



Designing a National-Local Simultaneous Election: A Proposal for Indonesian Electoral Governance

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Abstract. This article is an attempt to propose the design of a simultaneous election in contemporary Indonesia. Public debates between two popular choices of the simultaneous election: between the national-local model and the legislative-executive model. Which one is more effective for Indonesian election? This article will elaborate further. The paper is aimed to find out a relevant simultaneous election system in contemporary Indonesia. Methodologically, it is qualitative research by adopting the multiple case approach. Therefore, this article relies on the fieldwork gathered from the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with political parties, the Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs), academics, and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) activists in three Indonesia's different provinces. The finding demonstrates that a national-local simultaneous election is relevance for Indonesian culture and more effective rather than other models by designing the time space of 2.5 years between the national simultaneous election and the local simultaneous election. The first step is a national simultaneous election to vote the president-vice president, the House of Representative (DPR RI), and the regional representative council (DPD RI). More specifically, the presidential election is commenced at least between three and four months before the legislative election to guarantee that the presidential coattail effect can induce the party coalition and the legislative election. This model is designed to govern the activation along the years of the role of EMBs, political parties, and, indeed, voters. The significance of this paper is to figure out a win-win situation for a better electoral system in consolidating the path of Indonesian democracy.

Keywords: Simultaneous election · electoral system · Indonesia · national simultaneous election · local simultaneous election

1 Introduction

The election is a fundamental component of the democratic state. There is no a democratic state without the application of an electoral system. By applying the electoral system, the democratic system goes to build desirable goals such as evading dictatorship, ensuring

general freedom, protecting basic rights, allowing self-determination, presenting moral independence, advocating human development and peace-seeking, fighting for political equivalence, and implementing prosperity [1]. Therefore, there are three scenarios of the future democracy. First is the regression scenario of being caught in ‘a cycle of political crisis’. Some partial regimes are seriously damaged as seen in Belarus, Russia, and Chechnya. Second is the stability scenario where neither a trajectory towards a consolidated democracy in the near future nor a regression. The Philippines, Thailand, Ukraine, Russia (a border case), and most central American countries serve as instances. Third is the progression scenario, where the case of Slovakia can be depicted as transforming from a defective democracy to a consolidated democracy. It is the best scenario which can be found in Taiwan and Chile [2].

As the third largest democratic state of the globe after India and the United State of America, Indonesia adopted two kinds of the electoral system, mainly in the legislative election since post-New Order regime. It applied the Closed-List Proportional Representation (CLPR) system between 1999 and 2004 while it has been applying the Open-List Proportional Representation (OLPR) system from 2009 to 2024. There are, indeed, positive and negative trends in both systems. The CLPR system indicates that political parties have a central power in inducing the elected legislative candidates. Money politics deeds will take place among the party elites. Afterward, there is no a guarantee that the party institutionalization is going well. In the meantime, the OLPR system denotes to the fact that the election is like a free trade where voters have a determining role in winning the elected candidate, and, in turn, political parties no longer have a fundamental influence. Furthermore, money politics or vote-buying is rampant among society under this system. More importantly, the OLPR system affects to the weak party institutionalization such as the dependent finance, the internal party fragmentation mainly among the legislative candidates, the wanning ideology of the party, and the rise of the presidentialized party [3, 4]. That is what Al-Hamdi (2022) called as “the power of capital-intensive” under OLPR system [5].

In addition to the debate on the electoral system, there are other fascinating and fundamental issues in the election topic, such as presidential threshold, parliamentary threshold, the fulfilment of requirement for political parties as the election participant, the campaign finance, district magnitude, vote conversion method, and the design of a simultaneous election. The simultaneous election is one of the fascinating topics to be discussed further because it can affect the party strategy in winning the election. Indonesia’s 2019 simultaneous election with five ballot papers is the most spectacular election of the world because there is no one country in contemporary democracies which has such similar election. The five ballot papers are to vote the pair candidate of the president and vice president, members of the House of Representative (DPR RI), members of the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI), members of the Provincial Parliament (DPRD Provinsi), and members of the County/Municipal Parliament (DPRD Kabupaten/Kota). Most countries have at least three ballot papers for their simultaneous election. In the 2024 upcoming election in Indonesia, the simultaneous election not merely consists of five ballot papers but also two other ballot papers for the Regional Head Election (Pilkada), namely governor and mayor/regent.

By evaluating the 2019 simultaneous election, positive and negative trends were found. Positive trends are the rise of voter turnout, the realization of free and fair election, the elected president-vice president is supported by most fractions in the parliament, and the rise of women politicians in the House of Representative. Meanwhile, negative trends include the death of various officers at the polling stations, supervisors, and the like; the rampant of money politics; the five ballot papers which complicate the Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) at the polling stations and voters; all political parties need an immense effort to not merely winning their own presidential candidate but also the party vote to reach the minimum of the parliamentary threshold; and other technical issues [6].

This paper is going to design a simultaneous election in contemporary Indonesia. Public in Indonesia largely debates between two majority choices of a simultaneous election: the national-local model and the legislative-executive model. Which one is more effective in the context of the Indonesian election? This paper is going to examine further. Therefore, this paper is aimed to find out a relevant simultaneous election system in a contemporary Indonesian election.

2 Alternative Models of the Simultaneous Election: A Theoretical Framework

2.1 Six Models in the MK'S Verdict 2013

The simultaneous election can be understood as a unification all kinds of election where the implementation is organized at the same time, at least in the same year, even in a same day with the specific management. It includes legislative and executive elections at all levels of the government [7, 8]. Such an election is not merely familiar in established democratic states but also in new democracies such as in South America and East Europe. Nevertheless, it is still not prevalent in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand [9–12]. In 2013, Indonesia's Constitutional Court (*Mahkamah Konstitusi*, MK) for the first time recommended six constitutional models of a simultaneous election based on the Constitutional Court's Verdict No. 14/PUU-XI/2013 [13].

The first model is a simultaneous election entirely. It is to vote seven ballot papers (DPR RI, DPD RI, the president-vice president, DPRD *Provinsi*, DPRD *Kabupaten/Kota*, governor, and regent/mayor). Therefore, it is held once each five years. It so-called "a wholesale election" (*Pemilu Borongan*). The 2024 simultaneous election seemingly refers this model.

The second model is a simultaneous election to vote five ballot papers. It is to vote members of DPR RI, DPD RI, the president-vice president, members of DPRD *Provinsi*, and DPRD *Kabupaten/Kota*. After a certain time, it is followed by the regional executive elections to vote governor, regent, and mayor in the same day inside a province. The schedule depends on the local election cycle each province where the time is agreed. The 2019 national simultaneous election and the 2020 local simultaneous election refer this model.

The third model is a clustered simultaneous election. In other words, it can be so-called "legislative and executive simultaneous elections". It is to vote the legislative

position at the national and local levels simultaneously, and, in turn, followed by the executive simultaneous election.

First step: legislative simultaneous election. It is to vote members of DPR RI, DPD RI, DPRD *Provinsi*, and DPRD *Kabupaten/Kota*.

Second step: executive simultaneous election. It is to vote the president-vice president, governor, and regent/mayor, where it is held in a few months later after the first step.

The fourth model is a national and local simultaneous election. It separates between the national simultaneous election and the local simultaneous election. Thus, there are two different time of election respectively.

First step: The national simultaneous election to vote member of DPR RI, DPD RI, and the president-vice president. It is held in a same day.

Second step: The local simultaneous election to vote member of DPRD *Provinsi*, DPRD *Kabupaten/Kota*, gubernatorial election, and mayoral/regent election. It is also held in a same day at least between 2.5 and three years after the national simultaneous election.

The fifth model is a national and local simultaneous election. Basically, this model is almost same with the fourth model with a specific certain type, namely regional-based simultaneous elections.

First step: The national simultaneous election to vote member of DPR RI, DPD RI, and the president-vice president. It is conducted in the same day.

Second step: The local simultaneous election to vote member of DPRD *Provinsi*, DPRD *Kabupaten/Kota*, gubernatorial election, and mayoral/regent election. It is organized at least between two and three years after the national simultaneous election based on grouping certain region or islands. More technically, the first region-based simultaneous election is held in western Indonesia, followed by central Indonesia and eastern Indonesia. Another instance is the first island-based simultaneous election is held in Sumatera, and, in turn, followed in Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Papua, and so on and so forth).

The sixth model is a national and local simultaneous election. This option is almost similar with the fourth and fifth models with a particular type, i.e., national simultaneous election with flexible local simultaneous elections.

First step: The national simultaneous election to vote member of DPR RI, DPD RI, and the president-vice president. It is voting three ballot papers.

Second step: After a certain time, it is followed by the local simultaneous election to vote executive and legislative wings (governor, regent/mayor, DPRD *Provinsi*, and DPRD *Kabupaten/Kota*) inside a province in the same day. The timeline is relying on the local election cycle each province with the agreed time.

Third step: It is followed again by other local simultaneous elections in various provinces. Hence, there are numerous local simultaneous elections in different provinces a year.

If model 1 and 2 are a wholesale simultaneous election, model 3 is a legislative-executive simultaneous election, meanwhile, model 4, 5, and 6 are a national-local election with its specific differences. One thing that public should know, the Constitutional Court has no right to decide which model of a simultaneous election can be

applied in Indonesia. This right is belonging to the House of Representative and the government as the main legislator. If the first, second, and third models can be classified as the legislative-executive simultaneous election, the fourth, fifth, and sixth models are grouped into the national-local simultaneous election. Thus, the six models can be simplified into two main models: legislative-executive and national-local.

In terms of Model 1 and 2, the EMBs have difficulties in coping with various technical issues because the jobs and duties are in a high volume. In the meantime, voters shall deal with a lot of political parties, legislative candidates, and regional head candidates so that they have difficulties to decide their own choice among dozens of parties even hundreds of legislative candidates. In addition to the electoral complexity, political parties have obstacles in selecting and nominating the candidates for legislative and executive wings. They eventually tend to select the candidates which have a big chance to be elected without considering the ideological orientation. It is also likely that parties will nominate the candidates which can provide “a political dowry” to the party. In this circumstance, the party machine is seemingly not working to support their candidate, whether in executive or legislative election. Unfortunately, the candidates shall fight and campaign for themselves to reach the triumph. It is also possible to take place in Model 3. However, if the goal of a simultaneous election is merely to save the state budget, Model 1, 2, and 3 can solve it. Rather, there is no guarantee to solve psychosocial problems among society. The long impact of the 2019 presidential election is tangible evidence. Under Model 1 and 2, the electoral management is getting more complicated. The political configuration is not uncertain. Even, the political blocking is not obvious, and, in turn, the political transactional is rampant. The upshot, the party ideology and programs are no longer being a consideration for members of the parliament and the elected regional head in formulating any policy. The candidates obey only to the party elite not the party as an institution. This is what the authors call as “the overdoses of democracy”.

In the meantime, Model 4, 5, and 6 seems to have a simple way of the election. The political dynamics is working at national and local levels respectively. The coattail-effect is also effective because there is a significant impact of the party coalition in nominating the president-vice president candidate and the regional head candidate. The local politics is alive without the national hustle at the same time. Political parties in each level can focus to make their own coalition. By separating a simultaneous election at least 2.5 years between national and local, public has a chance to evaluate the performance of political parties without waiting for five years later. More technically, if the national simultaneous election will take place on February 2024, the local simultaneous election can be organized approximately between July 2026 and February 2027. Although these models indeed require a high budget, psychosocial obstacles amongst public as the impact of the election can be solved. Under these models, the EMBs still have a significant role in maintaining both models of a simultaneous election. For an instance, the EMBs can cope with the national simultaneous election in 2024 effectively by voting three ballot papers. A year later, they can start again to prepare and handle the local simultaneous election in 2026 or 2027.

These six models are approved based on a threefold consideration. First is the debate among the original intent of the 1945 Constitution when the amendment takes place.

Second is reinforcing of the presidential system in Indonesia. Third is investigating the notion of a simultaneous election in the Constitutional Court's Verdict No. 14/PUU-XI/2013. There are two fundamental things of those six models: (1) The MK terminates the dichotomy between the *Pemilu* regime and the *Pilkada* regime, and, in turn, includes *Pilkada* as part of *Pemilu*; (2) The MK highlights that whatever the model of a simultaneous election which will be applied, these three elections cannot be separated each other: the Presidential Election (*Pilpres*), the legislative election (DPR RI, DPRD *Provinsi*, DPRD *Kabupaten/Kota*), and the DPD election.

2.2 Six Models in the MK'S Verdict 2020

In spite of essentially almost similar, there is a little bit modification of six models in the MK's verdict No. 55/PPU XVII/2019 on 26 February 2020. It is fundamental to be explained here positive and negative trends each model in order to find a comprehensive insight in choosing the relevant model for contemporary election in Indonesia [14].

The first model: The simultaneous election with five ballot papers (DPR RI, DPD RI, the president-vice president, DPRD *Provinsi*, and DPRD *Kabupaten/Kota*). The advantages: (a) it refers to the electoral regulation as stated in the 1945 Constitution Article 22E verse (2); (b) it strengthens the presidential system; (c) this option can make an effective election, and, in turn, can reduce the financial efficiency. The disadvantages: (a) the 1945 Constitution Article 22E verse (2) was formulated when the political dynamics of *Pilkada* is not regulated yet. Thus, the Article 22E still did not accommodate the dynamic of the state administration; (b) electing the members of DPRD is no longer relevant in the context of the presidential election; (c) there is the dichotomy of the national and local elections.

The second model: The simultaneous election with five ballot papers (DPR RI, DPD RI, the president-vice president, governor, and regent/mayor). If the option 1 does not include *Pilkada*, option 2 does not include the DPRD election. The advantages: (a) it refers to the 1945 Constitution Article 22E verse (2) comprehensively where there is no any norm which can ban the unification of the day (simultaneity) between national and local elections; (b) it can be executed without the 1945 Constitution Amendment, and, in turn, the electoral regulation can be ruled in the form of Act; (c) it strengthens the presidential election and the regional autonomy simultaneously; (d) it is likely to create an effective election and can reduce the financial efficiency; (e) although there is the dichotomy of the national and local elections, the separation of the DPRD election from the simultaneous election has no positive impacts to the performance relationship among the regional government, mainly between the legislative and executive branches. The disadvantages: (a) the dispute completion system which is depending merely on the Constitutional Court can affect to the poor performance in solving a lot of disputes with the limitation of the short time; (b) strengthening the regional autonomy cannot work effectively because this system separates the DPRD election and *Pilkada*.

The third model: The simultaneous election with seven ballot papers (DPR RI, DPD RI, the president-vice president, DPRD *Provinsi*, DPRD *Kabupaten/Kota*, governor, and regent/mayor). The advantages: (a) it refers to the 1945 Constitution Article 22E verse (2) comprehensively where there is no any norm which can ban the unification of the day (simultaneity) between national and local elections; (b) it can be executed

without the 1945 Constitution Amendment, and, in turn, the electoral regulation can be ruled in the form of Act; (c) it strengthens the presidential system and the regional autonomy simultaneously; (d) it is likely to create an effective election and can reduce the financial efficiency; (e) there is the dichotomy of the national and local elections. The disadvantages: (a) the dispute completion system which is depending merely on the Constitutional Court can affect to the poor performance in solving a lot of disputes with the limitation of the short time.

The fourth model: The simultaneous election by separating between national and local elections. Therefore, there are two different times of election respectively. The advantages: (a) it refers to the 1945 Constitution Article 22E Verse (2) despite of excluding the DPRD election. Nevertheless, this separation does not affect to the electoral system as long as the DPRD election is also organized according to Article 22E Verse (1): “The election is organized directly, general, free, confident, honest, and fair once each five years”. It denotes to the fact that the separation of the DPRD election from the national simultaneous election does not impair the national simultaneous election system which is aimed to strengthen the presidential system. The DPRD election indeed has no direct relation in strengthening the presidential system; (b) the 1945 Constitution Article 18 Verse (4) which regulates *Pilkada* and Article 22E Verse (2) particularly on the DPRD election are unified in order to strengthen the regional autonomy (the unification of regional election between executive and legislative branches). It can influence the dynamic of local politics; (c) it can be executed without the 1945 Constitution Amendment, and, in turn, the electoral regulation can be ruled in the form of Act; (d) it strengthens the presidential system; (e) it strengthens the democratization of regional autonomy comprehensively; (f) it is likely to create an effective election and can reduce the financial efficiency; (g) the dispute completion system which is depending merely on the Constitutional Court has no negative impacts to the electoral performance. It is better if the national and regional simultaneous elections are organized by separating the election schedule. For an instance, the national simultaneous election has the time distance 2.5 years with the local simultaneous election. The disadvantages: (a) if it is examined from the original intent which separating the DPRD election, it can underestimate the electoral value. Nevertheless, the state administration practice (constitutional interpretation) does not always accommodate the original intent.

The fifth model: The simultaneous election by separating between national and local elections and executed with three different times of election respectively. The advantages: point a, b, c, d is totally similar with the advantage of point a, b, c, d in *Option 4*; (e) it strengthens the democratization of regional autonomy comprehensively at the level of province and county/city separately; point f and g is totally similar with the advantage of point f and g in *Option 4*. The disadvantages: (a) totally similar with disadvantage point a in *Option 4*.

The sixth model: other options of election as long as referring to the basic value of the simultaneous election to vote member of DPR RI, DPD, and the president-vice president. This option highlights that the legislators have their rights (*open legal policy*) to design the simultaneous election by considering the strength to the presidential system and is not contradicted to the main principle of the simultaneous election to vote DPR RI, DPD RI, and the president-vice president.

This concept refers to the 1945 Constitution Article 22E and Article 18. Article 22E states that “The election is organized to vote the member of House of Representative, the Regional Representative Council, President and Vice President, and the Local Parliament”. In the meantime, Article 18 mentions that “Governor, Regent, and Mayor each of them is acting as head of regional government in province, county, and city and are elected democratic”. It is fundamental to be stressed here that both articles have a similar meaning related to the election. In the constitution theory, there is a close relation between one norm and other norms inside the 1945 Constitution that the law interpretation of “democratic” is a direct election by people. It indicates that both articles agree to design a democratic election in Indonesia’s simultaneous election, whether the principle of its implementation or institution. Other instance is the law norm related to the presidential institution which cannot be examined partially on the Chap. 3 regarding the Power of Government but also studied comprehensively related to the Presidential Institution which can be found in, for example, in Article 20 Verse (2) and Article 22 of the 1945 Constitution.

Therefore, both articles should be interpreted as a united concept in terms of the electoral regime. As a consequence, it is no longer relevant to contradict each other that *Pilkada* is not part of *Pemilu* but part of the Regional Autonomy (*Otonomi Daerah*, OTDA). In the future, it is essential to be conducted an amendment to the 1945 Constitution in order to unify the electoral regulation regime in One Chapter (a special chapter for the electoral regime) because in a unitary state, the power is centralized in the state not the region. The main responsibility of the state can be found in the position of the president.

3 Research Method

This article applies qualitative method [15–19] by employing the multiple case study approach [20, 21]. The case study can be understood as the intensive examination which explain one or more cases within a tied case or multiple cases through in-depth data collection by gathering various sources [20–23]. To collect data, this paper uses documentary, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and in-depth interview [16, 17, 19, 21, 24, 25]. The documentary was conducted before, during, and after the field research. Supporting data from credible online news and suitable references will also be used in this paper. In the meantime, the FGD and in-depth interview were conducted with 51 informants spreading into four different institutions: the Election Commission (KPU), the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu), political parties, and scientists or Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) activists. More specifically, 18 informants are coming from Aceh, 18 informants are in East Java, and 15 informants are in South Sulawesi. The data collection spent roughly three months from April to June 2022.

Regarding the research location, it takes three different provinces in Indonesia. The location selection is considered based on a sevenfold thing: various cases of electoral fraud, the rampant vote-buying, many cases of the death of the Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs), special autonomy regions, and the electorate base in the 2019 election. Based on those considerations, this study selected three provinces: Aceh, East Java, and South Sulawesi. After data gathered, the final step is analysis into four steps: reducing data, displaying data, drawing and verification, and conclusion [22, 26].

4 Findings and Discussion

It will elaborate a threefold thing. First is the evaluation of the 2019 simultaneous election. Second elaborating the challenges of the simultaneous election in 2024. Third is a proposal to design an affective simultaneous election in contemporary Indonesia.

4.1 Evaluating the 2019 Simultaneous Election

By 2019, Indonesia applied a simultaneous election for the first time with five ballot papers after the MK's verdict in the end of 2013 on six alternative models of the simultaneous election. The five papers are to vote DPR RI, DPD RI, the president-vice president, DPRD *Provinsi*, and DPRD *Kabupaten/Kota*. The evaluation of the 2019 simultaneous election is mainly based on the FGD with respondents in three different provinces (Aceh, East Java, and South Sulawesi) and interviews with some relevant informants. They are EMBs (KPU and Bawaslu), politicians, academicians, and NGO's activists. From their views and opinions, it can be formulated into some points as follows.

Regarding voter turn-out, the 2019 simultaneous election has a positive impact on the rise of voter turn-out rather than previous elections, i.e., 81.97% for the presidential election and 81.69% for the national parliamentary election.

Although it affected the savings of the state budget, the psycho-social problem amongst society was rising continuously in-post 2019. Electoral buzzers were spreading and harming the democracy progress. Afterwards, hoax was also increasing in 2019, even it was exploited by certain groups to hit other candidates or among political parties and to impair the EMBs' image.

It affects to the overload of duties for the EMBs mainly at the grassroots level, and, in turn, the EMBs' performance in preparing election goods and serving voters is poor. The overload could be detected since the D-Day of the election and at least two days later (17, 18, and 19 April 2019). Even, various officers at the Polling Station Officers (KPPS) did not sleep for 24 h because of counting vote and writing the number of reports manually. In certain cases, some regions suffer a vote counting conflict affecting the addition of extra time. As a following consequence, a lot of KPPS officers were getting fatigue, even died. In Aceh, a woman who being one of the KPPS officers suffered a miscarriage due to fatigue of the duty overload. On the public discussion held by LHKP of the Central Board of Muhammadiyah on 07 February 2021, Pramono U. Tanthowi, the KPU RI Commissioner, confirmed that such an overload eventually induces the high number of work accidents of the EMBs at the grassroots level. The KPU data demonstrated that there were 894 people died and 5,175 people getting sick due to work accidents during the electoral process. Thus, Pramono stressed that the 2019 simultaneous election model should be the first and the last election which should be terminated.

The poor understanding of the EMBs at the grassroots level on the voting system, the vote counting system, and the technical-administrative system in the D-Day of the election. It is an impact of the ineffective trainings for such EMBs. This situation induces significantly on technical errors. According to the KPU RI data as was explained by Pramono U. Tanthowi on the public discussion, 07 February 2021, more technically, technical errors took place in the logistic provision and the voter service. It affected on 705 polling stations (TPS) which should organize the re-election (PSU), 2,260 polling

stations which shall manage the additional elections (*pemilu susulan*), and 296 polling stations which must accomplish the following elections (*pemilu lanjutan*) [27].

The low income of the EMBs at the grassroots level. The income for KPPS chairperson was 550,000 IDR while members of KPPS were 500,000 IDR. It is applied nationally. It is not surprisingly if money politics or vote-buying was increasingly rampant across the country in 2019. According to Al-Hamdi (2019), three modes of vote-buying are detected in the 2019 simultaneous election. First is candidate to voter (C2V). It is conducted by the candidate to voters directly without any intermediaries. Second is candidate to organizer (C2O). It is taking place between the candidate and the EMBs, mainly at the grassroots level. Third is candidate to candidate (C2C). It is carried out by ambitious candidates who desire the targeted seat and other candidates which only want to sell their vote to such ambitious candidates. It is an impact of the poor regulation under Act on Election No. 7 Year 2017 where it restricts to the perpetrator of vote-buying only for EMBs, political parties, registered candidates, and registered Success Team (*Tim Sukses*). There is no penalty for citizens outside those category as was regulated by the Act. In Aceh, vote-buying can be understood as part of *shadaqah* of politics. Hence, KPPS officers have a chance to take a part of money politics in the context of second mode.

A lot of electoral violations were taking place in various provinces. According to the Bawaslu RI's data released on 06 May 2019, there were nationally 7,299 cases of the electoral violation based on public reports and the officer findings. The highest case based on the officer findings took place in East Java (3,002 cases) and South Sulawesi (772 cases) while the highest case based on the public reports occurred in West Java (117 cases) and South Sulawesi (115 cases) [28]. In terms of money politics, Bawaslu RI found various cases of money politics in 25 different counties and cities across Indonesia [29]. Afterwards, the role *Sentra Gakumdu* (Center for Integrated Law Enforcement) as the electoral court consisting of Bawaslu's delegate, the Indonesian Police Body's (POLRI) delegate, and the attorney delegate did not work effectively. There was a different interpretation among those three institutions on various electoral crimes conducted by mainly candidates. Thus, sometimes the Bawaslu performance in 2019 was useless.

Due to various candidates with different political parties, voters have difficulties to select their choice, mainly in the legislative election. The upshot, each voter needs a long time to vote five different ballot papers at the TPS. More technically, each voter needs at least 5–7 min to vote those five papers. For more detail, young voters require 3–5 min while old voters need 7–9 min. Meanwhile, voters with disabilities require 9–11 min. It was more complex in Aceh because voters have additional alternative candidates from four different local political parties. If national parties in 2019 were 16, local parties in Aceh in 2019 were 4. Thus, there were 20 parties in Aceh. Although the voting can end on 13.00 PM, the number of voters each polling station was decreasing from maximum 500 to maximum 300. As a consequence, the number of polling stations nationally is increasing. There were 545,803 polling stations for the legislative election and 478,339 polling stations for the presidential election in 2014. Such a number was increasing to 810,329 polling stations for both legislative and presidential elections in 2019. Thus, the electoral budget in 2019 was rising. In other words, this system is disincentive for voters.

In 2019, the presidential election was more interesting rather than the parliamentary election. Public eventually focuses merely to vote the presidential candidate, and, in turn, seems to leave legislative issues. In a particular case, legislative candidates have a lot of obstacles when they want to campaign to society. Voters did not ask the legislative candidate programs but prefer to investigate why the candidate's party tends to nominate a certain presidential candidate. Thus, legislative candidates have no time to campaign themselves because they were insisted to campaign their presidential candidate. The impact is that certain political parties receive negative coattail-effects. It can be seen with the loss of national seats of the National Mandate Party (PAN) totally in Central Java and the decreasing seat of the Gerindra Party in Central Java where this province is the main base of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP) and Joko Widodo. Another instance, the local parliamentary seats of the Hanura Party were losing in West Java and West Sumatra were both provinces were the electorate base of Prabowo and Muslims.

Civil servants and members of POLRI failed to realize the values of a neutral position in 2019. Most of them involved to campaign a certain candidate. It is seemingly difficult for them to run away from this real politics. Therefore, they exploit the state resource to support their political campaign.

4.2 The Challenges of the 2024 Spectacular Simultaneous Election

If Indonesia's 2019 simultaneous election was the spectacular election of the world, the 2024 simultaneous election will be the most spectacular election of the globe. Why? Indonesia is the only state of the world amongst contemporary democratic countries which organizes a simultaneous election with seven ballot papers. More specifically, the first step of the simultaneous election will be organized in the same day on 14 February 2024 to vote five ballot papers, namely the presidential election, DPD RI, DPR RI, DPRD Provinsi, and DPRD Kabupaten/Kota. Nine months later on November 2024, the second step of the simultaneous election is the regional head election to vote the governor and regent/mayor. When the author(s) asked Arief Budiman, the chairperson of KPU RI in 2017–2021, in the public lecture held by Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta on 25 November 2021, on how many maximum ballot papers which organized by other counties? He confirmed, three ballot papers are maximum number. In the meantime, Indonesia will organize five ballot papers plus two ballot papers in 2024.

As a consequence, the schedule of those two steps is too close, and, in turn, a lot of schedules are crash each other. Even, the crash is higher rather than the crash between the 2019 simultaneous election and the 2018 regional head simultaneous election. More specifically, between February and October 2024 will take place the voting process, the vote counting process, the recapitulation process, the dispute process, and the possibility of the re-election (Pemungutan Suara Ulang, PSU) in various polling stations. In the same time, Pilkada will have steps of technical professional trainings (bimtek) for members of KPPS, updating the voter data, and the verification of support to independent candidates. Another possibility is the second round of the presidential election. Such a process imposes an immense burden not merely for the EMBs' duties but also political parties and voters.

Furthermore, the 2024 simultaneous election will need the powerful finance from the state budget (APBN) to finance the national election and from the regional budget (APBD) to finance the regional head election. In addition to that, the job burden of the EMBs mainly at the grassroot level and technical-administrative challenges particularly in the logistic provision such as ballot boxes, ballot papers, and the like will be almost similar with the 2019 simultaneous election. Therefore, the government needs to anticipate similar problems as what took place in 2019.

In terms of voters, they still have difficulties to select and differentiate between local and national issues or between executive and legislative issues during the campaign step of all candidates. Afterwards, political parties will have essential problems in the nomination process because they need an extra time to prepare such a process while the time distance between the legislative election (February 2024) and the regional head election (November 2024) is too close. The election is getting further away from the main goal, i.e., the effective presidential government, whether at the national and local levels. Therefore, it can be summarized that the 2024 simultaneous election is disincentive for political parties, voters, and the EMBs. So, why such a simultaneous election model is still to be held and maintained?

4.3 Designing a National-Local Simultaneous Election: A Proposal for Future Election

By considering advantages and disadvantages of six models, its relevance on Indonesian culture, and various problems as was elaborated above, this paper eventually proposes to separate between the national simultaneous election and the local simultaneous election. The national simultaneous election is held to vote three ballot papers, i.e., the president-vice president, DPR RI, and DPD RI. More specifically, there is a different day of the national simultaneous election, where the first step of the election is commenced with the presidential election, and, in turn, followed by voting for the DPR RI and DPD RI elections. It is dissimilar with the 2004 and 2009 presidential elections. For an instance, if the presidential election is held in February, the DPR RI and DPD RI elections could be held in between three and four months later. After roughly 2.5 years later, the election is followed by the local simultaneous election to vote governor, DPRD *Provinsi*, regent/mayor, and DPRD *Kabupaten/Kota*. Consequently, the simplification of the ballot paper is no longer relevance in this context because it is still normal if the national simultaneous election consists of three ballot papers and the local simultaneous election contains four ballot papers.

This proposal strengthens the Indonesian Institute of Sciences' (LIPI) policy paper [30] with some specific differentials. Nonetheless, the presidential threshold is no longer applied in this proposal, and, in turn, merely political parties having the national parliamentary seats which can nominate the pair candidate of the president and vice president. For more detail, there are some important explanations regarding the design of a national-local simultaneous election for Indonesian future democracy.

There is a closed relationship between executive and legislative wings in each level of government. The president and vice president can build their robust coalition with the House of Representative. In the same vein, the governor can design its relationship with the DPRD *Provinsi*. It is also applied in county and municipality. The upshot, this

model resists the party to do not work seriously merely for the election process but also in post-election.

The separation of national and local will provide a space for the EMBs to prepare the best performance. This model can minimize a big burden of the EMBs' jobs and duties. Afterwards, political parties will have enough time to find, select, and nominate the best candidate. After the national election, parties can evaluate their platform and campaign strategies to deal with the following local election. Furthermore, voters also have much time to find information related to candidates which they will vote in the following election. For an instance, if voters are disappointed with a certain party because of a poor performance, they can criticize and punish such a party, and, in turn, change their vote to another party.

This model strengthens the presidential system because the president electability can intervene the result of the legislative election. In other words, the president's coattail effect is working effectively. Thus, the election result demonstrates that the elected president will be followed by the domination of parliamentary seats. It can be seen in three last elections, 2009, 2014, and 2019. Thus, the legislative support to the elected president will strengthen the elected official to have a powerful authority in formulating and implementing public policies without any essential pressure of the parliament. Hence, the chance of divided government can be minimized.

In the aspect of the EMBs, there are some needs to be designed, mainly for the EMBs at the grassroots. First is the age limitation of KPPS officers at least minimum 18-year-old and maximum 45-year-old. Second is a need to check their health in order to avoid mental problems during the electoral process. Third is a must to increase the salary. It is good news that the House of Representative and the executive government agreed to increase the salary of KPPS officers into 1.5 Million IDR. It raises from 500,000 IDR in 2019. Fourth is intensifying the technical training for mainly KPPS officers. Fifth is extending the period of job for KPPS officers from one month to at least two or three months. Sixth is adding the human resources of EMBs at the polling station. For an example, adding member of KPPS officers from seven into nine or 11 members with the management of duties among of them. Seventh is that employing the Information Communication Technology is an inevitability in order to reduce technical overload of KPPS officers by providing "e-recapitulation" system as was applied in the 2020 *Pilkada*. Eighth is providing the health insurance for the EMBs at the grassroots level during the election process. Ninth is that KPU can cooperate with campuses through an independent program or a community service program in involving students as KPPS officers across the country or assisting KPU's jobs.

KPU needs to simplify the documents and procedures of voting at the polling station, campaign methods, the voter data sorting mechanism, and the electoral logistics procurement and distribution system. In addition to that, KPU should prepare to strengthen early the electoral ICT infrastructure. The government and all related stakeholders shall support this notion, mainly SIDALIH for updating the voter data, SIPOL for the political party registration, and SIREKAP for the vote recapitulation.

Political parties have more time to recruit the best candidates. If the legislative candidates are not elected at the national level, they can be nominated again at the local level, whether the legislative or executive position. This model allows the party cadres

being consistent politicians in each two until three years to pursue the expected position. Furthermore, this model can minimize the intraparty conflict. If the conflict previously can occur year-around, applying this model seems to indicate that the conflict merely takes place twice.

In the context of the national simultaneous election, the presidential election is designed in the first step, and, in turn, followed by the parliamentary election as the second step. Thus, there is a different day of this model. It will make a coattail-effect mechanism is working effectively. The presidential threshold in this model is still applied.

5 Conclusion

This paper eventually prefers to propose the model of national and local simultaneous election for Indonesian future election. It is more effective and relevance for Indonesian culture rather than other models. In terms of the national simultaneous election, there are two different times of election. The presidential election is a first step, and, in turn, followed by the legislative election in three-four months later. It is aimed to ensure that the presidential coattail effect is working effectively into the coalition model and the legislative election. In addition to that, there is a time space of 2.5 years between the national simultaneous election and the local simultaneous election. It is related to the electoral governance in order to always activate the role of EMBs along the years, political parties, and voters in managing all aspects of preparation.

Therefore, it is a need to revise the simultaneous election model as stated in Act No. 7 Year 2017 on Election. The electoral system shall include the simultaneous Pilkada as part of the electoral regime, mainly in the local simultaneous election. Consequently, the unification of Act of Pilkada and Act of Election into the sole Act of Election is an inevitability. The most important thing is that both legislative and executive wings have a political will and, in turn, concur to manage and execute this model seriously.

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