

The Phenomenon Of Centralization In Political Parties In Regional Head Election

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Abstract

The phenomenon of centralization in political parties is not only a phenomenon in Indonesia. From the perspective of political parties, it can be seen that maintaining the organization of political parties at the local level can be used as a source of gaining constituents. However, local organizations from political parties will be expensive for internal parties and can be a source of "political scandal" for the party. Thus, political communication carried out by political parties at the national level uses the media more than building the organizational strength of political parties to the local level. The question is to what extent do political parties need party organization at the local level? How is local power in the implementation of regional head elections not easily intervened by the power of political parties from the center? Experience in developed democrats shows that local organization political parties are still needed. This is related to the legitimacy of the political party. Campaigns for political parties at the local level can be said to be more effective. Political parties at the local level can provide political information, convince voters directly and mobilize the masses. Furthermore, the Denver study also explains that political parties at the local level can also be a source of party finance.

Keywords: *political parties, regional head election, decentralization, political decision, government*

1. INTRODUCTION

Taking into account the importance of the political party practices organization at the local level mentioned above, what are the political practices in Indonesia? Political practices that occur in several regions, such as in Banyuwangi, show that local actors are not subject to central decisions. This is because there are still opportunities to build loose coalitions between political parties or to use individual candidates to become candidates for regents / mayors in the regional head election system [1]. Meanwhile, theoretically, political parties at the local level will be a place to train cadres as a political training ground that can be an alternative for party leaders. Although in the context of political culture in Indonesia, it is still very top down. In the future development, it is desirable for party cadres who are evenly distributed from various levels.

The function of cadre recruitment at the local level is very important, especially in the implementation of regional head elections. Political parties at the regional level prepare their cadres to become government leaders at the regional government level, both Governors and Regents / Mayors. The practice of holding regional head elections can be used as a symbol of the process of political power in the regions [2]. In the period 1999-2005 regional head elections in accordance with Law no. 22 and Law no. 25 concerning regional autonomy which gives regional house of representative (DPR) powers to determine the head of their respective regions. This process shows the existence of vote buying in the implementation of regional head elections conducted by the regional house of representative (DPRD). The cases of North Maluku and South Sulawesi are interesting examples in the gubernatorial election process in the regional

house of representative (DPRD). Votes from political parties can be traded. Mirsan Abadi's master's thesis in Political Science on the election for the Governor of North Maluku shows the conflict after the candidates bought votes and remained unelected. The problem is whether all the candidates buy votes, so that the process is unclear [3]. Likewise, Jayadi Nas's dissertation also shows the practice of buying and selling votes in the regional house of representative (DPRD) of Central Sulawesi Province in the election for the governor.

During the reform era there was a tendency for the public to distrust political parties. At least it has an impact on the 1945 Constitution amendment. The Regional House Representatives (DPRD) come from individual representatives. Yet in the context of modern politics, the state cannot be separated from political parties. Do political parties become significant in the local political framework? There are three important reasons for understanding the organizational structure and mechanisms of political parties in Indonesia in the context of the regional head election process or local elections. First, political parties have significance in local elections because they have the power to nominate Governor, Regent / Mayor. In this case, political parties are a very important political vehicle for the Governor / Regent / Mayor. Following the development of the Constitutional Court's decision regarding the permissibility of individual candidates, The individual candidates had other alternatives to become a candidate. Only in practice, the requirements for individual candidates have become very complex and complicated [4]. Therefore, nominations from political parties are still dominant in the implementation of local elections. Even political parties must meet requirements such as obtaining seats as much as 15% in the regional house representative (DPRD) or obtaining votes as much as 20%. Thus the representatives of political parties, either individually or by party coalitions (compulsively) dominate the local electoral process. Elected candidates are the result of a political bargaining process or are often perceived as cow trading politics. This means not choosing a candidate who is deemed appropriate to lead the region he represents, but more the personal relationship factor between the candidate and the party officials concerned [5].

Second, the Central Leadership Council (DPP) in all political parties tries to control council members at the local level, both Provincial and Regency / City. Members of the Council at the 10ka level depend on the political parties structure such as the DPP (Central Leadership Council) at the national level and Regional Representative Council (DPD)Regional Representative Council (DPD)at the Provincial level. This is because political parties have the power to re-call or dismiss house of representative (DPR) members before their term expires, through PAW (Change Between Time) against these council members. The dependence of house of representative (DPR) members on political parties makes political parties still significant on one side. However, political parties become undemocratic in the pattern of recruiting these political positions [6].

Third, the political parties structure is still very hierarchical and top-down. In several practices of nominating candidates at the party level, changes occurred because the Central Leadership Council (DPP) did not approve of the candidates proposed by the lower level party structures. For example, the elected Regent of Banyuwangi Regency, at the beginning of his candidacy through the Indonesian Democratic Party Of Struggle (PDIP), has received the most votes from the DPC-DPC (Branch Leadership Council) at the Regency / City level. In addition, there is still a structure at the sub-district level of the DPAC (Sub-Branch Leadership Council) of political parties. In political practice there is a contestation between these party structures, but the Central Leadership Council (DPP) has the final say in determining the nomination. Thus the Central Leadership Council (DPP) has the power not to nominate these candidates. This practice occurs in all political parties. This is especially true when the issue of political interest meets the economic interest of a political party, institutionally as well as the interests of the actors of the political party management [7].

In the practice in internal power relations of political parties at the national, provincial and district / city levels, there are often contradictions in the management of party organizations. Thus, the main statement in this context is internal party democracy has not yet developed. The internal democratic process of political parties is a major challenge. In political practice since the reformation, no political party can be said to have democratic practices within the party. This is related to the issue of recruitment of political positions, such as becoming candidates for Council

members at all levels as well as political positions at the executive level [8]. The clear indicators in the recruitment process for these positions are only used normatively. In a political party structure, the chairman power of a political party is unlimited. For example, the Democratic Party has a model that the internal power structure of political parties is in the President Susilo Bambang Yudoyono (SBY). This model practice was carried out by Suharto in Party of Functional Group (Golkar), where Suharto was Chairman. Meanwhile, political parties that use Islamic ideology use the power structure of the Tanfidz Council for National Awakening Party (PKB), the Shura Council for the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), which are filled with ustadz or ulama who have absolute power. So that all decisions of the Central Leadership Council (DPP) political parties must get the "blessing" of these leaders.

Political party cadres in turn demand a bigger role in the context of regional head elections (Pilkada) to determine their leaders. Especially in the demands framework as a bargaining chip for the contribution of the cadres work in the national elections [9]. The top-down organizational model of political parties will lead to the tendency of alienating party cadres at the local level. The internal democratic process of political parties can be seen from the process of selecting cadres to be nominated as governors, regents / mayors in regional head elections. The process starts with the DPC at the Regency / City level which makes the sub-district the lowest unit in the candidate nomination process. From the Regency / City, they are then taken to the Province and to the Central Leadership Council (DPP). In this context, the Central Leadership Council (DPP) has enormous power to determine the nomination of the candidate's name. If proposals from the local level are not approved, political parties will split. Political party organizations at the local level must follow party lines and DPP decisions are formally deemed to have fulfilled the democratic process in accordance with the internal rules of the AD / ART in the party structure, either through bottom-up or through top-down. The Central Leadership Council (DPP) argument, which occurs in almost all parties, suggests that representatives of political parties at the local level are considered to have insufficient experience and knowledge to organize political parties at the local level [10]. Conflicts and internal political party dilemmas are a part of what all political parties face. In turn, factions within political parties use methods to solve problems at the central level rather than resolve party conflicts at the regional level.

Thus conflicts in political party organizations occur between the political party structures at the top level and those at lower levels from the Central Leadership Council (DPP) to the DPC. Apart from conflicts that occur between party members and party cadres, conflicts also occur between factions within political parties at the local level, as well as leadership at the district, provincial and central levels. Meanwhile, members of political parties at the local level who have sat in the Regional house of representative (DPRD) develop their own strength to gain influence in local political life, namely access to economic benefits which will be the main basis for maintaining their position in the next election. Therefore, members of political parties in Regional house of representative (DPRD) become separate factional forces in the political power conflict at the local internal political party level, especially in determining party cadres in the regional head election process. The power of party cadres in house of representative (DPRD) cannot easily be controlled by party officials at the regional level. Thus, party officials at the regional level directly use the management above them in seeking this balancing force. An example was a case in one district in East Kalimantan in the 2004-2009 period, a party cadre became chairman of the house of representative (DPRD), but there was a conflict with party officials. The threat of party officials is to dismiss these cadres from their membership. Party management directly collaborated with the Central Leadership Council (DPP) and received the DPP's blessing. However, the implementation of PAW in the election results for the 2004-2009 period became constrained because the laws and regulations could not dismiss the chairman of the house of representative (DPRD). Proposals to dismiss house of representative (DPR) members are signed by the chairman of the house of representative (DPRD). Is it possible for the house of representative (DPRD) chairman to sign his own dismissal? Thus the position of chairman of the house of representative (DPRD) becomes very strong.

2. **Accountability for Local Power: Direct Regional Head Election**

One of the most important things in political change in reform is the issue of people's sovereignty in determining regional leaders, namely the Governor at the Provincial level and the Regent / Mayor at the Regency / City level. After the amendment of the Regional Autonomy Law No. 22 of 1999 to Law No. 32 of 2004, one of the highlights is the implementation of direct elections for governors and regents / mayors.

In this context there is a contestation between the domination of the Central Leadership Council (DPP) Political Parties at the central level and the Regional Representative Council (DPD) at the Provincial level and the DPC Political Parties at the Regency / City level. The development of regional head election implementation from 2005-2009 can be seen from the role of political parties at the local level which is quite important. In the realm of Political Science, the classic study of local politics was carried out by Dahl in 1961 who discussed democracy at the level of local government in the United States. This study is a classic study of the perspective of pluralism in democracy. Meanwhile Duverger in 1964 saw about political parties in the modern state. Polsby in 1963 looked specifically at community power which is a classic study of society participation in local politics.

Some of the studies conducted in Western countries provide arguments about the irrelevance of local political parties or political party organizations at the local level. This is due to the steadily decreasing membership of political parties and by the era of electronic communication, so that political parties at the national level provide less incentives to political party organizations at the local level. The development of political parties today relies more on the ability to build the image of political parties in electronic and mass media using actors or party leaders. Thus, the centralization of political party organization has become a phenomenon that occurs in various countries, including in England.

After the 2004 elections, the regional head elections were held by the Provincial and Regency / Municipal KPUs directly under the Minister of Home Affairs. The central General Election Commissions (KPU) is not involved in the regional head election process in accordance with Law no. 32 of 2004. The argument put forward in the Constitutional Court (MK) with the leadership of Jimly Ashidiqie at that time stated that the regional head election was not considered an election. Meanwhile, Article 22 E paragraph 5 of the 1945 Constitution states that the election organizer is a general election commission that is general, permanent and independent. The problem that arises is that post-Soeharto politics are heavily colored by money politics [11]. This political practice has an impact on the party candidate who wins the election. There are several factors that determine the winning of the regional head elections. Choice of candidates nominated by political parties and the electoral process itself.

The selection of candidates through several processes is proposed by political parties, thus candidates must be associated with political parties in the regional elections until 2007. In the implementation of the elections in 2008, individual representatives were allowed in the implementation of regional elections. Political parties in the candidate selection process do not directly elect one pair of candidates in the process of managing political parties. Because this process will reach the Central Leadership Council (DPP) level. This is a tactic used by party officials to use the power of party officials. Therefore, individuals who wish to run for regional head must follow a fairly long process to be proposed as a candidate pair in accordance with the process of organizing the election to the General Election Commissions (KPU). Meanwhile, the General Election Commissions (KPU) itself also has the power to validate and not endorse these candidates. This practice also allows Regency / City KPU and Provincial KPU to become political forces in determining Qualified candidates to become candidate candidates.

In this perspective, local elections are an important part of the institution. The problem that then arises is that the multi-party system, which does not have a dominant political party, provides space for politicians to build coalitions [12]. After the 2004 elections, which were followed by 24 political parties, it continued to produce a multiparty model without a dominant political party. The fragmentation of political power in parliamentary institutions creates a model for party coalitions in the context of proposing candidates in regional head elections [13]. Thus, it is possible for candidates from political parties that have small vote support to still be able to propose candidates by means of coalitions with other parties. This opportunity is an open space

for candidates and political parties to practice vote buying, starting from the nomination process, party coalitions to the regional head election implementation process.

Regional head elections since 2005 have shown that in many regions even candidates from the largest political parties can fail to win regional head elections. Thus, from the experience of regional head elections, on the one hand, political parties have not yet fully functioned to prepare their cadres to be able to lead government at the regional level. However, local political parties have had experience in competing for real power with the aim of improving the lives of societies. In addition, local political parties will greatly benefit from implementing policies that are responsive to the needs of their societies. In the practice of regional head elections, there are not many studies that actually measure the extent to which political parties at the local level in the implementation of regional head elections can benefit society at the local level. A measure that can be seen directly is that political parties are only a political vehicle for candidates to become regional heads.

3. **Decentralization, Regional Head Election and “Money Politics”**

It can be said that the indication of money politics in the implementation of elections and regional elections is an inseparable part, both in the national legislative elections of DPR, Regional Representative Council (DPD), Provincial DPRD and Regency / Municipal DPRD as well as direct presidential and vice presidential elections. The desire to win elections in an instant way is to provide cash incentives which are often referred to as "dawn attacks", meaning candidates can give money to voters in the early hours of the morning before leaving for the polling station. However, in the 2009 election, what is usually said to be a "dawn attack" has become a "dluha attack" which means that candidates also practice giving money up to the limit before midday prayers. This becomes a political practice that cannot be avoided. Ryas Rasyid stated that money politics is also a terminology that integrates with the gubernatorial election and the regent / mayor election. For example, in the last 2008-2009 East Java gubernatorial election, according to the recognition of the traders in Pasar Babat, money was distributed from 5,000 (five thousand rupiah) to 20,000 (twenty thousand rupiah) from the candidates. Unfortunately the practice of money politics is very difficult to prove and none of the governors / regents / mayors who won by spreading money for vote buying can be arrested. It was only in the 2009 elections that several DPRD candidates were arrested because they were found to be spreading envelopes, even though spreading envelopes was a practice that was practiced almost by most political party candidates in the last 2009 election.

In this case, it can be seen that the authoritarian regime during the Soeharto era has been re-enforced and is using money politics in the implementation of elections, both national and regional. Although the regional house of representative (DPRD) grows and develops into a separate force, it has not been able to resolve the problem of money politics in the regional head elections. Election laws and regulations are still very clear in this context, but cannot be widely implemented. This is due to the widespread practice of money politics which gives confidence to the candidates to win the general election and regional head elections. This is because voters also learn and become a practice that is considered normal, so that voters only cast their votes to candidates who give money. Some of the candidates who can be interviewed are Mohammad Nasih from National Mandate Party (PAN) who said that during the 2009 elections, many candidates spread money to voters. Meanwhile, Nasih, as the son of a former village head, relies on his father's friends' network of village heads, his mother's Islamic boarding house (pesantren) and smart voter education. However, voters are still interested in the money the candidate provides compared to the policies offered to the candidate [14]. Likewise, Ryas Rasyid's admission in the panelist discussion at LAN stated that campaigns that use a policy approach have not been able to provide rewards to candidates for winning the election. According to a candidate who did not want to be named, a political party that does not have PAC and Sub district in the area can win the election by distributing funds to voters in the amount of 50,000 to 100,000 rupiah. After getting votes and sitting as members of DPR, DPL, Provincial DPRD and DPRD Regency / City commitment to constituents is seen very rarely. In fact, commitment to party lines is often very rare. The impact of the democratic political process through elections by using money incentives or money politics shows that the house of representative (DPR)

members' weak commitment to the constituents is evident. Some house of representative (DPR) members even stated that parliament is a place of corruption, both in the framework of making laws and regulations and in the framework of activities that are designed to spend the budget. Thus, executives from the presidential level, governors to regents / mayors also use "money politics" to get their political policy wishes easily. Especially in regencies / cities, being a member of the Council is a source of finance. Like what the Provincial DPRD member Agus Sunarto said in his interview with Choi, who said that accepting gifts from the executive is only natural because the executive is the DPRD's partner. Meanwhile, Ibu Tuty Indarsih is subject to imprisonment, while in almost all parts of Indonesia there have been cases of spreading money to voters. Including a case that was very busy being discussed in the media involving the president's son in the 2009 legislative election, can this be said to be money politics or not?

The absence of political policies that are owned by most candidates and a lack of commitment to their constituents, shows that political parties are only used as political vehicles for candidates [15]. Thus, although political parties have grown in Indonesia as a very important political force and have been institutionalized for several dominant political parties, competition in the power struggle is not determined by democratic indicators of the performance of these political parties and political party candidates. The victories of political parties in the 2009 elections and the victories in the regional head elections do not indicate a direct relationship between the victories of political parties nationally and the victories in the regional elections.

Political changes in 1998 have brought about fundamental changes in the institutionalization of political power, both political parties and parliamentary institutions and the institutionalization of election implementation. However, as long as the process of struggling for power to occupy this political position is still determined by non-democratic means, the political process towards democracy is still very long. Moreover, being a member of the Council at all levels, the President and the Regional Representative Council (DPD) only means getting wealth, so the democratization process in Indonesia must be reviewed. Especially in the framework of implementing elections for regional heads and local powers.

4. CONCLUSION

Democracy and elections, especially at the provincial and district / city government levels for the executive must be maintained. The withdrawal of the people's right to elect the governor / regent and mayor must be carried out through a referendum process. It is a process of asking the people about a certain policy by using the answer "yes or no". Therefore, the central government in a democratic manner cannot automatically take the power of the people to elect the governor or regent / mayor. Although the face of the implementation of regional head elections has not shown an ideal model, it can be seen that regional head elections can provide opportunities for the people and their elected leaders to be responsible. Among the issues that need special attention are internal democracy in the organization of political parties and money politics. The internal democracy of political parties must give the governance power of political parties at the local level to determine their party cadres in the regional head election process. The management of political parties at a level above is Regional Representative Council (DPD), (DPP) for Provinces and Regional Representative Council (DPD)for Regencies / Cities.

Political scientists consider that the traditional form of political participation is to vote in elections and become membership of political parties. However, nowadays the level of voters turnout and membership of political parties has decreased from one election to the next. Meanwhile, societies are only a complement to politics. In the implementation of the national election, the process of holding the regional head elections at the provincial and district / city levels, residents are faced with a choice of money politics. The distribution of money to voters is an integral part of the implementation of regional elections and general elections in Indonesia. Candidate policy debate is not yet an important factor that can determine election victory. Problems arise not only at the internal level of political party democracy, voters who vote because they receive money, and also election implementers in the 2009 election. General Election Commissions (KPU), Bawaslu and law enforcement who are considered weak in resolving various demands for problems in election administration.

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