

Incumbernt Versus Big Coalition: Incumbent's Failure as Regional Head Candidate in Wonosobo

Petahana Versus Koalisi Gemuk:

Kegagalan Petahana Sebagai Calon Kepala Daerah dalam Pilkada di Wonosobo

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Riwayat Artikel	Abstract
Diterima: 13 Februari 2024 Direvisi: 7 April 2023 Disetujui: 2 Mei 2024 doi: 10.22212/jp.v15i1.4475	<p>This research focuses on the study of incumbents in Wonosobo Regency. The incumbent is seen as a candidate who has a high chance of running again as a candidate. Other studies have also looked at many incumbents running as single candidates. This research uses interview methods and literature studies using the oligarchy concept. The results of this study showed that in the case of Wonosobo Regency, the incumbent failed to run as a candidate for regional head. With this failure, it shows that incumbents who have been seen as actors who can control political parties to nominate again, are the opposite of the case in Wonosobo where political parties can be independent. There are several factors that cause it. First, the parties' dissatisfaction with the incumbent leadership. Second, the leadership style of the incumbent regent is distant from political parties. Third, existing political parties do not provide support for the incumbent's re-nomination. Fourth, the formation of a large coalition built by PDIP. This research uses a qualitative approach, with data collection methods of in-depth interviews and literature study.</p> <p>Keywords: Local Democracy; Regional Head Election; Incumbent; Political Parties; Wonosobo.</p>

Abstrak

Pada beberapa kajian, incumbent dilihat sebagai calon yang memiliki peluang besar untuk maju kembali sebagai calon. Kajian yang lain juga melihat bahwa banyak incumbent maju sebagai calon tunggal. Dalam kasus di Kabupaten Wonosobo yang terjadi sebaliknya, incumbent gagal maju sebagai calon kepala daerah. Dengan kegagalan tersebut menunjukkan bahwa incumbent yang selama ini dilihat sebagai aktor yang bisa mengendalikan partai-partai politik untuk mencalonkan kembali, untuk kasus di Wonosobo sebaliknya di mana partai politik bisa bersifat independent. Ada beberapa faktor yang menjadi penyebab. Pertama, terkait dengan ketidakpuasan partai-partai terhadap kepemimpinan petahana. Kedua, gaya kepemimpinan bupati petahana yang berjarak dengan partai politik. Ketiga, partai-partai politik yang ada tidak memberikan dukungan untuk pencalonan kembali petahana. Keempat, terbentuknya koalisi besar yang dibangun oleh PDIP. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, dengan metode pengumpulan data berupa wawancara mendalam dan studi pustaka.

Kata Kunci: Demokrasi Lokal; Pemilihan Kepala Daerah; Incumbent; Partai Politik; Elite Politik; Wonosobo.

Introduction

As is well known, there is a *raison d'être* and urgency why the election of regional heads must be directly elected by the people, not through the DPRD. This is because the election of regional heads via the DPRD suffers from a number of weaknesses, namely: (1) the election of regional heads through the DPRD is oligarchic and elitist in nature, in which only elite party leaders and members of the DPRD have the right to determine a person elected to be the regional head; (2) the elected regional head is not necessarily in accordance with the aspirations and desires of the wider community or the people as the owner of the highest sovereignty; (3) the election of regional heads through the DPRD causes the elected regional heads to be very dependent on the DPRD so that they are less aspirational towards regional aspirations and interests.¹

Meanwhile, the direct election of regional heads by the people provides several advantages. First, severing the oligarchy and the elitist role of the DPRD in determining regional heads. Second, the elected regional head has a direct mandate from the people and has strong legitimacy. Third, strengthen the accountability and responsibility of elected regional heads to the people. Fourth, direct regional head elections will increase broad community participation which in turn will strengthen democratization at the local level (Nuryanti, 2006).²

Several studies on Pilkada have been carried out by Erb and Sulistyanto (2009) and Romli (2005a and 2005b) which discuss the relationship between Regional Head Election and the development of local democracy. Other regional head election studies related to the emergence of a single candidate, among

others, were carried out by Romli (2018) and Romli and Efriza (2021). This single candidate generally comes from the incumbent, namely the candidate who is currently in office. The incumbent who runs as the sole candidate automatically emerges as the winner.

Likewise, there have been many studies on incumbents who ran as candidates for regional heads and then won, such as studies conducted by Khoiron and Siboy (2018), Rohman, Astuti, and Fitriyah. (2013), Tiran (2013), and Okthariza (2019). The incumbents who ran again and then won were caused by several factors. First, incumbents tend to use money and patronage politics as part of a strategy to win voters' votes. Second, the incumbent has several advantages that his opponent does not have, for example access to policy discretion. Third, policies targeting certain groups tend to be carried out more frequently before election events.³

However, it turns out that not all incumbents can become candidates again in the Regional Head Election. In the 2018 Regional Head Election, for example, Tengku Erry Nuradi, the Governor of North Sumatra, failed to run as a candidate because he did not get party support.⁴ Likewise, the incumbent mayor, Mohammad Ramdhan Pomanto, failed to run for the 2018 Makassar City Regional Head Election.⁵ Meanwhile, in the 2020 Regional Head Election, there were six incumbents who failed to advance as regional head candidates, namely: Kendal Regent, Mirna Annisa; South Halmahera Regent,

1 Lili Romli, *Otonomi Daerah dan Wakil Rakyat di Tingkat Lokal* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2006).

2 Sri Nuryanti, *Analisis Proses dan Hasil Pemilihan Kepala Daerah Langsung di Indonesia* (Jakarta: LIPI Pres, 2006).

3 Noory Okthariza, *Petahanan, Patronase, dan Politik Uang di Jawa*. (Jakarta: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2009).

4 "Kenapa Gubernur Petahana Sumatera Utara Gagal Ikut Pilkada?", *tirto.id.*, 11 Januari 2018, accessed 9 Juli 2021., <https://tirto.id/kenapa-gubernur-petahana-sumatera-utara-gagal-ikut-pemilihan-Kepala-Daerah-c5C>.

5 "Kasasi KPU Ditolak MA, Petahana Gagal Maju di Pilkada Kota Makassar", *kumparan.com.*, 23 April 2018, accessed 9 Juli 2021. <https://kumparan.com/kumparannews/kasasi-kpu-ditolak-ma-petahana-gagal-maju-di-pemilihan-Kepala-Daerah-kota-makassar-27431110790476540>.

Bahrain Kasuba; Regent of Fifty Cities, Irfendi Arbi; Serdang Bedagai Regent, Soekirman; Deputy Mayor of Palu City, Sigit Purnomo Said, and District Head of Wonosobo, Eko Purnomo.⁶

In this regard, this study tries to explain the failure of the incumbent to run again as a candidate for regional head by taking a case study on the 2020 Regional Head Election in Wonosobo Regency, Central Java. In the 2020 Regional Head Election in Wonosobo Regency, incumbent Eko Purnomo, failed to become a candidate. Eko Purnomo is the elected regent who succeeded in taking office after defeating other candidate pairs in the 2015 Wonosobo Regional Election. At that time, Eko Purnomo as the regent candidate paired with Agus Subagio as his deputy candidate was promoted by Hanura, PPP and PKS with a win of 46.81%.

As regent who served for 4.5 years, Eko Purnomo claims to have succeeded in reducing the number of poor people in Wonosobo, which has always been a strategic issue in Wonosobo, considering that from year to year Wonosobo is ranked as the poorest district in Central Java Province. During the 5 years since taking office, Eko Purnomo has reduced the poverty rate from 160,120 people (20.53%) at the start of his term in 2016 to 131,300 people (16.63%) at the end of his term of office in 2019. Likewise for other indicators, Eko Purnomo was successfully reduced the depth of poverty index from 4.02 for 2016 to 2.44 for 2019.⁷ Ironically, even though he was successful in advancing the region, Eko Purnomo failed to run as a candidate in the 2020 regional elections in Wonosobo. This study looks at the factors that caused Eko

Purnomo to fail to run again as a candidate for regional head. By examining the failure of the incumbent as a candidate, it can provide a new perspective on the study of Regional Head Elections.

Conceptual Framework

The electoral candidacy process carried out by parties in Indonesia is very much dominated by the party structure at the central level in an elitist manner. This centralized candidacy process has been going on for a long time, not only in regional head elections, but also in the election of candidates for legislative candidates. One of the literatures related to this written by Yanuarti who describes the process of nominating members of the legislature that took place in Malang City and Blitar Regency. The article reveals that the process of selecting candidates for parties in Malang City and Blitar Regency is carried out in an elitist manner and relies on the patronage of party leaders, in this case there is very little involvement of the party's constituents. Not infrequently, Sri Yanuarti described as a result of the elitism of the selection of candidates resulting in internal party disputes. Nevertheless, Yanuarti concluded that the mechanism for recruiting candidates in 2004 was still better than in 1999. One of the parties, PDIP, applied standardization in its selection process.⁸

The domination of the elite in the political system creates a situation of increasing political personification and changes in party organization leading to increased autonomy for elites in the upper structure. Rahat and Hazan (2001) through their study entitled "Candidate Selection Methods: An Analytical

6 "5 Petahana gagal Maju Pemilihan Kepala Daerah", inews.id., 8 September 2020, accessed 9 Juli 2021. <https://www.inews.id/news/nasional/5-petahana-gagal-maju-pemilihan-kepala-daerah-mirna-annisa-cuma-bisa-pasrah>.

7 BPS, Kabupaten Wonosobo dalam Angka 2020 (BPS: Wonosobo, 2021).

8 Sri Yanuarti, "Proses Pencalonan Elit di Tengah Masyarakat yang Apatist (Kasus Kota Malang dan Kabupaten Blitar)", dalam Syamsudin Haris, *Pemilu Langsung di Tengah Oligarki Partai (Proses Nominasi dan Seleksi Calon Legislatif Pemilu 2004)* (Jakarta : PT. Gramedia Pustaka Utama bekerjasama dengan Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia (LIPI) dan Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD), 2005).

Framework," offer an alternative methodology in formulating the framework of candidate theory. The candidacy system must be treated as an institutional mechanism that reflects the nature of the party and influences party politics, this is because in many developing democracies, the candidate selection mechanism (candidation) is seen more as an internal mechanism of political parties rather than an established mechanism outside of it without looking at the party's internal system is a very difficult thing to do.⁹

Hazan and Rahat build an analytical framework for candidate selection theory, based on these parameters, concluding that the democratization of the candidate selection system (candidate) varies between countries and is determined by the degree to which the democratization of the electoral process carried out by political parties. Due to the different contexts of interest, the degree of democracy in the internal candidate process for political parties is not as high as the degree of democracy in the process of holding general elections.¹⁰

Candidate is a central component of the political process. Organizing political parties leads to the birth of candidates who will take part in the general election. Thus, the candidates are at the forefront of political parties in implementing ideology and platforms.¹¹ In elections, candidacy is the input of a long electoral process. An election process that is democratic and has integrity will not be able to produce political representations that are in accordance with the will of the people if the raw materials from the election itself are bad. Meanwhile, in the context of public

policy, an undemocratic candidacy process will only give birth to policy makers who are indifferent to the demands of society.

Thus, in accordance with election principles, the candidacy process must be inclusive, free, fair and competitive. Inclusiveness refers to equal opportunities for all people who are eligible to become candidates or selectors of candidates (selectors). Thus, the more inclusive the candidates and selectors, the more democratic the candidacy process will be.

To ensure that the internal candidacy process runs democratically, in another article "Democracy within Parties: Candidate Selection Methods and Their Political Consequences," Hazan and Rahat offer a three-stage candidacy model.¹² The first stage is candidate registration. At this stage, political parties conduct candidate screening which is carried out by an election team consisting of administrators. This first stage is still exclusive. In this stage, the team determines the number of candidates twice the seats or positions provided.

The second stage is candidate selection. At this stage, political parties carry out readoption (limited changes to the list of candidates proposed in the first stage) and deselection (approving or rejecting the incumbent candidates submitted in the first stage). Both processes are carried out by representatives of political parties who come from representatives of political party administrators and representatives of political party members. The selection of representatives from the two groups must also be based on democratic principles. Thus, this second stage is more inclusive than the first stage.

The third stage is determining the candidate. At this stage, the political parties determine the final list of the candidates they are carrying. For this purpose, political parties must involve all members or representatives

¹² Hazan and Rahat, Op.cit.

⁹ Reuven Y. Hazan and Gideon Rahat, *Democracy within Parties: Candidate Selection Methods and Their Political Consequences* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2010).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Mada Sukmajati, "Kandidasi Dalam Partai Politik Di Indonesia," accessed 16 Desember 2022 https://www.academia.edu/37338642/Kandidasi_Dalam_Partai_Politik_Di_Indonesia.

of all members (depending on the type of election) in a convention according to the level of the election. For example, for the election of Regional Heads at the district/city level, the convention is also carried out at the district/city level. Thus, this third stage is inclusive.

Through a literature review on internal candidacies, this study gains a broader perspective on the symptoms of elitism that are getting stronger in the legislative candidate candidacy process in the 2004 election contestation. The researcher wants to study the same thing in the candidacy of the candidate for regent and deputy regent in Wonosobo Regency in the Head Election Regions in 2020. The approach taken by Haris is the elitism of decision-making within political party organizations. Therefore, Rahat and Gideon treat the study of the candidacy system as an institutional mechanism that reflects the nature of the party and influences party politics, so analyzing the candidacy system must look at the party's internal system.

Methods

This study implemented a qualitative approach, referring to Harrison who points out that qualitative research significantly focuses on exploring the phenomenon equipped with a few thought-provoking examples in order to achieve depth rather than breadth.¹³ Elaborating further, Creswell asserts that qualitative research refers to a scientific process aiming to understand and explore a problem or phenomenon that arises from human or social interaction.¹⁴

In terms of data collection, the present authors conducted interviews and literature studies as the primary data; alongside, a

13 Harrison, L(2001). *Political Research, An Introduction*. London: Routledge. Retrieved at: https://books.google.co.id/books/about/Political_Research.html?id=4zOecfAKdKcC&redir_esc=y. Accessed 26 Desember 2020.

14 Creswell, J.W, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. (California: Sage, 2013).

purposive sampling technique was employed to collect other relevant sources to comprehend the research problems. In addition, a literature study was conducted by collecting and reviewing a wide array of books, regulations, and related documents as the secondary data. Further, the primary and secondary data sources were analyzed to obtain an explanation of cartel politics at the local level.

Factors Causing Failure

The Issue of Poverty as A Political Commodity

Wonosobo Regency is ranked as the poorest district in Central Java. When viewed from the factor of the level of primary education and the open unemployment rate, the basic education level in Wonosobo Regency is in the high category and the open unemployment rate is in the medium category but this does not change the predicate of Wonosobo Regency as the poorest district in Central Java. Research states that the causes of poverty in Wonosobo Regency are not influenced by geographical factors,¹⁵ but are influenced by low levels of primary education, low levels of basic education in rural areas, and high rates of open unemployment,¹⁶ as well as by many families who have slum settlements, many families suffering from malnutrition, and many families owning agricultural land.

To explain how the population can access development results in obtaining income, health, education, and so on, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) introduced the Human Development Index (HDI) in 1990. The Wonosobo HDI in 2019 was 68.27 below the Java HDI Middle in the same year of 71.73. The ranking for the number of poor people was recorded as the highest in Central Java Province at 20.53%

15 Setyowati, F. Ai dan Melati, I.S.M. "Identifikasi Faktor Penyebab Kemiskinan di Kabupaten Wonosobo Berdasarkan Klasifikasi Perkotaan dan Perdesaan", *Economic Education Analysis Journal* (Vol.9 Maret 2020).

16 Op.cit, BPS.

in 2016 and decreased by 16.63% in 2019. The total poverty rate in 2019 ranked it better in third place after Kebumen and Brebes.¹⁷ This poverty is also contributed by the high open unemployment rate and low labor force participation rate compared to other districts in Central Java.

Nonetheless, the District Government of Wonosobo has attempted to raise the standard of living of the people by reducing the poverty rate. The Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) report states that the number of poor people in Wonosobo Regency has decreased from year to year. In 2017 the number of poor people was 159,200 people (20.32%), in 2018 the number of poor people was 138,300 people (17.58%), and in 2019 the number of poor people was 131,300 people (16.63%). Likewise with the poverty depth index and poverty severity index, whose figures are decreasing.¹⁸

However, even though the Wonosobo Regency Government led by Regent Eko Purnomo has reduced the number of poor people, this still provokes a critical response from the DPRD of Wonosobo Regency. During the submission of the Regent's Accountability Report for the 2017 Fiscal Year at the Special Plenary Meeting of the DPRD, the Chairman of the DPRD, Afif Nurhidayat from the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP) Faction, gave a critical note that macroeconomic performance to maintain economic growth and inflation was quite progressive. Marked by the trend of economic growth that always increases every year and the declining inflation growth every year has no impact on reducing the poverty rate.

In addition, the decline in the poverty rate tends to be low. As mentioned above, the poverty rate in 2017 was 20.32 percent, while in 2016 it was 20.53 percent or only reduced by 0.31 percent. This can also be seen from the downward trend of the low poverty rate in the

following years. This decrease is in line with the 2013-2017 comparison which was successfully reduced from 22.08 percent to 20.32 percent, or only decreased by 1.76 percent for 5 years or an average of 0.26 percent per year. On one occasion, Afif Nurhidayat said that the existence of the Wonosobo Regent had no significant impact on reducing the poverty rate in the community. Afif Nurhidayat's critical attitude as the Chair of the DPRD from the PDIP faction can be understood considering the political position of the PDIP which was at odds with the political position of the Regent Eko Purnomo during the 2015 Regional Head Election.

Political Relationship Problems of Regent and DPRD

The Regional government is the Governor, Regent or Mayor, and regional apparatus as elements of regional government administration. The DPRD is a regional people's representative institution and has a position as an element of regional administration. Meanwhile, what is meant by regional government administrators consists of regional governments and DPRD. In that equal position, the Regional People's Representative Council together with the Regional Head carry out regional government functions which cover all matters according to the principles of autonomy and co-administration.

Thus, the main function of the DPRD is to control the running of government in the regions, in terms of legislative functions, the position of the DPRD is not a dominant actor, but involves the District Head as an equal partner. Based on Law Number 32 of 2004, the governors and district heads/mayors remain the dominant power holders in the legislative field. As an element of regional government administration, the DPRD has political functions to oversee the running of regional government. These functions include

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

legislative functions, budget functions and supervisory functions.

In Wonosobo, the relationship between the two regional administrations is often ineffective, where each party feels superior or more in authority. This tendency has resulted in a tug-of-war between the two institutions which is not productive for Wonosobo's development performance. The executive party understands their position better as implementers of policies, so they have more access to politics, especially to the public. On the other hand, the legislature feels that in accordance with their authority, they can be above the executive. Both parties felt that they were equally elected by constituents in constitutional general elections. This was very clearly seen when the Regent of Wonosobo, Eko Purnomo, submitted his Annual Accountability Report before the Plenary Session of the DPRD, Wonosobo Regency. In a number of cases, the evaluation of the District Head's Accountability Statement Report (LKPI) has been used as a bargaining tool for interests between the DPRD.

In the submission of the 2017 Annual Accountability Report as previously mentioned, the Chairperson of the DPRD, Afif Nurhidayat, provided 5 recommendations to the Regent related to improving the performance of local governments. One of the recommendations is for the Regent to communicate actively with the DPRD and Regional Leadership Coordination Forum (Forkopimda). The DPRD noted that Regent Eko Purnomo experienced weaknesses in building political communication, both in the internal executive between the Regent and his agencies and externally with the DPRD and the regional leadership communication forum.

One of the communication issues is the difference in poverty data between related agencies. As is known, the poverty rate

in Wonosobo Regency is still the highest in Central Java, however, the pattern of presentation of poverty data carried out by each Regional Apparatus Organization is different, as took place in the 2018 Regent's Accountability Report submission meeting. Yudistiro, a member of the DPRD from the PKB faction, Yudistiro, said that based on a report from the Social Service for Community and Village Empowerment, the data on poor people based on the latest data collection reached around 390 thousand people.¹⁹ That is, when compared with the total population of Wonosobo which reaches 875 thousand people. Thus, the number of poor people still reaches 44 percent. Whereas in the 2018 Regent's Accountability Report, poverty in Wonosobo Regency is still 17.58 percent or only decreased by 2.95 percent compared to 2017 which was 20.53 percent. From the fact that the differences in poverty data submitted by the Regent in the 2018 Accountability Report and the Wonosobo Social Service report, it shows that there are communication and coordination problems within the local government.

On a different occasion, Yudistiro also alluded to the attitude and actions of Regent Eko Purnomo in the administration of regional government between the DPRD and the Regent, who should be an equal partner. Yudistiro regretted the attitude of Regent Eko Purnomo and his deputy who rarely attended important forums, both official events and meetings held by the DPRD.²⁰ This confirms how bad the relationship between political communication between the Regent Eko Purnomo and the political parties that have seats in the Regional People's Representative Council.

19 Wonosobo.sorot.co, Data Kemiskinan Wonosobo Beda, Dewan Minta OPD Koordinasi, 9 Juli 2019, Accessed 7 Juli 2021. <http://wonosobo.sorot.co/berita-3664-data-kemiskinan-wonosobo-beda-dewan-minta-opd-koordinasi.html>.

20 Interview with S, tanggal 30 Juni 2021.

The cold relationship between the regent and the DPRD became the backdrop for the political event of seeking recommendations for proposals or support for regent and deputy regent candidates in the 2020 Wonosobo Regional Head Election. During the process of seeking these recommendations, around August 2019 to June 2020, Regent Eko Purnomo increasingly rarely attended meetings held by the DPRD. Yudistiro understands that the Regent is rarely seen because he has to communicate with several political parties and stakeholders when dealing with party recommendations. However, until the registration process for the Regional Head election was completed in September 2020, when Eko Purnomo no longer registered himself as a candidate for regent or deputy regent, political communication with the DPRD was increasingly stagnant. Even though towards the end of 2020, regional governments must discuss the 2020 Revised Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget as well as discuss the 2021 Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) in accordance with the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan which will end in 2021.

Poor communication between the regent and the DPRD is the result of the regent giving too much flexibility to the bureaucracy to determine development policies, programs and projects in Wonosobo himself. The district head seems to be hands off from the development performance carried out by his bureaucracy.²¹ Regent Eko Purnomo tends to implement autopilot governance, with the hope that the bureaucracy will work professionally by the Wonosobo Medium Term Development Plan that has been decided.²² From a different perspective, the allocation of development programs and projects is largely determined by the existence of a bureaucracy which is dominated by

graduates of the Domestic Administration High School (STPDN) who often have a higher bond of loyalty to their superiors (seniority) than non-STPDN bureaucracy. As a result, the program and project allocation process only revolves around entrepreneurs who are close to this bureaucratic group.²³ Meanwhile, the allocation of development programs and projects for entrepreneurs who are encouraged or close to political parties is very small. The domination of the STPDN bureaucracy that influenced the policies of the Regent Eko Purnomo exacerbated the relationship between the regent and the DPRD in the future until Eko Purnomo's re-nomination for the post of regent for the second time.

Failure to Support Political Parties

To run again for the 2020 Regional Head Election, the first step taken by Eko Purnomo was to try to approach the political parties that carried his old support in the 2015 Regional Head Election, namely: Hanura, PPP, and PKS. Of these three parties, only Hanura (3 seats) and PPP (2 seats) won seats with a total of 5 seats. However, as an initial capital, Eko Purnomo continued to register himself as a potential pair of candidates with PPP and Hanura. PPP welcomes Eko Purnomo's registration with his party. In addition to Eko Purnomo, PPP received registration documents from Jefri Asmara, who is an internal PPP cadre and the younger brother of the Wonosobo PPP Chair.

Regarding the two files for prospective regents, PPP then held a Branch Leadership Meeting (Rapimcab) which was attended by all administrators and cadres at the sub-district level whose results were then reported to the Regional Leadership Council (DPW) and Central Board of PPP (DPP PPP) for approval. The PPP DPP agreed to the Wonosobo PPP's proposal to designate the pair Eko Purnomo

21 Interview with EG, tanggal 28 Juni 2021.

22 Interview with GI, tanggal 1 Juli 2021.

23 Interview with H, tanggal 29 Juni 2021.

and Jefri Asmara as potential regent and deputy regent candidates for Wonosobo in the 2020 Regional Head Elections.²⁴ Meanwhile, the Hanura is directing its support not to the incumbent Regent Eko Purnomo, whom he once supported in the 2015 Regional Head Election, but to the candidate pair Afif Nurhidayat and Muhammad Albar. Hanura reasoned that his party is closer to Afif Nurhidayat and Muhammad Albar than Eko Purnomo and Abdul Arif.²⁵

As a result, the Hanura, which previously nominated him, has shifted its support to Afif Nurhidayat and Muhammad Albar. So practically, Eko Purnomo has just pocketed PPP which has 3 seats. For Eko Purnomo, at least 6 more seats are needed to be able to get his candidacy ticket. To get that, Eko Purnomo approached Golkar and Gerindra, which have 4 and 6 seats respectively. The amount is more than enough to lead Eko Purnomo to become a candidate for regent for the second time if he succeeds in convincing the two parties.

The efforts of the incumbent regent Eko Purnomo to get a Golkar ticket first approached a figure from one of the Parent Organizational Groups (KINO), namely Mutual Cooperation Multipurpose Cooperative (KOSGORO) 1957. Kosgoro 1957 was one of the organizations besides Center for Indonesian Self-Employee Organizations (SOKSI) and Mutual Cooperation Family Conference (MKGR), which gave birth to the Joint Secretariat of Functional Groups (Sekretariat Bersama Golongan Karya or Sekber Golkar) on 20 October 1964. However, the position of the Kosgoro organization in front of Golkar was only the wing of the party. In the end, it was the Golkar elite who had the authority to decide which candidate for regent was promoted by Golkar, not the wing organization. The Golkar Party DPP decided to provide recommendations to Afif Nurhidayat

24 Interview with UR, tanggal 29 Juni 2021.

25 Interview with DH, tanggal 1 Juli 2021.

and Muhammad Albar. Eko Purnomo failed to get a nomination ticket from Golkar.

Failing to get Golkar's support, Eko Purnomo tried to approach the Gerindra elite to provide him with a recommendation for a candidate for regent in the 2020 Regional Head Election. Politically, Eko Purnomo's efforts seem successful. Gerindra provides opportunities and support for Eko Purnomo as a candidate for regent from Gerindra. However, this success only appeared on the public surface, because in the end Gerindra did not deliver the support recommendation file to the Wonosobo KPU, which made Eko Purnomo's candidacy ineligible due to the lack of political party support.

The background of the absence of Gerindra in the registration of prospective candidates to the Wonosobo KPU, which also means that politically leaving the coalition supporting Eko Purnomo as a candidate for regent along with PPP is not meeting the interests of carrying the candidate for vice regent. Communication and negotiations to determine the candidate for deputy regent of the Gerindra and PPP coalition have reached a dead end. The chairman of the Gerindra Wonosobo Party DPC, Sumardiyo, in a press conference at Taman Puring Mendolo, September 8, 2020, revealed that PPP was adamant in its stance and did not want to compromise.²⁶

PPP wants the candidates for regent and deputy regent to be Eko Purnomo and Jefri Asmara, while Gerindra, which Eko Purnomo himself also wants, is Eko Purnomo paired with Abdurrahman Efendi, who is a figure in Wonosobo's NU circle. The reason Gerindra offered a candidate for deputy regent from the NU circle was considering NU's closeness to the Wonosobo community and the network of Islamic boarding schools affiliated with NU was quite widespread and accepted by the Wonosobo community. In this way, it is hoped that the presence of Abdurrahman

26 Interview with S, tanggal 30 Juni 2021.

Efendi, who is also the caretaker of one of the NU Islamic boarding schools in Wonosobo, will further strengthen the support of the Wonosobo community for the incumbent regent Eko Purnomo, which is jointly promoted by Gerindra and PPP.

Apart from seeking support for Hanura, PPP, Golkar Party, and Gerindra Party, Eko Purnomo also sought support from other political parties, such as Indonesian Unity Party (PERINDO) which only has 1 seat in the DPRD, Democratic National Party (NASDEM) with 4 seats, Democrats with 3 seats, and PAN with 2 chairs. Of the four parties, only Perindo politically supports Eko Purnomo. Nevertheless, the political power and seat acquisition as a condition for nomination of the candidate for regional head of this party are far from expectations. So Perindo is only a follow-up factor that other political parties in Wonosobo have deliberately left behind. Meanwhile, Nasdem, PD and PAN directed their support to support the pair Afif Nurhidayat and Muhammad Albar as a commitment to the grand coalition-raising meeting at the end of August 2019 and in exchange for the political dowry that Afif Nurhidayat promised to the parties.

A Big Coalition Against the Incumbent

Throughout the three regional head elections, starting in 2005, 2010 until the 2015 regional head elections, the Wonosobo PDIP has never succeeded in making its pair of candidates into regent and deputy regent. The defeat of the Wonosobo PDIP in the direct Regional Head Election was an ironic result of the victory in the election of the Failure to support political parties . Starting from the first post-reform election, namely the 1999 election, PDI-P became the winner with 34.1% of the vote.²⁷ Likewise, in the

²⁷ Pemilu.asia, Pemilu DPRK 1999, 2009, <http://www.pemilu.asia/?lang=ind&c=54&opt=1&s=81&id=11>. Accessed 11 Juli 2021.

2004 general election to elect by the the DPRD, the PDIP became the winner again by winning 14 seats. Even in the 2009 election, the PDIP with 11 seats was still ahead of the other parties participating in the election. The winning trophy was again won by the PDIP in the 2014 General Election by getting 9 seats. Likewise in the 2019 Election, the PDIP again won by getting 11 seats.

The Wonosobo PDIP got its momentum when the incumbent Regent Eko Purnomo did not get the support of the the DPRD. As discussed in the previous section, Eko Purnomo is the regent elected as the result of the 2015 Regional Head Election which was promoted by 3 parties, namely Hanura, PPP, and PKS. In the 2014 election, the number of seats for the three parties in the the DPRD as a total of 9 seats, but decreased in the 2019 election, only 5 seats remained, this was because the three parties experienced a decrease in votes in the 2015 election. This further strengthened the dominance of the parties of opposition against the incumbent Regent Eko Purnomo, and the parties that support him, are getting smaller and smaller in influence in the DPRD Wonosobo.

Taking advantage of this momentum, several cross-political party figures in Wonosobo held an informal meeting to explore the nomination process for the 2020 Regional Head Election which was getting closer initiated by the PDIP and PKB. The first meeting took place at the end of August 2019 at the house of the Chairman of the DPC Gerindra Wonosobo, Sumardiyo. A little background Sumardiyo is an entrepreneur. Prior to serving as Chair of Gerindra, Sumardiyo had run as a candidate for regent from the individual path in the 2005 Regional Head Election in pairs with H. Muchson, both businessmen. In the 2019 Election, Sumardiyo managed to lead his party to get an additional 2 seats, becoming 6 seats in DPRD for the

2019-2024 period.²⁸

The meeting which was held at Sumardiyo's house which was attended by 7 political parties resulted in 2 agreements, namely to block the nomination plan for the incumbent regent Eko Purnomo in the 2020 Regional Head Election and form a "big coalition" by bringing in candidate pairs from the caucuses of the parties, PDIP and PKB. The grand coalition did not decide who the candidate for regent and vice regent would be, it was left to the two parties, PDIP and PKB to decide. This is because the PDIP and PKB are both eyeing the position of the candidate for regent in the coalition.²⁹

The formation of this grand coalition brought political benefits to the PDIP, this was due to the experience throughout 3 times of holding direct Regional Head Elections from 2005 to 2015, where there were 3 to 5 pairs of candidates fighting, not giving victory to the candidate pairs carried by the PDIP. In addition, PDIP calculated that the incumbent regent Eko Purnomo still has the opportunity to run for re-election in his second term, and has popularity and electability over other regional head candidates. So for the PDIP there must be political efforts to hinder Eko Purnomo's plan to run again. In addition, PDIP needs to partner with PKB in this grand coalition, because PDIP has a fundamental weakness, namely the Chairperson of the PDIP the strong candidate for regent candidate proposed by PDIP is a Muhammadiyah cadre (Interview with EG).³⁰ So forming a grand coalition with PKB and other parties and trying to create a single pair of candidates is a winning strategy for PDIP.

The next step is to determine who will be nominated as regent and deputy regent from the two majority parties, namely PDIP and PKB. On January 31, 2021 a meeting was held

between PDIP and PKB in Semarang City. The two parties made an interesting agreement for the study of political science about who should be the regent and deputy regent. This determination is not based on the popularity and electability of each candidate according to the results of a public perception survey, nor is it based on an internal convention held by each party or a combination of the two parties, but this determination is based on which party can provide cash to be used as winning fee by the agreed deadline, which is February 28, 2021 (Interview with EG).

In this effort, the PDIP calculated that its efforts would be successful if it succeeded in two more steps, namely: first, thwarting the plan to nominate the incumbent regent through any party, and second, cooperating with the second strongest party and having a traditional mass, namely PKB. If the incumbent regent does not run for office and PKB is in a coalition with the PDIP then half the battle has been won, the next negotiation is to determine which party cadre, between PDIP and PKB, will be the candidate for regent. In this regard, the PDIP was successful in demonstrating its logistical strength before the PKB board.

For the PDIP, the formation of a grand coalition with the main objective of blocking the plan for the nomination of the incumbent regent for the second time was a political strategy to break the record for winning the first direct regional head election since the 2005 direct regional head election, as well as to strengthen the supremacy of the PDIP's political power in the region. Central Java as a ballot barn for a national hat-trick in the 2024 General Election. A large coalition would be meaningless if it only consisted of the PDIP and PKB, so PDIP is trying to attract the carriages of two parties with medium seats, namely Golkar and Gerindra.

The first grand coalition discussion meeting

28 Interview with S, tanggal 30 Juni 2021

29 Interview with S, tanggal 30 Juni 2021

30 Interview with EG, tanggal 28 Juni 2021

was held at the house of the Chairperson of the Gerindra Wonosobo DPC, Sumardiyo, who is also a colleague of Afif Nurhidayat as the co-leader of the DPRD. Initially Golkar chose to be outside the grand coalition with the intention of supporting Eko Purnomo in his second term. However, the decision of the party leadership at the central level finally decided that Golkar should be included in the carriage of the grand coalition. The Golkar DPP approved the nomination of Afif Nurhidayat as a candidate for regent from the PDIP on the condition that the nomination of Golkar cadres in the Klaten and Purbalingga Regional Head Elections was supported by the PDIP. The barter terms played by Golkar were approved by the PDIP. This agreement canceled the PDIP's DPP recommendation letter which had already been issued for the two regional head elections.

With the formation of a large coalition, the incumbent failed to run as a candidate because he did not receive a ticket from a political party. Meanwhile, the time to run as an independent candidate is no longer there. Under these conditions, the 2020 Wonosobo Regional Election only leaves one pair of candidates, Afif Nurhidayat and Muhammad Albar. The existence of this single future has a negative impact on the development of democracy at the local level. In regional elections, where there should be competition between candidates, there is automatically none because they are competing with empty boxes. The public also does not have many choices because there is only one pair of candidates.

Conclusion

In the case of the failure of the incumbent as a candidate for regional head in the case of Eko Purnomo, it was caused by several interrelated factors. First, it relates to the dissatisfaction of the parties and some political

elites in Wonosobo with the leadership of Eko Purnomo during his tenure as regent. Eko Purnomo is considered not to have succeeded in lifting the poverty predicate of Wonosobo which is always stagnant in front of other districts in Central Java. There are claims of poverty reduction, but this is not supported by improvements in other indicators, such as the poverty severity index, poverty depth index, and human development index. Although statistically there is an increase, it does not change the real poverty situation experienced by the Wonosobo community.

Second, the incumbent regent Eko Purnomo's leadership style is distant from political parties. In running the government, the regent should provide equal political space to the DPRD, as mandated by law that the regional government together with the elements of the DPRD are the organizers of the regional government. For a political party that has a seat on the DPRD, it means that every discussion of development programs must be included in both planning and implementation. From a clientelism perspective,³¹ the involvement of parties in the DPRD means their desire to be involved in government work or projects funded from the Wonosobo APBD. For Wonosobo, the APBD is the main instrument, considering that there are no more natural resources that can increase economic growth other than agriculture owned by the people, not plantations. Therefore, the APBD through development programs and projects is the target of local politicians to be able to access them in the form of government jobs.

Third, the political parties in the DPRD did not provide support for the re-nomination of Eko Purnomo as a candidate for regional head. Despite being the incumbent, of the nine political parties that won seats in the DPRD,

³¹ Aspinal, E dan Berenschot, W., *Democracy for Sale, Pemilu, Klientelisme, dan Negara di Indonesia*. (Jakarta : Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2019).

only PPP, which had 3 seats, nominated Eko Purnomo as a candidate for regent. With only 3 seats (6.6%) so that the number of seats does not meet the requirements because the requirements for political parties to be able to nominate candidates are at least 20% or 9 seats. The lack of support for Eko Purnomo's nomination is because the party that used to carry him, namely PKS, does not have a seat in the DPRD and the Hanura Party provides support for the Afif Nurhidayat-Muhammad Albar pair.

Fourth, the formation of a large coalition built by the PDI-P by carrying the pair Afif Nurhidayat-Muhammad Albar as candidates for regent and deputy regent. The initiation of building a grand coalition is intentionally to stem the incumbent as a candidate. To that end, the PDI-P approached political parties to support the Afif Nurhidayat-Muhammad Albar pair. A large coalition was formed so that incumbent failed to gain party support to run again as a candidate for regent. The big coalition also succeeded in making the pair Afif Nurhidayat-Muhammad Albar the sole candidate.

If the previous study shows that incumbents have higher power than political parties so that they easily influence political party elites in the decision to re-nominate as regional head candidates in the next election period. By using an interaction approach between political parties, which are dominated by elites leading political parties who see the incumbent's existence as an unfavorable potential for the fulfillment of their common goals in the future. In the case of Eko Purnomo, political parties are not solely dependent on incumbents, but the political parties themselves are independent. This study also shows that although the regional head election is directly elected by the people, the oligarchic nature is still strong. Indeed, oligarchy in a democratic system

cannot eliminate the formal participation of the public in elections, but in fact, oligarchs intentionally make participation useless or useless.

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