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Community Empowerment in Political Education

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore community empowerment in the context of political education for the 2024 elections in Indonesia. The research employed a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. The research results found that community empowerment in political education is very important in the implementation of elections. Political knowledge through political education makes people understand politics. Thus, in the end, it increases participation in politics. Political education is intrinsically tied to the internalization of values, a process through which individuals not only acquire knowledge but also integrate those principles into their own identities. Through political education, it will increasingly support the democratic process.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the democratic party in 2024 will be a simultaneous election. In 2024, the people will not only elect regional representatives and the president but also regional heads. The democratic system in Indonesia involves direct general elections to elect people's representatives in the legislative, for example, the People's Representative Council (DPR) and the Regional Representative Council (DPD) (Juniar, 2021; Putra & Mahendra, 2022; Trijono, 2018). General elections (Pemilu) are one of the important milestones that represent the sovereignty of the people. Thus, there is no democratic country without providing opportunities to be held systematically and periodically. In addition, the democratic system in Indonesia incorporates political parties that play an active role in the political process. Political parties can nominate candidates in Pemilu and work to express their interests and views in the state policy process.

The presidential election is also carried out directly by the people. The concept of elections was created from the idea of democracy, which means freedom, justice, and individual equality in all fields. Pemilu is not a competition between the candidate pairs participating in the contest. Holding Pemilu can also increase the political temperature among individuals who possess the right to vote. Pemilu in Indonesia aims to elect someone to a particular political position. Elections are held for executive and legislative positions at every level of government (Fatayati, 2017).

Political education is a crucial aspect in building a strong democratic foundation. A solid grasp of the political system, along with an awareness of citizens' rights and responsibilities and the workings of the democratic process, empowers society to become more engaged and informed agents of change in selecting leaders and assessing government performance (Pasaribu, 2017). The 2024 Pemilu in Indonesia will be an important moment in the democratic process. These elections offer the community the opportunity to elect leaders at the local, regional, and national levels. However, elections are also faced with complex challenges such as identity politics, polarization, and disinformation, which can cloud people's views about political choices.

The advancement of information technology and social media has profoundly transformed the political landscape. The fast and widespread flow of information can influence people's perceptions of potential leaders and political issues (Aji & Indrawan, 2020; Katili & Latuda, 2022). Therefore, community empowerment in terms of media literacy and information analysis is becoming increasingly important. People's active participation in the political process is not only about rights, but also about responsibilities to ensure fair and effective representation. In the context of community empowerment, political education allows them to understand candidates' platforms and agendas, as well as assess performance and competence. Political education is not only about providing information, but also about facilitating inclusive public dialogue and discussion. Forums such as candidate debates, seminars, and community meetings can be effective platforms for the exchange of ideas and a deeper understanding of political issues relevant to society (Wardhani, 2018).

The government continues to strengthen the democratic system and encourage active participation of citizens in the political process. This is done through policy reform, strengthening democratic institutions, protecting human rights, as well as free participation of civil society and media in voicing public opinion (Bela & Utama, 2019). The purpose of this study is to discuss community empowerment in political education in the Indonesian Election 2024.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Empowering communities is an economic development concept that encapsulates community values, aiming to establish a new, people-centered, and participatory approach to development (Prasetyo, 2016). In this context, Harris outlines three key aspects through which community empowerment can be examined:

- (i) Enabling: This involves fostering an environment that nurtures the community's potential for growth and development.
- (ii) Empowering: This aspect focuses on reinforcing the community's capabilities through tangible measures, such as supplying essential resources and creating diverse opportunities that enhance their overall empowerment.
- (iii) Protecting: This entails safeguarding and advocating for the interests of vulnerable communities.

The empowerment approach highlights the importance of community groups having the autonomy to make their own decisions. This approach is rooted in personal experiences, direct engagement, democratic resources, and social learning. Empowering a community encompasses not just economic aspects but also political dimensions, ultimately enabling the community to strengthen its bargaining position on both national and international stages.

There are at least five significant ways in which politics impacts education. According to the effect on the educational budget. Politics also determines the allocation of educational resources, including teacher salaries, infrastructure that supports learning, and professional development opportunities for educators. Additionally, political factors shape the school system itself, impacting the structure of schools, the system of recognizing and rewarding teachers, and the processes for student admissions. Lastly, the influence of politics is evident in the quality of graduates, particularly in how education alumni engage politically, culturally, economically, and socially. However, after the implementation of educational autonomy, as a responsibility for regional autonomy, the handling of education is no longer centralized from the center. Currently, the capacity of regional governments to improve education has become very open, even though each region has obstacles, both in terms of teaching staff and education budget costs (Triningsih, 2017).

3. METHODOLOGY

The research employed a descriptive method that adopts a qualitative approach. This research explained community empowerment in political education for the Indonesian Election 2024. Data collection techniques included the study of literature and observation. Literature study through searching for the Indonesian Election 2024 in textbooks, research, reports, and other documents. The data analysis involved three key components: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Indonesia is a country with a democratic system. The government system is run from the people, by the people, and for the people. Indonesian democracy is reflected in the holding of general elections. One of the functions of elections is as a legitimate means for citizens to maintain or replace peacefully and with dignity their leaders/deputies to run the government and provide opportunities for the best citizens to lead society in realizing shared ideals (Zuhro, 2018).

But in reality, in Indonesia, elections seem to be a natural means of competition to seize or maintain power, and there is a tendency for election participants in Indonesia to use various methods to win. Two key factors shape how voters exercise their voting rights: political awareness and trust in the government. Political awareness refers to a citizen's understanding of their rights and responsibilities. It encompasses an individual's knowledge of the social and political landscape, shaping their interests and engagement with the world around them. On the other hand, trust in the government pertains to how a person evaluates the integrity and reliability of their government. This trust (or lack thereof) can significantly influence a voter's decision-making process. Some researchers divide them into four categories. First, if a citizen has high political awareness, trust in the government, then political participation tends to be active. Second, if political awareness, trust in the government is low, then political participation becomes passive. Third, it is radical militant if political awareness is high, but the trust in the government is very low. Furthermore, if political awareness is very low, but trust in the government is very high, then this participation is called inactive (passive).

Community empowerment regarding political education ahead of elections is important in ensuring active and intelligent participation of the community in the political process. In this case, community empowerment includes an approach that focuses on increasing political knowledge, political awareness, and active involvement in the general election process.

Several efforts to empower the community regarding political education ahead of the election:

- (i) Increasing Political Awareness: Political education aims to increase political awareness, namely, understanding the importance of participation in elections and its impact on their lives.
- (ii) provide objective information: It is important to provide accurate and objective information to the public regarding candidates and political parties competing in elections.
- (iii) Increasing Political Literacy: Political education must also focus on increasing people's political literacy. Political literacy includes an understanding of political structures, electoral systems, voter rights and obligations, and political participation mechanisms.
- (iv) Encourage Political Participation: Community empowerment must also encourage active political participation. This involves inspiring people to exercise their voting rights and engage in political activities. Political education will encourage people to understand that political participation is a means of influencing positive change in society and advancing their interests.
- (v) Encourage Political Ethics: Political education must also emphasize the importance of healthy political ethics. The public must be empowered to develop an understanding of integrity, transparency, and accountability in the political process.

Political education is related to the internalization of values, where individuals learn culture and become part of that culture as an important element in their self-concept. The function of the government and political parties is to provide political education for citizens, which is carried out optimally because good political education will further strengthen the democratic process.

The participation, community empowerment through political education encourages active participation in the election process. People are encouraged to register to vote, take part in political campaigns, attend candidate debates, and involve themselves in public discussions. This helps strengthen democracy by ensuring people's voices are heard and represented. Preventing Identity Politics and Money Politics, political education before the

election also helps people to avoid the trap of identity politics and the influence of money politics. With a good understanding of real political issues, society can make decisions based on the substance of programs and values, not just factors of identity, popularity, subjectivity, likes and dislikes, or attempts at political corruption.

5. CONCLUSION

Community Empowerment in Political Education is very important in the implementation of elections. Political knowledge through political education will make people understand politics. Thus, in the end, it will increase participation in politics. Political education is always related to the internalization of values, where individuals learn something and become part of that. Through political education, it will increasingly support the democratic process.

6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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