

Public Participation In The 2024 Regent And Deputy Regent Elections At The Ngunut District Level

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Abstract:

Tulungagung Regency has held direct regional elections, with the last implementation in November 2024. Based on the recapitulation results, as many as 90% of the people in Ngunut District exercised their right to vote. Therefore, researchers are interested in studying the level of community political participation and the factors that influence it in Tulungagung Regency, especially Ngunut District, using the theory of political participation put forward by Ramlan Surbakti. This research applies qualitative methods with research locations in Tulungagung Regency, especially Ngunut District. Data collection techniques were carried out through indepth interviews and observation of several informants. The research results show that the level of community participation in Ngunut District is quite high. This is driven by various factors, such as the high level of public enthusiasm which contributes to critical thinking regarding the implementation of elections and interest in participating. Apart from that, the role of mass media is very strategic in increasing public knowledge regarding the regional head election process, so that information dissemination takes place well and becomes a means of political socialization. The KPU's performance in the Tulungagung Regency Pilkada was also quite optimal with an aggressive campaign that encouraged voter interest. These factors contributed to increased public participation compared to the previous regional elections, which only reached 80%.

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Introduction

General elections are one of the benchmarks in assessing the stability and dynamics of the democratization process in a country. In Indonesia, elections have been held regularly since 1955. However, its implementation in the previous period did not fully reflect the principles of mature democracy, because it was still in a political system that tended to be authoritarian. Hopes for a more ideal democracy began to be seen after the 2004 elections, which took place relatively safely and in an orderly manner.

For a nation that has only been a few years away from an authoritarian system, the implementation of the 2004 elections, which included legislative elections as well as direct presidential elections without incidents of violence or conflict, was an important achievement. The democratization process in Indonesia has been tested again with the start of the implementation of the direct regional head election system since 2005. Ideally, the momentum of this Regional Election should be used as a vehicle to strengthen the democratization process.

The public has high hopes for the impact of the implementation of direct elections, where they want a deeper understanding of the content of the law. That way, people's political knowledge and insight can increase, so that political education becomes more mature, especially in paying attention to the relationship between government structures and between local governments. Furthermore, understanding the law can increase public political awareness, build a better understanding of politics, and encourage the public to be smarter in choosing candidates for regional heads who have a vision to advance the region, improve welfare, and improve public services.

Tulungagung Regency has held direct elections for regents and deputy regents twice, namely in 2018 and 2024. The second regent election will be held on November 27, 2024, with four candidate pairs, namely Maryoto Birowo – Didik Gironoto, Gatut Sunu Wibowo – Ahmad Baharudin, Santoso – Samsul Umam, and Budi Setijahadi – Susilowati. This research describes the Theory of Political Participation. According to Ramlan Subekti includes

1. **Definition of Political Participation** Political participation is the involvement of citizens in the political process, which includes various activities to influence or support government decision-making.
2. **Form of Political Participation:** the way or type of activities carried out by individuals or groups of people to be involved in the political process, especially in influencing government decision-making or public policy.
3. **Factors Affecting Political Participation:** Ramlan Surbakti explained that there are various factors that affect the level of political participation of the community, namely:
4. **Levels of Political Participation:** levels of political participation can vary, from very active to very passive, depending on individual and structural factors.

This research focuses on the formulation of problems regarding the extent of community political participation in the implementation of the Regional Elections in Ngunut District. The main purpose of this study is to examine and understand community involvement in the Regional Elections in the area. Theoretically, this research is expected to contribute to the development of science, especially in the aspect of community political participation and the effectiveness of services provided by the General Election Commission in the Regional Election process. Meanwhile, the practical benefits of this research are not only limited to the expansion of academic insights, but also to produce findings that are systematically and professionally analyzed. The findings are expected to be valuable recommendations for the government in designing more effective policies to improve the quality of the implementation of regional head elections.

Methodology

This study aims to analyze the level of community political involvement in the election of the regent and deputy regent of Tulungagung Regency in Ngunut District in 2024. In accordance with the characteristics of the problems studied, this study applies a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. This approach is applied to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the research context, interact directly with participants, and collect data directly from them. This method relies on descriptive data

that describes the situation in detail and depth. This approach is in line with the view of Moleong (2000:1), who states that qualitative methods produce descriptive data in the form of written and spoken words based on observations of observed behaviors.

In this study, informants were selected based on relevance to the problems discussed. Therefore, the subject of the study includes individuals involved in the implementation of the regent election, such as KPU members, community leaders, and people who participate as voters.

Result and discussion

1. Community Political Participation in the Regional Elections in Ngunut District.

The 2024 Tulungagung Regent Election is an interesting phenomenon to be studied to understand the extent of public participation in the political process. As part of the democratic mechanism, the Regional Elections act as an indicator of stability and democratization dynamics in a region. In this discussion, the Regional Elections are considered as a political event that occurs periodically and continuously, but in its application always leaves important matters related to the level of community participation.

Expectations for a form of democratization in Indonesia are also reflected in the various regional elections that have been held since 2005. Although there are still some people who are skeptical of the development of democracy, especially regarding the readiness of materials and the infrastructure that supports it, the direct election of regional heads remains a crucial step in strengthening democracy. Despite various challenges, the implementation of the Regional Elections directly is an effort towards a more ideal democratic system.

The level of public political participation in the 2024 Regional Elections in Ngunut District shows an interesting phenomenon. The number of voters in the region reached 84,438 people. Based on an interview with one of the members of the Tulungagung Regency KPU, it is known that public awareness of their obligations as citizens in a democratic system is increasing. This can be seen from the high enthusiasm of the community in exercising their political rights.

2. Supporting Factors for High Community Participation in Tulungagung Regency precisely in Ngunut District in the 2024 Regional Elections.

The level of public participation in the 2024 Regional Elections in Tulungagung Regency, especially in Ngunut District, is influenced by various factors. Intensive socialization and political education by local governments and election organizers can increase public political awareness, such as socialization involving community leaders in Tulungagung Regency. Accessibility to polling stations (TPS) also plays an important role, where good infrastructure makes it easier for voters to reach polling stations. Weather conditions on election day, such as heavy rain, can reduce people's interest in coming to polling stations.

In addition, the election schedule adjacent to the regional elections can cause political saturation among the public, thereby reducing participation. The suitability of candidates with public preferences is also an important factor, because candidates who do not meet voters' expectations can reduce public interest in participating. The government's efforts to increase participation, such as socialization and active political education, also contribute greatly to encouraging public participation in the Regional Elections.

3. The Formation of Enthusiasm

Based on the previous presentation, it can be concluded that in the political momentum of the Regional Elections in Ngunut District, the level of community participation reached a fairly high number, namely 90%. This reflects the public's awareness in making choices and channeling their political rights. This high participation rate is supported by the formation of political awareness and the enthusiasm of people who are increasingly independent in exercising their voting rights. One of the main factors that triggered this phenomenon was the belief that the candidates competing in the Regional Elections had sufficient ability to realize their aspirations.

The main factor in determining the choice and assessing the capacity of candidates in the Regional Elections is based on rational and critical considerations. This is reflected in the community's view of the candidates' efforts in building closeness with residents. One of the community leaders, AB, revealed that the candidates in this Pilkada showed a more active attitude in interacting directly with

residents. They often go into the field, make visits, and communicate directly. Considering that the area of Ngunut District is not too large, in one day several candidates can visit at the same time. Their presence is often accompanied by various forms of attention to the community, which ultimately increases the enthusiasm of residents in welcoming election day.

4. The Role of Mass Media

One of the important elements in the democratic stage is the role of the media in providing political education to the public. The wide dissemination of information about the Regional Elections through the media contributes to increasing public awareness to make their choices. On the other hand, the lack of intensity of campaigns and news about political events and the implementation of the Regional Elections can result in a lack of information received by the public, thus having an impact on their low level of involvement in the election process.

With mutual understanding and construction, the messages conveyed by local media in Tulungagung Regency can be communicated effectively. Information conveyed by the media has an important role in increasing public political participation by adjusting the characteristics of the audience and providing influence in building political awareness. Through this approach, the message about the urgency of public involvement in the political process can be conveyed widely. As revealed by one of the community leaders, the residents of Ngunut District are very active in monitoring the development of the Regional Elections through various mass media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and online news portals. This condition provides its own advantages for the media, which is encouraged to continue to present information in a sustainable manner. Thus, consistent news has become one of the effective forms of socialization, allowing the public to understand more clearly all stages of the Regional Elections in Tulungagung Regency.

5. KPUD Performance

The preparation of a well-organized Permanent Voter List (DPT) is an important factor in increasing people's political involvement. Problems related to DPT often arise in the implementation of the Regional Elections, especially when

there are still residents who have not been registered, so it becomes a difficult challenge to solve. However, this situation does not occur in Tulungagung Regency.

This success cannot be separated from the contribution of the Regional General Election Commission (KPUD) as an institution that has responsibility for the implementation of the Regional Elections. The performance of the KPUD in carrying out its duties can be said to be quite optimal. The main challenge faced is the extent to which the KPUD is able to hold a campaign progressively to encourage people to exercise their voting rights and actively participate in the Regional Elections. Although in some cases the interests of individual voters take precedence over involvement in elections, the efforts of election organizers, including the KPUD, in providing political education to the public remain a key factor in increasing political participation.

As expressed by one of the residents, overall the KPU has worked professionally. Although there are still some shortcomings, in terms of socialization to the community, the efforts made have been quite good.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion in the previous chapters, the researcher concluded several aspects regarding the involvement of the people of Tulungagung Regency in the 2024 Regional Elections. Community participation in local political events, especially in the election of Regional Heads in Ngunut District, is relatively high, with a voter participation rate of 90%.

The high level of community participation in Ngunut District is influenced by various factors. One of them is the high enthusiasm of the public, which encourages critical thinking about the implementation of the election and increases their interest in participating in the Regional Elections. In addition, the mass media plays an important role in expanding public insight into the process of electing regional heads, so that the flow of information can be conveyed properly and effectively as a means of political socialization. On the other hand, the performance of the Tulungagung Regency KPUD in organizing the Regional Elections is also considered quite optimal, especially in conducting aggressive campaigns to increase voter participation. Various campaign strategies implemented, both through print media, leaflet distribution, and banner

installation, have proven successful in increasing public understanding of the goals and visions of the Regional Elections in determining the direction of regional leadership.

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Disclosure statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this research. This study was conducted objectively and independently without any financial, personal, or institutional influence that could affect the research process, results, or interpretation.

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