



## The Level of Community Political Participation related to the Elections of the Regent and Deputyregent and Empty Boxes in the Simular Elections in 2024

Hasnawi Haris<sup>1</sup>, Nurharsya Khaer Hanafie<sup>2</sup>, Muh.Said<sup>3</sup>, Fatimah Hidayahni Amin<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia

Corresponding Author:  [nurharsya.khaer@unm.ac.id](mailto:nurharsya.khaer@unm.ac.id)

### ABSTRACT

Direct regional head elections can be said to be one of the real forms of implementing regional autonomy, where the people can directly elect the leaders they want directly. This study tries to describe how the level of community political participation is related to the election of the Regent and Deputy Regent as well as the empty box in holding the simultaneous local elections in 2024. This study tries to describe the level of political participation of the community in a substantial and procedural manner through a review of normative literature studies and immediately goes down to see how the residents' enthusiasm for the 2024 simultaneous regional elections and interviewed several residents regarding how they are prepared to face the simultaneous regional elections in the future. It turned out that the formal procedural implementation that went well was not in line with the substantive democracy to be achieved. Democracy will be based on the principle of equality in the sense that every human being is equal; therefore there is no specialization of any particular group or assumption that one is more honorable than another.

**Keywords:** *Simultaneous Pilkada, Empty Column, Voter Participation*

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## INTRODUCTION

Since it was first held in 2005, the Pilkada has immediately tried to be perfected both interms of regulation and implementation so that it is of higher quality. One of the efforts is how to create Pilkada with a high participation rate as the main guarantee of legitimacy in addition to the contestation and healthy competition factors. In its development, the Pilkada then transformed in to Simultaneous Pilkada following the dynamics of politics that continued to develop (Chaniago, 2016; Sholikhin 2015). Since it was first held on 9 December 2015, it has emerged as a new tradition of democracy in Indonesia.

Simultaneous Pilkada which has a function as a means of strengthening the consolidation of democracy at the local level. There are at least three important things that are the goals of the simultaneous local elections as stated in the Pilkada Law. The three objectives are, among others, to produce effective and efficient regional

leadership in order to support the presidential government system, to realize efficient and effective regional head elections and finally to build and strengthen the degree of representation between the community and their regional heads

The stipulation of Law No. 1/2015 which regulates simultaneous voting or simultaneous elections has tortuous and tortuous stages to maintain direct elections by the people. The twists and turns of the discussion and ratification of the regional election law, made us all aware that people's sovereignty cannot be played with. The efforts of the political elites of political parties to deceive the people with the excuse that "the regional elections by the DPRD are also democratic, because the DPRD is the people's representative," clearly turning a blind eye to the DPRD's political practice which is used to manipulating the people's votes. Therefore, the people who saw and felt the commendable political act, refused to have their right to elect their regional head revoked.

The people resisted in various ways until sovereignty remained in their hands. This condition then undermines the quality of democracy and creates disharmony in development policies. In fact, one of the prerequisites for a democratic state is that there is a regular exchange of the ruling elite/regional head, which is 1 period for 5 years. The author believes that there are many regional heads who have been hurt because their terms of office have been reduced just for the sake of the ambition of the simultaneous regional elections.

Furthermore, the implication abuse of authority and power in filling Plt. District head. Several major parties, especially the ruling party, will benefit if the 2022 and 2023 elections are held in 2024. The party that will be the ruling party. Plt. The Regional Head will be prepared in advance to become an extension of the regional government, so that the Regional Head Plt. will work perpendicular to the source of power and can have an impact on the politicization of civil servants or ASN. The author doubts the regional head of Plt. can be neutral. In Law Number 10 of 2016 in article 201 paragraph 8 it is stated that national simultaneous voting in the Election of Governor and Deputy Governor, Regent and Deputy Regent, as well as a Mayor and Deputy Mayor throughout the territory of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia in November 2024.

One of the legal implications is that the Provincial and Regency/Municipal RPJMD is a development planning document of a region which is the elaboration of the Vision and Mission of the selected Regional Heads and Candidates for Regional Heads. Furthermore, the implication abuse of authority and power in filling Plt. District head. Several major parties, especially the ruling party, will benefit if the 2022 and 2023 elections are held in 2024. The party that will benefit is the ruling party. Plt. The Regional Head will be prepared in advance to become an extension of the regional government, so that the Regional Head Plt. will work perpendicular to the source of power and can have an impact on the politicization of civil servants or ASN.

The author doubts the regional head of Plt. Pilkada is a mandate of Law 10 of 2016 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents, Mayors which was stipulated on July 1 2016, where later the Pilkada will be held simultaneously in November 2024, No

less important, governance and management in the implementation of the democratic party is the key to a successful election. Looking at the Simultaneous Pilkada in 2020.

Therefore to realize political participation, there are at least three things that must be considered. First, there must be competition in the sense that public positions must be competed. Second, participation in order to influence government policy. Third, freedom of expression, in this case the government should nothing the movement of community group so reorganizations. Although it cannot be generalized, the level of voter participation in some areas is generally still very low. From the results of the report on the Voter Education Network for the People (JPPR) it can be seen that the level of voter participation in the Pilkada held in 229 regions, out of a total of 264 regions that carried out voting on December 9, 2015

The existence of political participation can change a society that was originally apathetic to become active, participation has an important role, both for each individual to control and supervise government policies in order to avoid abuse that can harm society, as well as for the government to measure the high or low of the democratic system in an area country

## Literature Review

### 1. The Concept of Democracy

Democracy as a political system includes a system of power and government. Democracy is a popular term in politics. One of the most common definitions of democracy that we often hear is power from, by and for the people. Some easily understand that democracy is the government of the people.

The notion of democracy can also be described as a protected politics of freedom. There is no freedom without democracy. There is no democracy without freedom. However, this freedom is limited. The limit is public interest or partial interest. That freedom is also, again, protected. Its protector is the state, in the form of a constitution, law, or statute. In short, democracy can be seen as the institutionalization of freedom.

As a term, democracy has a broad meaning. The definition of democracy is also very broad. As a political system, democracy also has various forms. At least to this day, democratic political systems are often considered the best political systems available. As a political understanding that is identical with the search for power, a democratic political system is a system that competes with other political systems in pursuit of power.

According to Schumpeter, such a belief is actually an ideal hope that is very far from the political reality that is happening. The common will or the common good is not something that is easily formulated. It is more realistic to say that the general will is not something that society really wants, as Rousseau, for example, said. Because, when talking about what is good for one group or individual, it cannot be applied to other groups or individuals. Thus, the common good is not something that is abstractly easy to formulate.

## 2. Political Participation

Political Participation Theory Political participation has various meanings. There are several experts who express their opinion about political participation. According to Ramlan Surbakti, what is meant by political participation is the participation of ordinary citizens in determining all decisions concerning or affecting their live.

Herbert McClosky, a leader in the problem of participation, argues that political participation is the voluntary activities of citizens through which they take part in the process of electing rulers, and directly or indirectly, in the process of forming public policy.

Miriam Budiarto generally defines political participation as the activity of a person or group of people to actively participate in political life, namely by electing state leaders directly or indirectly influencing government policy (public policy).

From some of these expert opinions, what is meant by political participation is the existence of activities or participation of citizens in the government process. Then these activities are directed to influence the course of government. So that the existence of political participation will affect their lives.

According to Ramlan Surbakti, political participation is divided into two, namely active participation and passive participation. Active participation is to propose a public policy, propose alternative public policies that are different from the policies made by the government, submit criticisms and improvements to straighten policies, pay taxes and elect government leaders. On the other hand, activities that are included in the passive participation category are activities that obey the government, accept, and carry out every government decision.

Meanwhile, Milbart and Goel distinguish participation into several categories. First, apathy. That is, people who do not participate and withdraw from the political process. Second, spectators. That is, people who at least have participated in the general election. Third, gladiators. This means that those who are actively involved in the political process, namely communicators, specialists in face-to-face contact, party activists and campaign workers, and community activists.

The second theory used by researchers is rational choice theory. One of the figures concerned with rational choice theory is James. S. Coleman. Rational choice theory is evident in its basic idea that individual actions lead to a goal and that goal is determined by values or choices. The next section addresses the problem of actors choosing actions that can maximize utility or satisfy their wants and needs.

There are two main elements in Coleman's theory. Namely actors and resources. A resource is something that attracts attention and that the actor can control. Coleman describes the interaction between actors and resources in detail down to the level of the social system: The minimal basis for a social system of action is two actors, each controlling resources that attract the attention of others. One person's attention to the resources controlled by another is what causes both to engage in mutual need.

Next, Antony Downs is also one of the figures who are concerned with rational choice theory. From Downs' writings, rational choice developed in various

directions. Rational choice theory takes individuals' preferences, beliefs, and feasible strategies as the cause of their actions.

Understanding and theory of political participation According to Ramlan Surbakti in the book *Understanding Political Science* (2005), is any form of participation or involvement of ordinary citizens (who do not have the authority) in determining decisions that can affect their lives. Political participation can be done individually or collectively. Political participation is more focused on the activities carried out, and not focused on political attitudes. Political participation has two approaches, namely the group political approach and political rights. Launching from the *Journal of Community Political Participation in General Elections*, political participation activities are individual or collective, organized or spontaneous, steady or sporadic, peaceful or violent, legal or illegal, and effective or not.

Political participation can be interpreted as the role of citizens in the government process. This form of participation can affect the course of government, so that directly or indirectly, it has an effect on the lives of the people of a country. Political participation is an example of the embodiment of a democratic state, where the community plays a role in choosing state officials in carrying out government activities. Political participation has a number of benefits, namely: As a form of support to the government and authorities. To show the weaknesses or shortcomings of the government, so that they can be improved. As a form of challenge to the authorities and the government, so that structural changes and political systems can occur.

## **METHOD**

The research approach used in this study is an associative approach. The associative research approach is used because it aims to determine the relationship between two variables. The type of research used in this research is quantitative. This type of quantitative research is used because researchers interact directly with respondents to provide questionnaires related to the main problem in this research, namely the simultaneous election of regional heads towards substantial democracy. In the simultaneous local elections in 2024, to answer the problems mentioned above, the formulation of the problem in the research is a study of how to increase community participation. Related to the implementation of regional elections towards the direction of Conceptual Democracy regarding public political participation in the election of the Regent and Deputy Regent as well as the Empty Box. The purpose of this study is to find out efforts to increase the level of community participation in the simultaneous regional elections towards Substantial democracy in 2024. This research is expected to contribute to the efforts of universities to find solutions to improve the performance of the General Election Commission together with the central and regional governments to improve the performance of the General Election Commission. Community participation in local elections as a means of legitimizing candidates who are most widely supported by the community

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Substantial Democracy

Based on its form, democracy is known as substantial democracy, which is a form of democratic values, for example, the protection of minorities by the state and society in general. When everyone has freedom of opinion without hurting the public interest, then this is a form of substantial democracy. The term democracy has a broad meaning. The definition of democracy is also very broad. As a political system, democracy also has various forms. At least to this day, democratic political systems are often considered the best political systems available. As the political understanding is identical with the search for power, a democratic political system is a system that competes with other political systems in pursuit of power.

A number of scientists mapped democracy based on the scope and participation of citizens in the making and implementation of political decisions. This approach distinguishes democracy into participatory democracy which considers procedural democracy to be thin, aggregate democracy does not reflect self-government, and deliberative democracy does not involve all citizens. Therefore, democracy should make citizens interact directly in the discussion of policy formulation in order to overcome the problems they face. Substantive democracy emphasizes democracy as a value or culture that allows the people to have sovereignty in the true sense. Some of the essential values of democracy are freedom, a culture of respecting the rights and freedoms of others, the existence of cultural pluralism, tolerance, anti-violence, etc.

As is well known, the classical understanding of democracy presupposes that the public will or public interest is the main source of the driving force of democracy. For Schumpeter, such a belief is actually an ideal hope that is very far from the political reality that is happening.

The common will or the common good is not something that is easily formulated. It is more realistic to say that the general will is not something that society really wants, as Rousseau,

On the other hand, democracy is very different because the son of the king or the son of the president cannot automatically replace his son's position, but he must go through the general election mechanism, whether the general election is through direct elections or through representatives in parliament. Another reason, in the understanding of classical democracy, leadership is not an important thing to discuss in the workings of a democratic system.

It is as if who ever will become the ruler is passive and will only carry out the direction of the urge to realize the "common good" or the "general will". In fact, political leadership is a factor that determines how the direction of political policy will come out. In fact, as mentioned earlier, in practice, perhaps, as has been repeatedly stated, what is meant by "the common good" is actually nothing more than a political decision issued by a political leader. Schumpeter also admits that the definition of democracy that he proposes is nothing more than a definition of competition or competition between leaders. For him, political life cannot be separated from the process of competition in gathering support through general elections.

## 2. Simultaneous General Elections

Unlike the Election editions in previous years, this time the KPU plans to elect President-Vice President and DPR-DPRD legislative candidates with the Governor, Regent and Mayor elections held in the same year.

It is planned that the elections for President-Vice President and legislative candidates for DPR-DPRD will be held in early/mid 2024. Meanwhile, the elections for Governors, Regents, and Mayors will be held at the end of 2024. This is certainly a big challenge for the KPU as the election organizer. The reason is that the KPU will be faced with challenges in terms of technical elections, the budget that is feared to swell, and the level of voter participation.

The electoral legal framework should be structured in such a way that it is not ambiguous, easy to understand, and must be able to highlight all the electoral elements necessary to ensure democratic elections. The term "election legal framework" refers to all laws and legal documents related to elections. Within the legal framework it must be emphasized that the powers of the EMBs are clearly defined, differentiated, and nd described in order to prevent conflicts or overlapping powers being exercised by other bodies.

In the electoral system there must be the elected bodies, the frequency of elections, and the election management body. The electoral system must ensure that political division is included in the legal framework of elections to ensure political participation and representation so that inter-group conflicts can be accommodated. The selection of an electoral system must first calculate which electoral system can fulfill political goals and is in accordance with the social, political, geographical and historical circumstances of the country.

Determination of Electoral District. Electoral districts are made so that every vote is equal to achieve a degree of effective representation. The legal framework must define how to plan and define electoral districts so that political groups are aware of the consequences from the start. The Right to Vote and Be Elected.

This ensures that all eligible citizens are guaranteed to be able to vote without discrimination. The guarantee that every citizen can exercise the right to vote and the right to be elected is important so that in some countries these provisions are included in the constitution.

This regulation should make provision for mechanisms to process, decide and deal with complaints in elections in a timely manner. Voter Registration and Voter List. The legal framework should require transparent and accurate storage of voter lists, protect the right of eligible citizens to register, and prevent unauthorized or fraudulent registration of persons. The right to vote is violated when the legal framework makes it difficult for a person to register to vote. The right to vote is also violated if the regulations are deemed to fail to guarantee the accuracy of the voter list because this is closely related to the participation of citizens to participate in the main election agenda.

It should also ensure that every political party and candidate enjoys freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, and has access to voters and all parties to the electoral process.

Elections are a tool for translating the general will of the voters into a representative government so that all parties and candidates must be able to convey their programs, political problems, and solutions freely to the voters during the campaign period.

The campaign period must be defined and must begin after the valid nomination of parties and candidates and end one or two days before voting. Media Access and Freedom of Expression. The legal framework must ensure that political parties and candidates are treated fairly by state-owned or controlled media. There are no restrictions on the freedom of expression of political parties and candidates during the campaign. In this way, the general public can find out the political platforms, views, and goals of all parties and candidates in a fair and unbiased manner.

### **3. Legal Standing for Simultaneous Regional Head Elections**

The issuance of the revision of the Election Law in the National Legislation Program (Prolegnas) of the DPR RI in 2021 implies that discussion of the revision has been stopped. Thus, the discourse on normalizing the election schedule in 2022 and 2023 has disappeared. In 2024, there will be elections for the President, Members of the DPD, and members of the Indonesian Parliament, Provincial DPRD, and Regency DPRD along with the Election of Governors and Regents/Mayors.

The implementation of the 2024 General Election is based on the provisions of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, namely in:

1. Article 167 paragraph (2) which states that, "The day, date and time of voting shall be determined by a KPU decision".
2. Article 167 paragraph (3) which states that, "Voting is carried out simultaneously on holidays or national holidays".
3. Article 167 paragraph (6) which states that "The Stages of Organizing Elections begin no later than 20 (twenty) months before voting day".
4. Article 167 paragraph (7) which states that, "The determination of the elected Candidate Pair is no later than 14 (fourteen) days before the end of the term of office of the President and Vice President".

The implementation of the 2024 Simultaneous Election is based on the provisions in Law Number 1 of 2015 concerning the Stipulation of Government Regulations in Lieu of Law Number 1 of 2014 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents and Mayors to become Laws, as has been amended several times, most recently by Law Number 6 of 2020 concerning Stipulation of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 2 of 2020 concerning Third Amendment to Law Number 1 of 2015 concerning Stipulation of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 1 of 2014 concerning Election of Governors, Regents and Mayors to become Laws Article 201 paragraph (8) which states that, "National simultaneous voting in the Election of Governor and Deputy Governor, Regent and Deputy Regent, as well as Mayor and Deputy Mayor throughout the territory of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia 30 months to ripen. So it is possible that the 2024 election stage will begin in mid-2021.



Elections are not only about the circulation of leadership and people's representation by giving their voting rights, but also related to political rights to become smart voters. With a very well-planned schedule that is known far from the time of implementation, voters can participate and contribute. Voters can immediately find information about election participants, such as knowing and comparing candidates. With this, the participation of voting rights users will later include good insights from the voters. The percentage of voters is not only a matter of procedure but also more substantive.

In Law 7/2017 it is clearly written about election scheduling. Article 167 emphasizes that elections are held every 5 (five) years, in which the day, date and time of voting for the election are determined by a KPU decision. Voting is carried out simultaneously on holidays or national holidays.

Based on the provisions of the law, it is not difficult to arrange the scheduling of voting in the 2024 General Election. Because the rest of the provisions can be regulated by the KPU. The case is different with election regulations. The Pilkada Law has stipulated that the voting schedule for the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Head Elections is November 2024. Another thing that is also fundamental and important to be of common concern is the recruitment process for the organizers of the 2024 General Election and Pilkada Simultaneous.

Why? Because this is related to the effectiveness and sustainability of the implementation of the stages.

The Pilkada Law, Article 15 paragraph (3) and Article 18 paragraph (3) stipulates that the PPK is formed by the Regency/Municipal KPU no later than 6 (six) months before voting and dissolved 2 (two) months after voting. Again, this is not regulated in the Bawaslu institution to form the Sub-district Panwaslu and the Kelurahan/Village Panwaslu, but in practice, this is done with a time span that is not much different from that of the regency/city Bawaslu.

This becomes an important part of the arrangement. The goal is to ensure that the 2024 Simultaneous General Election and Regional Head Elections run well and do not repeat mistakes. To achieve this requires a solid and effective team. But all of this has legal consequences because it is related to the tenure of KPU and Bawaslu members whose tenures are still attached in accordance with the previous SK.

Law No. 1/2015 uses a single candidate model (candidates for regional heads without representatives). This model denies the function of representation in the nomination of Pilkada, so that the position can only be owned by one majority group. The single candidate model can also cause social conflict, both during the election and post-election administration.

Therefore, the package model (pairs of candidates for regional head and deputy regional head) is the best choice. If the model pair of candidates makes the regional head not compact, then the procedure for nomination is carried out as follows: first, a political party or political party coalition of political parties or independent candidates to determine the nominees for regional head candidates; second, candidate for head he region appoints a candidate for deputy regional head; Third, the pairs of candidates for regional heads and deputy regional heads register themselves with the KPU.

Law No. 1/2015 uses the formula for the pair of elected candidates: first, the pair of candidates who get the most votes above 30% are designated as the 27 elected pairs of candidates; secondly, if no candidate pair wins at least 30% of the votes, then a second round will be conducted for the pair of candidates with the first and second most votes. This formula not only fails to simplify the party system in the DPRD, but also prolongs political tensions. Therefore, the formula needs to be replaced with a simple majority formula that is able to force parties to form large coalitions in order to win the election.

#### **4. Strategies to Increase Political Participation**

The first rationalization strategy is to disseminate face-to-face communication conducted by the Pangkep Regency General Election Commission to disseminate information related to the general election to be held. Socialization is done in order to communicate between individuals without going through intermediaries. Various kinds of segments are given socialization. Socialization is carried out in schools, fields, universities and other places.

In increasing public participation through a rationalization strategy approach, the method used is by conducting outreach to novice voters. There are novice voters who still don't really understand the world of politics, and the number of novice voters is actually quite large. So even the general election organizers are more agile in socializing to novice voters. So that novice voters want to participate in the general elections held. The General Election Commission of Pangkep Regency must be as interactive as possible in socializing the general election. So that novice voters are not politically literate and become abstentions. The rationalization strategy also provides detailed information on election technicalities by distributing portraits containing invitations to vote. Transparency is the provision of information about government to the public and guarantees the ease of obtaining accurate and adequate information.

The persuasion strategy is the second strategy that is carried out by getting closer to the community with all kinds of activities. So that many people participate in general elections. Done by making an activity that involves the community, so that people are interested in the general election and want to participate in the election. Instilling confidence in voters (campaign). Political contestants need to look at the characteristics of their voters, if voters see the rational aspect more, the persuasion process is carried out in an argumentative manner and is based on the provision of reliable data and information. Aspects of logical thinking that are problem-solving need to be communicated to voters.

Political parties are great intermediaries that link social forces and ideologies with official government institutions and link them to political action in the wider society. Based on this view, the party emphasizes the importance of political campaigns carried out by political parties to introduce their candidates.

Political campaign is a form of political communication carried out by a person or group of people or political organizations within a certain time to gain political support from the people. Political parties play an important role in encouraging political participation. In addition, political parties must also provide an

understanding to voters about the importance of public participation in regional head elections to improve community competence to participate in political competition and minimize obstacles in the implementation of political education which leads to low voter political participation. Political parties make efforts to overcome various obstacles to the implementation of political education aimed at increasing public political participation.

Efforts made include: the party takes an internal/personal approach. The party puts forward persuasive methods to attract the hearts and sympathy of the people to be actively participatory in political movements. The internal approach is carried out to tap public awareness to realize their role as citizens who have political rights, obligations and responsibilities. Creating people to follow the development of the election process through mass media, this has become a form of socialization to the community carried out by political parties, so that people know for sure about the Pilkada process. Related to improving the performance of election organizers, it is not only related to the technical performance of the implementation, but also in terms of raising awareness about the importance of community participation in the implementation of elections, so that the public can understand what participation can be done and what the outputs of such participation are.

Shows that the media, both television media, internet media, and print newspaper media have been well utilized by the public as a source of information and as a means of political participation in increasing public participation through communication, in the midst of the covid-19 pandemic, political parties have an important role in increasing participation electoral politics. In addition, political parties must also provide an understanding to voters about the importance of public participation in general elections to improve community competence to participate in political competitions and minimize obstacles in the implementation of political education which leads to low participation politik elector. Through political campaigns, political parties communicate to voters to gain political support from the people.

Reinforcement or commitment is required in the relationship between the contestants' supporters. This needs to be done so that the bonds between them that are both rational and emotional are maintained. It is hoped that the bond between political parties and their constituents will be higher. This strengthening strategy is carried out so that the bond between supporters is not weak and to avoid foreign influences that can attract their attention. Also prepare careful planning as a constant. Starting from the beginning to the end, including the provision of legal entities to anticipate fraud or election disputes.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the research conducted by the author, there are several conclusions that can be drawn in increasing community participation in local elections in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, using the following indicators:

1. Introduction or socialization by using

2. Approaches, namely the Rationalization Strategy approach, where this rationality strategy focuses more on novice voters. The KPU's persuasion strategy increasing community participation is by conducting performances or activities that can increase community participation. Political campaign communication is a form of political communication carried out by a person or group of people or political organizations at certain time to gain political support from the people.
3. Reinforcement or Commitment Reinforcement or commitment is needed in the relationship between the contestants' supporters. This needs to be done so that the bonds between them that are both rational and emotional are maintained.

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