

Political Participation of Members of the Indonesian Youth National Committee of Medan City in the 2020 Medan City Regional Head Election

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Abstract

Currently, educational institutions are a means for socialization and political education. Young people in the community can join and join existing organizations. This makes it easier for young people to show their political participation. Joining an organization helps young people to become leaders, speakers, and activists. Through a qualitative approach, an in-depth interview was conducted with one of the youth organizations of the Indonesian National Youth Committee (KNPI) in Medan City to find out the political participation carried out by youth people in the election of mayor and deputy mayor through the Medan City KNPI organization. The results of this study show that the political participation shown by the Medan City KNPI Members in the provincial government election in 2020 is by determining one pair of candidates they will support. The form of political participation carried out by the Medan City KNPI to the candidate pairs they have chosen is by forming volunteers among the youth, building communication and socialization to young people groups to support the candidate pairs they have chosen, escorting the votes of the candidate pairs from each polling station and participating in escorting the results of the votes to the Medan KPU office.

Kata kunci: Youth, Political participation, General elections, Democracy

Pendahuluan

The Democracy Company in a country has a very broad meaning, as well as when talking about the election of regional heads. The election of regional heads in Indonesia at this time has also been directly elected by the people, in contrast to the old and new order eras, where the election procedure was through direct appointment by the president or through elections in the DPRD (Nasution, 2014) The election of regional heads in Medan City was first held directly in 2005 and then re-elected in 2010, 2015 and 2015. At the time of the 2020 Regional Elections, two pairs of candidates for Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Medan were participating. The public as voters are the main target of political parties and participants in the Regional Elections to win the contest of the democratic party in Medan City in 2020. The large number of voters who exercise their voting rights is one of the benchmarks in the successful implementation of the Regional Elections.

Political participation is one of the most vital aspects in determining the choice of regional heads, is a political force and part of the implementation of democracy (Mohamed, 2018) Akbar (Akbar, 2017; Mudhoffir, 2013; Nst, 2021) that the level of community participation in the election of regional heads is a very important indicator, although it does not necessarily determine the quality of the implementation of the regional elections themselves. Quality that relies more on efforts to provide an understanding of elections through political education, socialization and communication, as well as articulation and aggregation is an important part of the implementation of quality elections. If democracy is considered a way to achieve broader prosperity, then regional elections play an important role in producing the quality of local leaders. The level of political participation of the community can be influenced by several factors such as the candidate, the candidate's vision and mission, the factor of staying in the area for a long time, political awareness, political education and curiosity. For the novice voters, this is a factor in what it feels like to be actively involved in the process of electing regional heads (Usfinit et al., 2014).

The large number of voters who exercise their voting rights is one of the benchmarks in the successful implementation of the Regional Elections. In this study, the researcher only focused on novice voters or young voters with an age range of 17 to 23 years old and members of the Medan City KNPI organization. Novice voters as a society that has just grown up and if they are associated with the election process are still not involved much in the political process. The existence of a free and open political environment is an opportunity for young people to increase their political participation (Perangin-angin & Zainal, 2018) Campuses are one of the educational environments and facilities for important changes for young people (Earl et al., 2017) Campus life creates "a transitional moment for young people by changing their daily activities and social networks to become activists and active in political organizations (Munson, 2010) Based on the Medan City KNPI database, the number of members is around 1,500 people. KNPI members come from different backgrounds, there is plurality in it. This really attracted the attention of researchers to see how the participation of Medan City KNPI members in the 2020 Medan City Regional Elections. As a young voter who has the right to vote for a candidate for leader in his region and what influences them to choose one of the candidates.

Methodology

This paper uses a case study research method with a qualitative approach to be able to provide a clear picture of the participation of Medan City KNPI members in 2020 so that it can explain the main problems in this paper. Data collection was carried out using in-depth interviews with several selected informants in this paper. The selected informant is a member of the Medan City KNPI who is a resident of Medan City and has turned 17 years old in 2020.

Results and Discussion

History of KNPI Medan City

KNPI as one of the forums for gathering youth organizations, was born as an answer to the condition of the nation, especially youth to be more active and color the life of the nation which is heading towards change. This places the KNPI as the only official forum for gathering or gathering youth (Law No. 17 of 2013). With the availability of this forum, it is hoped that the youth will be well coordinated in carrying out development. In addition to the availability of specific youth forums or organizations, various policies, both political and economic, must be able to provide support and breakthroughs that can have a direct influence on improving the quality of youth as human resources. The KNPI organizational center is in Jakarta. However, in this case, the regions are supporters for the creation of development in Indonesia. One of them is the Medan City KNPI.

The city KNPI is one of the important parts in the development of the nation's generation, this can be seen from the number of youth organizations in the city of Medan. This is also a form of Indonesian youth participation to support the government's Nawacita program. KNPI in improving human resources, especially youth and promoting development by supporting government programs.

As the only youth organization, KNPI also has a role in providing political education. This is stated in the AD/ART KNPI although it is not explicitly stated to provide political education that has the function and purpose of the KNPI to hint at youth to be politically literate. However, in some ways the KNPI has a slight shortcoming in providing political education, namely coming from within the KNPI itself, then the work of each team in the KNPI has not been maximized.

KNPI Medan City as a reflection of the North Sumatra region also provides political education, because political education is a process of influencing individuals to obtain more complete information, clearer insights, and higher political skills; so that he is critical and more intentional/directed in his life. In relation to this problem, the researcher is interested in studying more deeply the effectiveness of the KNPI in conducting political education from the cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects, especially in the city of Medan.

Understanding Political Participation

Political participation in a country that adheres to a democratic system is a very sacred thing. A country will be recognized as adhering to a democratic system if its government provides the widest possible opportunity for its people to carry out political activities. Public participation in politics is not only limited to participating in implementing or implementing government policies. Political participation is divided into two types, the first is active participation, namely community behavior to play an active role in existing political activities both nationally and regionally. Passive political participation is a situation where people do not want to be involved at all in existing political activities or democratic parties.

There are several forms of political participation that can be done by the community such as: voting, working in a reconciliation team, lobbying efforts both individually and in groups to be able to help in the winning process, looking for connections to increase networks, and violence is also part of political participation such as violence to change leaders or influence government policies. If viewed from the explanation above, political participation does not only talk about whether a society is active in a political activity and does not talk about whether to implement government policies, but political participation can be seen from a broader perspective. Because committing an act of violence to reject government policies and violence to bring down a leader is also part of political participation. Political activities can move from non-involvement to the activities of their positions. Therefore, political participation varies from one society to another.

Participation provides the space and capacity of the community to meet their needs and rights, develop local potentials and initiatives, activate the role of the community and build an independent society. In the context of these relationships, participation puts society in its true position. First, society is not as a slave (client) but as a citizen (citizen). If the slave shows total obedience, but if the concept of the citizen assumes that everyone is a whole person and has the full right to belong. Second, the community is not able to be ruled but as a partner of the government in managing government and development. Third, participation is not a gift from the government but as a right of the citizens themselves. Fourth, the community is not just a passive object of beneficiaries of government policies, but as an actor or subject who actively determines policies. This explains why the regional elections are held evenly in Indonesian territory. Democratic awareness places the importance of community participation in the actual position in the process of selecting leaders. There is political power from the people to participate in determining the best choice of their leader in the general election mechanism.

Ideally, active participation must be accompanied by high responsiveness. The political trust given by voters in an election so that state administrators carry out policies that are responsive to the needs of the community, is increasingly prominent today. As an organization filled with young people, KNPI must be able to follow dynamic political developments in the community. This can be achieved because KNPIA has a parent organization that is said to be quite established in terms of its organizational journey. According to the view of Medan City KNPI Members, active participation is someone who wants to be actively involved in the process of political activities, for example, participating in the winning team of one of the candidates for the leadership election, participating in the election, and as a contributor to political activities. Meanwhile, passive participation is people who are less willing or even not willing to be involved in political activities. Because not all people are interested in being involved in political participation

activities, either because there is a job that cannot be abandoned, or they do not like political activities.

Political Participation of Medan City KNPI Members in the 2020 Medan Regional Election Reasons for Supporting One of the Candidate Pairs

In essence, the organization is used as a forum for people to gather, work in accordance with their duties and functions, work systematically, organized, planned, guided and controlled in utilizing existing resources to be used efficiently and effectively to achieve organizational goals. In the 2020 Medan Regional Election, the Medan City KNPI Youth Organization decided to support the Bobby-Aulia Couple. The systematics of this decision occurred because it was the result of a decision of the Medan City KNPI Organization which was decided through a Plenary Meeting forum attended by the Medan City KNPI DPD Leaders and Elements of the Medan City District KNPI Leadership. After the decision was issued, this was immediately informed to all members of the Medan City KNPI in all sub-districts and then to be forwarded to all cadres in Medan City. The KNPI organization has a systematic and structured coordination relationship. It can also be seen that decisions taken in the organization and regarding the interests of the organization are communicated to all cadres.

With the issuance of this decision, KNPI Youth Organization cadres domiciled in Medan City, if viewed from an organizational perspective, must follow the decisions that have been taken by the leaders of the organization. With several considerations and from several points of view and looking at the track record of each candidate, the Medan City KNPI decided to support the Bobby-Aulia Candidate Pair. As a cadre of the Medan City KNPI organization, it is mandatory to follow the instructions given by the organization's leaders. Because it has been decided that the organization must follow it, it must not violate or go against the organization's decision, moreover, the decision was decided in the Plenary Meeting forum. Being one of the cadres of the Medan City KNPI and being part of the KNPI organization, the members followed the organization's regulations to support the Bobby-Aulia couple. However, the KNPI still has the power to make decisions that are then deliberated first and not because of individual interests. As an organization that is already established structurally and experienced, KNPI Medan City which is the parent youth organization is proof that this organization is well established, KNPI Medan City continues to exist with its youth-style movements, including in political activities. There are several considerations why the KNPI of Medan City decided this, first, Mr. Bobby is a figure who represents young people and the interests of young people, Second, a pair of candidates who have had a lot of experience, Third, a pair of deputy candidates who are considered as figures who have proven their performance as representatives of the people in the city of Medan.

Forms of Support Given to Candidate Spouses

The form of support given by Medan City KNPI Members to the Bobby-Aulia Candidate Pair is not only limited to issuing organizational decisions to support the couple, but there must also be concrete steps taken by Medan City KNPI Members by members or organizational leaders by mobilizing time. As for the mobilization of the masses to attend the transmission of knowledge, attitudes, values, and political norms from a political organization, political mobilization like this can be included as a political communication activity or political socialization.

In the context of politics and in the context of political participation, if a person or group has decided to fight in a political moment, concrete steps in mobilizing members in a group must be more real. Political mobilization is the act of mobilizing the masses, whether consciously or unconsciously, to fight for the urgent demands of a political group (political parties, mass organizations, non-governmental organizations, or certain civil associations). During the 2020 Medan Regional Elections, the leadership arranged several tactical and strategic steps to support the Bobby-Aulia Candidate Pair to win the 2020 Medan Regional Elections competition. There are several strategic steps taken by Medan City KNPI Members to win the Bobby-Aulia Candidate Pair.

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that five forms of support provided and carried out by the Medan City KNPI for the Bobby-Aulia candidate pair are as follows:

1. Making a plenary meeting of the Medan City KNPI with the agenda of discussing organizational consolidation and discussion about the 2020 Medan Regional Election regarding support for the Bobby-Aulia couple.
2. Instructing all members to vote for the Bobby-Aulia candidate pair on the voting day of the 2020 Medan Regional Elections.
3. Appeal to the members of the Medan City KNPI to invite the nuclear family and other families to choose the Bobby-Aulia couple.
4. Inviting other groups outside the Medan City KNPI to support the Bobby-Aulia Candidate pair such as the motorcycle community, cars, and sports communities.
5. Forming a volunteer community for the Bobby-Aulia Candidate Couple outside the KNPI organization.
6. Participate in escorting the results of the ballot counting until the determination of the winner of the election at the KPU.

Social Network of KNPI Members of Medan City in the 2020 Medan Regional Election

Social networks are relationships created between many individuals in a group or between a group and another group. Social networks are usually associated with how individuals relate to each other and how the bonds of affiliation that are established to obtain something to be worked on, as a bridge to facilitate relationships between one party and another.

In an organization like KNPI, the leadership factor greatly affects how an organization runs. In the context of the 2020 Medan Regional Elections, Medan City KNPI Members decided to support the Number 2 Candidate Pair, Bobby Nasution and Aulia Rachman. Although this decision was born from the Medan City KNPI Plenary Meeting Forum, this

was born from the existence of a social network between the Medan City KNPI Leader and the Bobby-Aulia Candidate Pair.

In the context of the Regional Elections, it is not an event to utilize the network but rather to test the consolidation and cohesiveness of the relationship that has been undertaken by the Medan KNPI so far. Like the chairman of KNPI Medan, he already has many networks among the community which have been running well. The symbiotic relationship of mutualism must be built between individuals and between groups. So, the network used is indeed the one that has been established for a long time, not only because of this Regional Election.

In a group that is built based on common orientation and goals with modern organizational management, it will have a better level of member participation and have a wider network. Every organization has a mechanism that regulates the relationships between the people in it, including the network formed due to social relationships.

One of the functions of an organization is to learn to work together, work according to its tasks and fields to achieve organizational goals, meaning that the difficult becomes easier. Including the KNPI in the context of yesterday's Regional Elections, the Medan KNPI utilizes the social network that exists in their part. And this is an attraction for election participants to reap votes. In fact, the KNPI network itself is also classified as many outside the KNPI circle itself. Such as organizations that are members of the KNPI itself, the motorcycle, car, and sports communities. In that community there is 1 KNPI child but the others are not, this is a challenge and attraction for KNPI in utilizing the network they have. Moreover, KNPI members are used to appearing more dominant.

Social networks are also formed because of a sense of mutual knowledge, mutual information, mutual reminder, and mutual help in implementing or overcoming something. The community or members of a group themselves need a relationship (network) in their daily life for the benefit and increase their well-being to achieve individual goals and group goals. In the context of the 2020 Medan Regional Elections, social networks are useful for gaining votes as a condition for winning political battles. KNPI Medan City as an established student organization is considered to have a wide social network, ranging from the number of members, organizational relations to the militancy of members of this organization.

The social network used by the Medan City KNPI not only maximizes Medan City KNPI cadres in the 2020 Regional Elections but also utilizes groups outside the Medan KNPI such as the Medan Muathay Medan martial arts community, the 234 SC Motor Club, the Expand Car Club Community, Bushido to participate in voting and supporting the Bobby-Aulia Couple in the 2020 Medan Regional Elections. The Medan City KNPI movement focuses on utilizing the social networks they must gain votes in the election process.

Social Exchange between the Medan City KNPI and the Pair of Mayor and Deputy Mayor Candidates for Medan 2020-2025.

In this study, KNPI Medan Cadres stated that there was no political contract between the organization and the supported candidate pairs. There is no such thing as an agreement or reward from both economic, political and social, projects that will be given to KNPI cadres of Medan City. Especially with this KNPI, the task is how to change the stigma of the community that youth organizations are not thug organizations and are not looking for projects. The political dynamics of the 2020 Medan Regional Election can be explained by George Pascar Homans' theory of social exchange which views social behavior as an exchange of activities and interests owned by everyone. Homans' theory departs from basic economic assumptions (rational choice), namely what individuals give and what they get, whether it is profitable or not (Ritzer, 2012)

In the 2020 Medan Mayor Election, members of the Medan City KNPI as a community carried out political activities as described by Homans, namely exchanging political interests with each other. However, in this context there was no social or political exchange materially, the KNPI cadres of Medan City stated that if the Bang Bobby-Aulia pair won this would be a matter of pride for them. There is no political agreement or political contract with the candidate, in fact this can be said to be a moral contract. Social exchange is a social relationship between one person and another and in social relationships there are rewards and rewards that affect each other. So, people relate to others because they meet a need. described above with Homans' theory of exchange is the interaction between individuals who make an exchange of interests with the basic law of rewards and profits obtained by the individual who makes the exchange. Social exchanges that occur between individuals do not run static, because individuals do not always benefit from the process of social exchange.

The community needs enough political knowledge to be able to determine their political stance wisely. What is meant by a wise attitude is when individuals have rational decisions when they want to make choices, even though there are influences from the family, social environment and material offers from the candidates. The next challenge is in the community itself. The people of Medan City must be able to maintain conducive conditions for individuals and families with sufficient political knowledge, because from these things we can expect a society that has good political behavior and culture. However, social exchange will always be based on the idea, that people view their relationships in a social context. They will tend to count the sacrifices and compare them to the rewards earned by continuing the relationship. Sacrifice (cost) and reward (rewards) are elements in the dimension of social exchange. Money politics was born from this approach (Haliim, 2017).

Political behavior as an activity is certainly influenced by various factors. Many opinions highlight the factors that influence political behavior; some highlight factors from within a person, some highlight factors from the outside and some combine them (Sahid, 2011) Considering that those involved in the process are not limited to individuals but also involve larger social groups (social structures), in this case the group exerts a great influence in directing individual political decisions, in this case members of the Medan City KNPI. The political behavior of Medan City KNPI Members is mostly directed by the social structure of their group. The political decisions of Medan City KNPI members often follow the leaders they trust and provide benefits or rewards for them (Fasya et al., 2023; Setiawati, 2023)

Conclusion

The awareness built in the context of the 2020 Medan Regional Election is organizational solidarity, but individual awareness has not been so developed because members must be actively involved in the contest for the election of regional heads. This is what causes the lower class of the Medan City KNPI to still have a lack of understanding about political participation. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the cadre process to increase the insight of Medan City KNPI members in terms of orientation and benefits in organizing. This aims to make members or cadres more prepared to face organizational conditions in the future, so that members of the Medan City KNPI are superior in thinking and acting. The form of political participation they do is by utilizing the social networks they have. Political socialization is carried out by forming groups and building communication between the networks owned by each group member. This activity can increase the political awareness of other groups but can also result in conflicts through differences of opinion that may arise. Political participation carried out by members of the Medan City KNPI turned out to be carried out as a form of political activity without any reward or political agreement with the candidate pair they supported.

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