

How Elections Can Be Regarded As The Instrument Of Democracy

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Abstract

Almost all countries in the world use a democratic government system. One indicator of a democratic government system is the succession of the government or the regime carried out through a regular election. The election is the main indicator in the democratic government system. In various countries experience that are called advanced democracies, the political issue of the administration and election administrator is not a very important issue. The election administration and election administrator are believed to meet the criteria in holding the election that has the free and fair principles (free and fair) and fairness. In the development of political studies, the field of political study of election administration has not yet become an important study in Indonesian universities. Even the study of election administration politics is not discussed or included in the curriculum in the field of political study. The study of election administration appears to have only developed in the last two decades, after the 1998 reforms. This coincided with the fall of the authoritarian regime which applied the political process of openness in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In addition, the study of Politics on the politics of election administration has been carried out by many international institutions such as IDEA, IFES, NDI, and IRI. The last three are institutions based in the United States.

Keywords: *election, democracy, government, politics, administration*

1. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, the references in the political history of elections have always been said that the 1955 election was the most democratic. However, the debate on how the 1955 elections were held, who held them, what kind of internal politics happened in the election administration and the process and results, as well as the international media which criticized the administration of the elections did not become a political debate [1]. We then only accept the statement that the 1955 election was very democratic. The variables or indicators of democratic election in 1955 did not become the main debate in every discussion in election administration. Especially in the framework of preparing for the next election in Indonesia.

During the period of President Suharto government, it took 5 governments. President Suharto finally held elections in 1971. Then the election was held regularly every 5 years. The indicator of democratic governance is how the election is held for succession of government, however, the debate on how the election held is also not a major debate [2]. In extreme terms, it can only be said that the elections held during the Suharto era were undemocratic elections because every election, Golkar party must win over 50%. The debate about the detailed data on how the election process was manipulated has never been clearly disclosed.

The political changes in 1988 brought the major changes in the administration of the election in 1999. The debate over the 1999 election was only said to be successful without noticing that in the 1999 election, which was held on June 7, 1999, the election administrator did not validate the election results. However, President Habibie's intervention which then validated the election

results after KPU members from 27 political parties did not sign and was then submitted to President Habibie on August 4, 1999. Again, the debate of the structure of election administration, House of Representative (DPR) intervention and government intervention in organizing the election is not a reference or important study. Even the role of international donors, either through UNDP or directly bilaterally as well as international or domestic Non Governmental Organization (NGOs), is not a study in the sovereignty of implementing the succession of government. The change in the "foreign aid industry" since the process of political openness, which was previously part of the economic development package, has turned into a project of assistance on the democracy projects [3].

Meanwhile, the 2004 Election in Indonesia was the first time held by the General Election Commission, namely a national, permanent, and independent state institution. For the first time, the world's most complex and largest election was held. In addition, in the history of politics in Indonesia, the first presidential and vice presidential elections were held directly using two stages [4]. The issue of organizing the 2004 elections with the difficulty of the implementation process, different organizing structures and transparency of voting results at a relatively cheap cost, namely three elections around 7.2 trillion, compared to 2009 which was only 2 elections with a budget of 21 trillion. Meanwhile, the logistics still mostly used the 2004 election. The 2004 election was successfully held without violence, not being a process that could be used as a debate, because it takes for granted, that holding election is a norma [5]. Variables regarding internal politics, how to withhold intervention from the government, NGOs and international donors as well as election participants, were not included in detailed data in the election discussion [6].

This paper will examine how elections can be regarded as the instrument of democracy. It is believed that the continuous implementation of election can build democracy in the future. In addition, election from a gender justice perspective is discussed in the framework of seeing democracy as representation of the majority of the female population.

2. Election as Political Legitimacy of Rulers

In the context of political debates both that presented in a media and at the formal level in Commission II of the DPR, often evaluating the implementation of election in Indonesia in 2004 compared to the 1999 elections or the 1955 elections which were always used as a reference for elections that were considered the most democratic. However, often in conveying a thesis about the 1955 election is much better than the 2004 election or the 1999 election is much better than the 2004 election without being followed by detailed data, evidence, and arguments.

How far the election can explain the variables of democratic election implementation? At least by using the following variables:

1. Legal framework Election administration management
2. Constituency and polling
3. distric demarcation
4. Voters education
5. Voters registration
6. Access to and design of bollot paper
7. Party and candidate nomination and registration
8. Campaign regulation
9. Polling
10. Counting and tabulating the vote
11. Communication for transparency of democracy through KPU's IT
12. Resolving election related complaints, verification of final result and certification
13. Post election procedures.

This comparison can also be used to measure how the administration of the 1999 election compared to the 2004 election. Even with the constantly changing Election Law, it can also be compared to the implementation between the upcoming 1999, 2004, 2009, and 2014 elections. The presidential and vice presidential elections in 2004 opened a new history of Indonesian politics, in this case, an election.

Meanwhile, elections during the New Order era were mostly used as legitimacy for the Suharto regime. In the context of a democratic election approach [7], competency measures for political change can be used as a measure. In the 1971 election with the limitation of 10 political parties, in the end it resulted one dominant party, namely GolonganKarya (Golkar) Party. Some political scientists argued that Golkar is not a political party. However, this book will still use that Golkar was included in the political party group during the New Order era. An organization is said to be a political party if it participates to get a power through the elections.

3. Post-Soeharto Elections and Democracy

After President Soeharto stepped down from the New Order regime, he was replaced by President BJ. Habibie, the national political condition did not immediately become stable. During the history of the New Order, political representatives did not appear. In the last decade of Soeharto's rule, it can be seen that there has been an increase in "political interpreneurs" from the middle and upper classes who received facilities from GolonganKarya and the military. The political interpreneur gets a position as people's representative. This is closely related to the election process [8].

The elections during the New Order era were full of government intervention both through law and the implementation process, and also the military intervention. Furthermore, the structure of the election implementing agency (LPU) is the government with ministers who were the members of LPU chaired by the Minister of Home Affairs. The election course was marked by various violations. There were many imbalances in the political process and the unbeaten victories of Golkar election contestants can be predicted before the election is held. In the end, the elections were only used to legitimize the power of the Soeharto government from the 1971 election to the 1999 election.

After the fall of the New Order regime in May 1998, the Democracy process in Indonesia demanded a fundamental change from the election process as a key factor in a democratic government system [9]. The 1999 Election is considered the first democratic election in the history of the Indonesian political system. One of the shortcomings that occurs is due to a lack of democratic experience. There is an extreme change from one side of the pendulum to the other. For example, during the election of New Order era, the Election institution worked in accordance with the wishes of the government and the government party (GolonganKarya).

In the 1999 election, the pendulum shifted whatever the government, they did not gain trust. As a result, the Election Institution which changed its name to the General Election Commission was filled by political parties participating in the election plus representatives of the government [10]. As a result, the 1999 election process was marred by various conflicts within the election implementing agency. The fundamental issue that can be criticized is that KPU's members are the partisans. The growing debate is that there are more demands on how to adopt the interests of their respective parties [11]. In this short paper, we will discuss why an elections is important in the democratization process. Second, the need to reform the election implementing agency. Thus, it can be studied to what extent the prospects for the KPU in delivering the democratization process in Indonesia.

4. Election Main Indicator of Democracy

An election is important in a "democratic" system, so it is related to the political structure and process whether a political system can be categorized democratic or not. A country cannot claim to be democratic if its political system is not based on democratic elections. The election has a very long history. The word election comes from the Latin "eligere" which means "to elect", while the word election is part of the political process in ancient Roman and Greek times. While the election as a form of democratic polities had been quite new since the mid-18th century, the existence of competitive and free election can be said that a democratic polity exists [12]. Many Indonesian political scientists stated that the 1955 election was the only national election that could be said to be fair in the history of politics in Indonesia. Thus, it is also important to analyze the election process and analyze whether the elections had achieved their objectives in a democratic society [13]. Furthermore, the study of election is to see more broadly not only about who won in the election but also to see the impact of the election [14]. Election itself can be

defined as: "a formal expression of preferences by the governed, which are then aggregated and transformed into a collective decision about who will govern – who should stay in office, who should be thrown out."

From this definition, it can be seen that the importance of elections concerning various statements such as issues that can be very simple or very complex [15], regarding the election mechanism, its components, the results and what the impact of the election is [16].

Election is a fundamental component of a democratic political system. First, election gives citizens choices - candidates, between programs and policies, between political parties participating in contestants, and between teams to form a government. Various issues have emerged, including the "choice". Does the election mechanism in the election system give voters the same choice? Is this choice free and fair? Second, regarding political and election information and education. Are voters well informed about how to vote? are they politically aware? Do the candidates and political parties offer voters enough material to provide them with sufficient information?

Election is basically important in the concept of "representation". Society elect people who can represent themselves in parliament [17]. However, it is not simple. Various lists of questions emerged such as, if indeed the election system has been designed to produce representatives, the question is what kind of representation? How do these representatives actually work to represent the interests of their voters? The answer really depends on the election process and also depends on the political parties (both the system and the working mechanism) [18].

Election also means responsibility. The responsibility of the elected representatives toward the voters for their political actions, the policies they elect [19]. They can also form a government or as an opposition. Thus, the question arises how the responsibility is carried out by these representatives [20].

Election basically functions to provide legitimacy toward the government, parliament, and the political system itself [21]. Politics is basically concerned with "power". In a democratic system, the key is authority as "legitimate power". This means that those who have "power" by getting legitimacy from the public can use "power" [22]. Legitimacy means that members of society (the polity) accept that those who have "power" are legal in their position through election. Then they are elected to exercise their authority [23].

Election is also closely related to the question of "mandate" - which is one of the misused political terms. In its simplest sense, a mandate is a right given to members of parliament, and to the government, or to the government to claim it [24]. Often rhetorically, a government that wins an election states that the policy it takes is the mandate of its voters and hopes to be approved in parliament to implement [25]. However, basically it is very difficult to justify that the policy of a party is the mandate of its voters unless the political party in the campaign offers a very specific political policy [26].

Election also means that there is an element of political communication. Especially in the campaign, the process of political communication is very fundamental [27]. However, the fundamental question regarding whether the rhetoric and propaganda of a political party in a campaign can be said to be democratic political communication is debatable [28]. Communication occurs from two directions [29]. Political parties and their candidates provide information for the voters related to the party's policies and programs and explain the weaknesses of the opposing party's program and criticize the opponent's party. This raises a very important question, is there a guarantee of "truth" on the political parties and their candidates in communicating with their constituents? In other directions voters communicate with their party in a variety of ways - public opinion, talkback radio, letter and personal contacts [30].

Election also questions the importance of the role of political parties. For everyone, election and political parties are two things that cannot be separated. In modern democracy, it can be seen that the inauguration of mass suffrage is always directly followed by the formation of political parties. Election is a contest between political parties and candidates from these political parties. Independent candidates also appear in various political systems such as in the United States or in Australia, but they are very rarely successful. Thus, analyzing political parties in elections is very important, especially the role and impact of political parties in election. There are various difficulties in the election study as stated: "In the petty details, such as the compilation of a

register of voters, the timing of nominations, the arrangements for casting and counting votes, and the rules governing campaign practices and election expenses, every country has its own laws; and on the larger question, the mathematical devices for linking votes cast with seats won, there is an extraordinary variety of answers.”

This is caused by that it is still very difficult to answer questions regarding "fair" and a representative election. It is very difficult to figure out what election system is best; what is the meaning of representation; or the extent of the relationship between election, election systems, political parties, and representative democracy. There are fundamental differences between political parties, where political parties usually always use rhetoric or with their election policies and principles, basically at the same time, how they can win the election.

5. CONCLUSION

Thus, political parties become the focus in every discussion of the election system (election system), election, and representation (representation). For example in Australia, political parties are further involved, which are not just in the election. Especially when compared to the United States or Canada, which are basically the function of these political parties as an election organization, very active during the general election, namely the campaign period and return relatively after the election. All intra-party and inter-party policies, programs and rhetoric have the election implication. How about in Indonesia? A study can be a first step in looking at the relationship between election and political parties.

Thus, the argument that can be put forward is to see the extent to which concepts such as fair and open are in the election. By considering the important points mentioned above, the extent to which election in Indonesia has fulfilled the fundamental components of the election function. The fair and open component is an important issue for election participants in Indonesia. The role of the state and bureaucratic strata in Indonesia's political history greatly influenced their political behavior. The state was very dominant and centralized, while the fragmentation of society was very high, resulting in an authoritarian power structure under the rule of Soekarno and Suharto. The bureaucracy became the political machine of the government party.

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