l states that the ASN code of ethics and code of conduct contain behavior regulations, so that ASN employees implement the provisions of laws and regulations regarding ASN Employee Discipline.

3. METHODS

According to the background of the problem then it would be an interest to conduct research at two locations, namely in East Kolaka and Konawe Islands, both of which are currently in the process of Bawaslu. The subjects and informants in this study were, the Chairperson of the Southeast Sulawesi Province Bawaslu, the head of East Kolaka Bawaslu and the Konawe Islands, the Regional Head Candidate and the online media which contained the news. Data Sources (a) Primary Data is the data source directly obtained by the researcher directly from the source of the study by conducting interviews with predetermined informants. (b) Secondary Data is a data source that indirectly provides data to researchers.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Other provisions that oblige PNS to act neutral are contained in Government Regulation Number 53 of 2010 concerning Civil Servant Discipline, article 3 point (4) that PNS is obliged to obey all provisions of laws and regulations. Furthermore, Article 4 Number (1) contains prohibitions for civil servants to abuse their authority. The provisions of these two articles reinforce the norms of the State Civil Apparatus Law for civil servants to act according to the outlined provisions. Deviation from the provisions of these articles, it can be categorized that the involvement of the state civil servants in politics (Pilkada) is a form of non-neutrality of ASN.

However, in reality the bureaucracy cannot fully fulfill the ideal type as imagined by scientists to be neutral from politics. It is undeniable that bureaucracy was born as a result of the complexity of life in modern society. As a complex organization, bureaucracy is a reflection of the various interests that exist in society. Each of these interests competes for a comfortable position. Therefore political support is a necessity to occupy a bureaucratic position or in implementing a policy. As a result, the face of the bureaucracy is inseparable from the existing political configuration.

It seems as if it has become a general axiom that the bureaucracy in Indonesia cannot escape from political influence. The history of this nation has shown that the bureaucracy has always been a tool for the political interests of the rulers. A fairly prominent historical fact occurred during the New Order era where the bureaucracy became a political instrument to gain and maintain power, to carry out development programs, but was also actively involved in the political arena. At that time, the bureaucracy was mostly used as an instrument to maintain a single majority for the political power of the rulers

(*Golongan Karya*). Through a concept known as monoloyalty, bureaucratic networks from the center to the regions were actively involved as pendulum votes in every general election, which lasted during the New Order regime in power. In the New Order era, the bureaucracy was not only not neutral, but also became an inseparable part of political interests.

Witnessing the conditions that have occurred in several regional elections, it is difficult to expect a bureaucracy that is sterile from political interests. There are several factors that cause bureaucratic neutrality in the implementation of the pilkada, first, the status of the incumbent regional head candidate who remains active during the implementation of the election. With positions that remain active during the elections, incumbent candidates move the bureaucratic apparatus more freely for the sake of defending themselves. It is not difficult to distinguish between the role of a regional government and the position as a candidate for regional head. Therefore, the incumbent candidate should be inactive during the implementation of regional elections.

Second, the lure of promotion for the bureaucratic apparatus. This factor is one of the triggers for the involvement of the bureaucratic apparatus or ASN in supporting one of the candidates, especially the incumbent candidate. The hope of obtaining or promoting a higher position makes bureaucratic apparatus involved, both directly or indirectly in helping to win certain regional head candidates. There are at least three main approaches in explaining the relationship between candidates and voters (Edward Aspinall, 2014). The first approach and the one that has been mainstream is the giving approach as studied in Mauss's classic study.

In the context of electoral politics, the social mechanism in the form of "giving, receiving and repaying gifts" is a mechanism used by candidates in order to mobilize support. The second approach is the clientelism approach originally introduced by Scott. Hicken further explained that there are four patron-client elements borrowed from Scott, namely direct (face-to-face), reciprocal, hierarchical, and iterative (long-term) relations. The third approach is the market exchange approach, where this approach explains that the relationship between candidates and voters is based on the mechanism of commercial transactions, exchange of goods and services for money or other forms of payment. According to Scahffer & Schedler, the logic behind this approach is that, first, the actors (buyers and sellers) are involved in an effective exchange of money and goods / services (the buyer pays and the seller delivers). Second, buyers and sellers understand what they are doing; that they are entering into a reciprocal exchange relationship.

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Bureaucrats who are considered to be at odds with the elected regional head will have their career stunted. Regional heads are capable of controlling politicization because in this era of regional autonomy, regional heads have a set of powers that can make civil servants inevitably submit to regional heads, unless they are willing to bear the risk of being hampered by their career in the bureaucracy. This authority includes, among other things, in determining the position of Eleson, the authority of the regent / mayor in making SK for the appointment of PNS and the authority in making the decree for the rank of PNS.

Various forms of job transfer, including rolling, non-assignment, and others are absolute matters of the Regional Head. This is reasonable to do, especially if it is for organizational refreshment and career paths, however, it must follow established rules. But what happened in Konawe Selatan region was that the organizational reshuffle that was carried out was for the benefit of which only the regent himself was aware of. There was no clarity in carrying out the reshuffle, especially for the top officials. The suspicion that the placement of this position was due to the bureaucrats concerned having played a role in bringing the Regent to his current position is a growing reason, both among the bureaucrats themselves and among the community. In other words, the position occupied by the bureaucrat is as a gift and thanks for the services he has done. This is done by eliminating people who are considered unrelated to him, then replacing them with people who have a role in making him successful. Thus, the regent has indirectly placed his trusted people to occupy the positions below him. This is intended to strengthen the power he has.

Interview with the informant by Mr. Sutarmin said that:

"Being given a reward or remuneration clearly happens because the elected regional head appoints people who support or fight for him, always like that, he feels indebted and repays his services for supporting him by giving a more strategic position than the previous position" (interview 3 August 2020).

The politicization of the bureaucracy in regional head elections will have a negative impact on the bureaucracy, it is feared that there will be a lack of bureaucratic members who do not comply with regulations that bind

bureaucratic members so that regional head elections will be used as *copetinsi mumen* to regional head candidates to accelerate career growth for the members of the bureaucracy. The regional head is the holder of the highest authority in the area so that the regional head has an influence on the acceleration of career advancement in members of the bureaucracy. Position transactions before regional head elections are an opportunity for bureaucracy to reflect, this is due to the emotional approach of regional head candidates to bureaucratic members who have partiality or are not neutral in the election to participate and become a successful team for one of the candidate figures.

Interview with the informant, Pak Agus Jatmiko, said that:

"The elected regional head always appoints people who support their interests, while people who do not support will have their positions changed so that their performance will run as desired, which can be said to be remuneration". (Interview, 8 August 2020).

From the explanation above it can be concluded that this alignment cannot be carried out just like that, there must be a reciprocal relationship between the two parties, so it is suspected that whether in Konawe Selatan District there is a Regent and when he becomes regional head members who are siding with the regional head will be the party who has the position that both in the midst of the bureaucracy, in this case, are heads of offices, sub-district heads, secretaries, school principals, and other strategic positions.

Replacement of bureaucratic officials is carried out with certain objectives such as ethnic relations or emotional closeness and is also carried out because it is related to the same vision and mission, as in the election of regional heads conveying the vision and mission it is also carried out with the aim of providing an assessment of the people who will vote.

The change of officials was also said by one of the informants, namely the former head of the education and culture office Pak Busnawir said that:

"The appointment of leaders in the bureaucracy has a close relationship with the political phenomenon of regional heads, as what happened during my tenure, the regent's family was my subordinate, but it seemed as if he was in control and became the head of the office who always received and conveyed information to my subordinates/other officials. which should be my responsibility as regional head". (Interview 13 August 2020)

The statement above can be concluded that the appointment of a position in a political institution is

closely related to the existence of ethnic relations or political relations, but behind this, the appointment of a bureaucratic official also has rules and conditions, the main thing seen by a regional head, but the background of the head the area to rehabilitate the cabinet is so that its vision and mission can be properly realized by cooperating with bureaucratic officials.

Interview with the former head of the education and culture office, Pak Busnawir, said that:

"The reason I resigned was because of a system that was not suitable or contrary to my background, such as the interests or vision and mission of the regional head that had to be prioritized, part of the vision and mission I did not agree with, therefore I am conflicting with the regional head, because this is not in accordance with bureaucratic regulations". (interview, 13 August 2020).

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that in the change of bureaucratic officials on a large scale political intervention. In the bureaucratic ranks in Konawe Selatan Regency, several officers were carried out in the middle of Covid-19 ahead of the 2020 Simultaneous Election held in December 2020 to place the elected regents into the bureaucratic ranks.

5. CONCLUSION

Various forms of violations, including the use of social assistance by the incumbents to increase electability by positioning themselves as figures who have provided assistance to the affected communities with the Covid-19 in Konawe Kepulauan Regency and Konawe Selatan Regency, but in reality none of the ASN has been sanctioned on the grounds that there is not enough evidence and only conjecture. This of course reflects the lack of supervision from the competent institutions, namely Bawaslu and its staff. Bawaslu as a supervisory agency should have anticipated violations like this, so that they do not happen again. Negligence of the supervisors was easily exploited by the incumbent to mobilize the bureaucratic apparatus to distribute various social assistances during the Covid-19 pandemic by entrusting a message to the public to re-elect the incumbent on December 9, 2020.

In terms of prosecution, Bawaslu also seems difficult to prove, and ensnares regional head candidates who use bureaucratic politicians. The obstacles experienced by Bawaslu come from internal and external. Internally, Bawaslu has limited human resources both in quantity and quality (competence). In terms of quantity, Bawaslu staff resources are very limited, and are faced with a large number of reports and findings. Meanwhile, the competence of the election supervisory commissioner has

not received maximum support from the secretariat, due to the uneven competence of secretariat staff in understanding the rules, and the weakness of legal analysis they have. As a result, the handling of violations is still very simple, so sometimes it cannot convince the police, and the prosecutor's office for the election related criminal cases handled. From externally, Bawaslu is not supported by laws and regulations that can impose severe sanctions on candidates for regional head who use bureaucracy as a political tool.

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