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Yth. Bapak Winengan,

Selamat siang,

Terima kasih telah mengirimkan naskah kepada Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, namun kami memiliki ketentuan yang harus dipenuhi. Mohon untuk memperhatikan Panduan Penulisan dan Template Naskah sebelum melakukan revisi naskah.

Demikian informasi ini, atas perhatian dan kerja sama yang baik, kami sampaikan terima kasih.

Salam,

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Local Political Democratiation Policy: Voter Participation in The Direct Regional Head Elections

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Abstract

The regional head election, a local political event and a symbol of democratic government, is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. Since the Indonesian reformation era, the policy regarding the regional head election has shifted from being elected by the local legislative assembly (representative system) to being elected by the people directly (direct election). Anchored in the quantitative descriptive research design, in which the data were garnered from documentation, this study aims to examine the extent to which the people partook in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election in 2015. The collected data were analyzed by means of the participatory and democracy approach within the local political landscape. The empirical findings showed that the public participation in the local election remained low given the statistical evidence 64.02% of the total voters. The study demonstrates that despite the provision of the political stage within the local scope, it does not fully encourage the people to exercise their political rights.

Keywords:

regional head election; democracy; election; participation

Introduction

The Indonesian political choice in using the democratic system for its governmental operation has contributed to the state development both in terms of structure and culture. Regional head election is a local political event and a symbol of Indonesia as a democratic state, as stipulated in the basic law of the Indonesian Republic 1945. Practically speaking, the policy regarding the regional head election mechanism should be based on the political lives, social dynamics, development and progress of the state democracy, and explicit regulations. While the main actors in the elections consist of community, political parties, and candidate contestants (Fenyapwain, 2013, p. 1).

Since Indonesian independence, the election of the regional head is regulated through Law Number 5 Year 1974 regarding the local government. The law posited two functions—as an autonomous local government who led and was fully responsible for the local governance—and a regional government who represented the central government regarding general matters at the regional levels. However, based on the policy, looks that the attitude of the very authoritative center government, because not provide the room for local community to participate in distributing the political rights at the local level.

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However, since the fall of the New Order, which was possible of reform waves in 1998, there has been a significant shift in the regional government system, which generates a new mechanism for carrying out the regional head election. In contrary to the New Order era, during which the local government was decided by the president or minister of home affairs, they no longer have had such an authority since the Reformation era. The amendment of the basic law 1945 brings about significant shifts pertinent to the regional head election system, for instance, the article 18 para (4) basic law 1945, which stipulates that the governor, regent, and mayor, who respectively head the province, regency, and city, are elected democratically.

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The term 'elected democratically' has been actualized in two ways, namely; firstly, the regional head election is done directly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly by each member of the regional legislative assembly (representative system); secondly, the regional head election is done directly by each regional people, without the representative system as elected by the regional legislative assembly with the stipulation that the candidate with 50%+1 voices would be determined as the winner to lead the region for five years.

Until the regional head elections of 2015, the direct participation of every regional people is still an ideal choice in the mechanism of enforcing the political democratic rights of regional peoples. The implementation of the direct and simultaneous election on December 9, 2015, both at the provincial, district and municipal levels, was relatively democratic, safe and peaceful, which reaped a positive appreciation from a number of people, including observers as a democratic experiment which was so admirable and commendable. However, the public participation remained low. The data taken from the general election commission showed that the public participation in the direct and

simultaneous regional head election on the December 9, 2015 was 64.02 percent on average of the total expected voters (Tashandra, 2015).

Even, in some regions, the level of participation was below 50 percent. Other reports also evidenced such a low participation in several cities and regencies, which included Medan city (26.88 percent), Serang regency (50.84 percent), Surabaya (52.18 percent), Jember regency (52.19 percent), Tuban regency (52.25 percent), and Mataram city (56.94 percent). On the other hand, some other regions with relatively high participation were Central Mamuju regency (92.17 percent), South Sorong Regency (89.92 percent), East Bolaang Mangondow (88.83 percent), Tomohon city (88.47 percent), and North Konawe (88.24 percent). Despite the facts above, the general election commission had targeted to boost the public participation in the democratic event to be around 75.5 percent (Tashandra, 2015).

This low participation had come to the fore and remained mostly reported by the mass media in Indonesia. From the 358 media that reported the regional head election in the country, the public participation appeared to be appealing. As a result, issue of voting in the direct regional head elections system getting a lot of attention, because it is not in line with expectations of good local governance and decentralization policies (Erb & Sulitiyanto, 2009). This study looked into the public participation in exercising their political rights regarding the five-year democratic event in the regional level framed under the direct and simultaneous regional head election.

Methods

This descriptive quantitative research design aimed to examine the public participation in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election 2015. With reference to the locus of the data collection, this research belonged to the literature study, in which the data were collected by means of documentation technique as it made use the existing literature resources, such as books, journals, Internet, and relevant previous research findings; therefore, the data in this study were categorized into the secondary data. Subsequently, the data were analyzed through the use of theories relevant to the participatory study of people in the regional political context.

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Results

The Empirical Problems of The Direct Regional Head Election

The regional head election is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. On the other words, the direct regional head election is a political expansion of the people and as a form of people's sovereignty in determining the figure of the regional leaders in accordance with the hopes and aspirations of the people and has strong political legitimacy (Simamora, 2011, p. 229). Drawing on the context of the regional head election in democratic countries, the concept that underpins the public participation has basic ideologies that people have the rights to decide their own leaders, who will later determine the public policy for the sake of social purposes. These democratic nations posit that the people hold the supreme power over the states' sovereignty (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), hence their political participation should be taken into account.

Historically, the first direct election was held in 2005 in Kutai Kertanegara Regency, it turns out from year to year still raises the issue, both issues related to regional readiness in conducting regional head elections, implementation issues schedule, stages and program of regional head election, fulfillment of candidate of regional head and vice regional head and other issues related to execution at field (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126).

While the direct and simultaneous regional head election was held on the 9 December 2015, which were held in 8 provinces, 222 regencies, and 34 cities across Indonesia. However, there remains a rise of fraudulent claim regarding its implementation (Sahdan & Haboddin, 2009, p. 57). Similarly, the general election commission as the legal institution administering the national and regional head election proposes argues the same thing that the results of the first period of the direct and simultaneous regional head election in fact left several problems due to the rejection of the results by lost candidates drawing on 147 number of lawsuits. On the other hand, the primary object of the plaintiff basically centered on the accusation of fraud throughout the election. Such accusations included money politic, the involvement of state civil apparatus, partiality of the election organizer, and the data manipulation pertinent to the election (KPU, 2015, p. 7).

The accused frauds committed by the election organizer were also reinforced by the provision of the data of violation of the code ethics of the election committee in the Board of

General Election Organizer. Since it was established on the June 12, 2012 to March 2013, it has received 90 lawsuits related to violations of the code of ethics with the details of its decision as follows; sanction of dismissal: 5 chiefs of the general election commission and 15 members, 1 chief of election guard committee and 2 members, 5 members of Independent Commission of General Election; firm sanction or warning: 4 members of the general election commission, and 6 members, and 1 member of election guard committee; and written reminding: 1 chief of the general election commission (KPU, 2015, p. 52).

In addition, based on the data collected from the field, the implementation of direct and simultaneous elections in 2015 has caused several problems (Budiman, 2015, p. 2), such as the followings:

Firstly, the selection of the candidates did not go through democratic system as they were fully determined by party officials at the central level (central board). The general election commission would only approve the candidates if they are proposed by chief of the party board. If the candidates did not have any recommendation; the general election commission would reject their candidature, which was against the theory of representation. On the other hand, the regional heads, who were not able to represent their regions, would not be able to provide the best services to the community. Moreover, within several parties was a conflict of stewardship among the members, which confused the public of their political choices.

Secondly, there remained a dynastic system of politics in the direct regional head election although the constitution No. 1 Year 2014 regarding the governor, regent and mayor election has limited the spaces and opportunities for the growth of the political dynasty. Furthermore, the general election commission has stipulated the regulation No. 9 Year 2015, which posits that progressive changes in diminishing the chains of dynastic politic from any angles. However, it changed after the constitutional court issued the stipulation of the election conflict No. 33/PUU-XIII/2015 regarding the election of governors, regents and mayors against the law article No. 28J para (2) basic law 1945. The constitutional court initially indicated that the government had violated the human rights because it denied someone to candidate him or herself to be the regional head or vice of the regional head due to having familial relationship with the current government. Therefore, there remained the dynastic power having controls in various regions given the latest regulation. The growth of

political dynasty did not mean that the public were satisfied with their performance, yet the money politic hampered the transactional politic, which brought about the dilemma about the regional governance.

Thirdly, there appeared the replacement of the two-round systems with the first past the post (FPTP) in determining the winning candidates. The former allowed the candidates to gain public support by means of simple majority (minimum of 30 percent), so it relatively affirmed their legitimacy in the region. On the other hand, the latter limited the public support (legitimacy) because the regional democracy through the regional head election would not run the second round election should there have been a disparity between the winning candidates, and the plaintiffs were small, 2 percent.

Fourth, the constitution No. 8 Year 2015 rejected the political parties which proposed candidates who gained foreign donors for their campaign. The central government, regional government, national state own enterprise and others with fictive identity, yet this law did not forbid the candidates to receive any donors. With this regard, the regulation also obliged the political parties to propose candidates to open special bank accounts for the campaign purposes, yet it did not apply to the individual candidates.

Furthermore, according to the Ministry of home affairs of Indonesia, Tjahjo Kumolo (Lustrilanang, 2017, p. 16), there were some underlying problems arising during the direct and simultaneous regional head elections, which encouraged the anticipation of the following issues throughout the election periods: the availability of unregistered voters; Potential voters with no e-ID card; the lack of optimal role and function of the general election institution; the rise of questions regarding the issue of independency, integrity, and credibility of administering the election; the public participation after the election to become the balance for the state bureaucracy as a result of the election or *elected officials*; the lack of willingness of public in the general election; the provision of the political parties that often presented in the face of the general election; the existence of provinces with their local characteristics; ineffective law enforcement for elections with various problems, both technical and non-technical factors; the emergence of crucial issues, such as racial issues, money politics, campaign funds, abuse of power, bureaucratic political neutrality and mobilization of state civil apparatus that harmed the integrity of elections.

The emergence of various problems in the implementation of local elections directly above, actually has been predicted before by the government, thus inviting the discourse to restore the direct electoral system into the hands of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD), even appeared in the Plenary Session of the House of Representatives (DPR RI) on September 24, 2014, on the grounds that direct elections have political costs high, vulnerable to the emergence of conflict, and does not guarantee the emergence of a good regional head (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126). However, because the development of a democratic political system requires direct community involvement, the direct Regional Head Election is finally maintained, as a manifestation of the repatriation of the "basic rights" of the community in electing its regional leaders (Sundari & Ishak, 2017, p. 1).

The Degree of Voter Participation in The Direct Regional Head Election

The transformation of the regional governance system into a more democratic one as stipulated by the regional autonomy has brought a new hope to the realm of regional politics. In the democratic development perspective within local scope, the approved regional autonomy becomes a promising milestone as it affords wider opportunities for the public to participate in determining their regional governments (Tejo in Karim, 2008, p. i). The existence of the direct election policy is one of the symbols of upholding democracy at the local level. It has created a stage for the community to exercise their political rights, as well as a manifestation of political modernization in the democratic state (Sundari & Ishak, 2015, p. 3).

The direct regional head election is a result of reforming the local government system to a more democratic direction, which aims to give local people the opportunity to determine their regional leaders directly. Direct regional head election, when viewed from the theory, then this direct election has a very strong legitimacy because the elected regional head, directly elected by its constituents. Constituents in this case are given the opportunity to participate in determining the local government. Thus, elected regional heads besides possessing strong legitimacy, are also expected to bring regional heads with an orientation to improve the welfare of their people (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 127).

For this reason, the election of regional government through a representative system by the local legislative assembly has been deemed irrelevant to the demands of emerging

democratic values as it makes the candidates remain unrecognized by the people in the region. The phenomenon of low public participation in the 2015 direct and simultaneous regional head election was caused by several factors (Fachrudin, 2015), as the followings:

Firstly, regulation factor; the law No. 8 year 2015 regarding the regional head election or the regulation of the general election commission No. 7 year 2015 about the electoral campaign of the governor and vice governor, regent, and vice regent, mayor and vice mayor, which limited the rooms for the candidates to socialize as stipulated by the regional head election commission at the municipal, regency, or provincial levels, particularly regarding the installment of banners in public spaces. Such a regulation has lessened the joy of the regional head election, which harmed the public's interest in exercising their political rights.

Secondly, a number of political parties entitled to carry candidates in the local elections were experiencing internal conflicts, and there had been no verdict with permanent legal force. The internal conflicts that occurred within the political party board not only made it difficult for them to process and propose candidates who had a high degree of electability and popularity, but also resulted in voters, especially the constituents become less enthusiastic to support wholeheartedly the candidate couples proposed by the political parties.

Third, the candidates promoted by political parties or those from independent candidates were deemed to lack the electability, thereby reducing public trust on the elections, political institutions and candidates themselves as the instruments capable of making changes and community improvement. As a result, voters became apathetic and remained reluctant to go to the Voting Center.

Fourth, the people were reluctant to go to the voting center due to the absence of their name as the permanent voters, or did not gain invitation letter for the election (known as C6), which was often caused by the negligence of the regional head election commission. However, without the letter of invitation, the people could vote as long as they were registered in the election center.

Another factor that caused the low participation of the public in the direct and simultaneous regional head election, drawing on the result of the Indonesian Survey Institute, was the change of mode of campaign, which was mostly arranged by the general election commission through media, such as banner, posters, and etc (Ambardi, 2015).

Furthermore, according to the Polmark survey institute, the limited amount of time given to socialize to the public also contributed to the lack participation in the regional head election (Akbar, 2015). On the other hand, the general election commission as the administration argued that the lack participation of the public in the 2015 regional head election was caused by the lack role of the candidates to ensure the people's awareness to exercise their political rights, which happened because the promoting team did not work.

Discussion

Dynamics of The Direct Regional Head Election Policy

The election of regional heads (Pilkada) is a contest for the legitimacy of power held by a person in order to lead the way in the process of governance and regional development. In other words, that Pilkada is a mechanism of selection and delegation of authority to someone who has the legitimacy to fill the positions of local government leadership (Surbakti, 1992, p. 181).

In the context of the election of regional heads, in countries that embrace democratic ideals, the idea of people's participation has an ideological basis that the people have the right to decide who will be the future leader and in determining public policy for his welfare. Countries that adopt a democratic system mean a state that views the existence of its citizens as the owner of sovereignty in the country (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), so that its political participation cannot be ignored.

The election of regional heads has been an important issue since independence, and has become one of the main characters in the provincial and district governance system of Indonesia (Mboi, in Earb & Sulistiyanto, 2009). However, the provision of the constitution No. 32 Year 2004 adding perfection to law No. 22 Year 1999 about the regional government has impacted on the reform of the mechanism for the regional head election per se, which aimed to generate a better, more effective and efficient election procedure in accordance with the dynamics of political life and the development of democracy in Indonesia, where all regional heads were elected directly by the people of each region (Nugraha 2016, p. 73).

Direct regional head election is a manifestation of political autonomy due to the decentralization policy of local governance. It is an important means of enforcing democratic values at the local level to enable people to partake in choosing their leaders who will control

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and lead the regional development policies to a better direction (Sari, 2016, p. 87). In addition, it is a means of manifesting the sovereignty of the people (Simamora, 2011, p. 229), in order to get local government elected in a democratic way in accordance with the 1945 Basic Constitution of the State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Unfortunately, the local democratic process of local politics through direct local elections in Indonesia demonstrates a negative practice, largely due to the politics of money, and dominated by local elites (Aspinall, 2010), so that although Indonesia is considered successful in building its democracy, but in terms of quality is still relatively low, the result of a political business conspiracy or hijacked interest groups and ignored the real purpose of fighting for the decentralization of local politics (Hadiz, 2004). In addition, the decentralization policy that gave birth to local direct election systems has weakened accountability in the regions (Sjahrir et. al, 2014). The direct mechanism of local elections with the aim of strengthening the democratic accountability of local governments is ineffective. This, among others, is seen from the indication of corruption that has not decreased significantly, but it is decentralized and disorganized (Hill, 2012), because many birth corrupters at the local level (Rumesten, 2014).

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They remained skeptical of the regional head candidates for the coming five years due to the fact that many regional governments in Indonesia misused their rights and were allegedly caught in corruption (Sjahrir et. al, 2014). In addition to that, the people also assumed that there would be no betterment at the regional levels through the regional head election. Hence, either participating or not in the regional head election did not have any effects on the betterment of the region. This was legitimized by the fact that during the regional head election were found a number of money politics, which was reasonable that a myriad of local governments were alleged corruption as they needed to return their expenses during the election (Sari, 2016, p. 87).

However, there appears to be a big consequence because it generates big political campaign, which requires much funding from both the national and local budget (Sari, 2016, p. 87). The average expense for the mayor and regent elections is twenty five billions, and five hundred billions for the governor election. Within five years, there has been thirty billions of state funding used for the regional head election. Meanwhile, on the other hand, the participation of voters in the local direct election system is also likely to decline.

However, with the change of direct local elections system is simultaneously considered to cut half of the budget (Budiman, 2015, p. 13).

The existence of various problems that occur in the direct election of regional heads, should not be used as a basis to say that local democratization policies or local political autonomy is not suitable for Indonesia. Local political policy must be maintained, as it can be a means of political education, deliberation, and realizing accountable local government for regional progress. In addition, according to Putnam et al. (1994), the direct election of regional heads can be a means of democratic participation of the community to demonstrate commitment, trust and cooperation in forming a civic community to build regional development performance. This idea also refers to the views of John Stuart Mill and proponents of participatory democracy at the local level, that opening taps for community involvement will support the creation of good governance and support for the achievement of social welfare (Suyatno, 2016).

Admittedly, the policy of local political decentralization in Indonesia has not shown significant and significant results in better local governance, but rather on budget wastage (Hill, 2012). However, for the sake of political empowerment of the people, this policy of local political democracy must remain guarded, because this political democracy is a system of government in which those who have authority to make decisions (that have the force of law) acquire and retain this authority either directly or indirectly as the result of winning free election in which the great majority of adult citizens are allowed to participate (Burns, in Saifudin, 2009: 13)

The practice of local political democracy, which places the participation of society as its essence, as in the direct elections of regional heads in Indonesia, according to Habermas (Hardiman, 1993, p. 76), is an ideal form of common life that must be fought for. Although the ideal situation cannot be fully achieved, the most important thing is the principle of handling to achieve the "ideal state" is continuously enhanced and rejects all kinds of obstacles, either the barrier of freedom of voice of opinion or the avoidance of isolation of groups social.

Starting from some views about ideally democracy in the system of governance, both central and local, then although direct elections are still facing problems (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126) and voter participation is still low (Sundari & Ishak, 2017, p. 5), it should not be an

excuse to return the election mechanism to the representative system, sick, there are other activities, again outside the city), jobs (working and not getting permission), administration (moving, not having identity card/KTP, and not getting invitations), socialization (not knowing candidates, not knowing, and confused), and political (do not believe in candidates and saturated) (Arianto, 2011, p. 56-59).

As for addressing various problems in direct election of regional heads, there is no other way, unless all regional elements (government, private, and civil society) participate in totality, both with their knowledge, attitude and actions that must be directed to maintain and run the stage the local democracy is in accordance with the established rules of the game. Not participating falsely, that participation is born because there is a certainty or paid by certain parties.

Measure The Degree Lower of Voter Participation in Direct Regional Head Election

The reform of the system of local government administration towards a more democratic direction that carried the policy of regional autonomy has issued new hope in local political life. In the perspective of democratic development at the local level, the enactment of this regional autonomy policy is certainly a good sign, since the involvement of the community in the local political arena is increasingly wide open (Karim, 2008, p. i). The opening of the public political participation taps is a form of the care of democratic values at the local level as well as the objectives of the decentralization policy (Muluk, 2009).

Political participation is the core of democracy, so it is one of the logical implications of a democratic system adopted by a state, because according to Huntington and Nelson (1977, p. 3), political participation will not occur if a country's political life is not built on democracy. Even political participation is at the heart of democracy. Democracy cannot be imagined without the ability of citizens to participate freely in the state process. In the view of Herbet McClosky (in Budiardjo 1981, p. 1), political participation is a voluntary activity of citizens to take part in the electoral process of the ruler and the process of forming general policies, both directly and indirectly. However, according to Rush & Althoff (2007, p. 122), voter voting in the general election is considered to be the least active form of active political participation, since it requires a minimum involvement, which will cease if the vote has been implemented.

In Indonesia, to facilitate the political participation of local communities through this voting action, the government issued a policy of local political democratization in the form of direct regional head elections by each community based on Law No. 32 Year 2004 on local government (Hidayat in Erb & Sulistiyanto, 2009). Unfortunately, the local political democracy facilities are not well utilized by local communities. This is evident from the low level of voter participation in channeling their voting rights in the direct elections of regional heads held in various regions from 2005 to 2015 (Tashandra, 2015).

There are still many apathetic local people in the smallest active political participation (Rush & Althoff, 2007, p. 122), or the low participation of the public in the 2015 election at the regional levels indicated the failure of carrying out the five-year democratic tradition given the low and high participation of the public as one of the indicators of the success of the administration of such a regional head election (*voter turn out*) (Fachrudin, 2015). In addition, it also indicated the lack awareness of the public regarding the political life, which impacted on the lack of public's interest in promoting the democracy in their regions, as according to Huntington and Nelson (1977, p. 3) who argued that the high participation of the public indicates that they were aware of and having the democratic lives in their state.

Based on empirical data, the low voter participation in direct regional head elections in various regions in Indonesia, which can only reach an average of 64.02 percent (Tshandra, 2015), is at least caused by three factors:

First, the mistrust of voters against candidates for regional heads, that will be able to apply the mandate and ability to carry out the task of regional leadership. This attitude is triggered by the many corruption cases that hit regional heads in Indonesia, and most of them are from politicians, not professionals. These voter typologies tend to think rationally and have higher levels of education. The mistrust of the voters in transforming and bettering their lives, in the context of direct election, the primary reason for the public not to fully participate in exercising their voting rights (Laurian, 2004).

Second, pragmatic, that is, voters feel they do not get any benefit or benefit from the election of the regional head. The election of regional heads is considered to benefit only political elites who expect certain positions in local government. The typology of this voter generally comes from the lower economic community with low education level. They will choose if given material rewards, so often the target of money politics team of candidates for

regional head. The low voter participation is not because it is unconscious and does not consider political participation important, but because they feel no real benefit will be obtained for themselves (Mao, 2010). The people participation was driven by the economic interest (Agus, 2016).

Third, the disinterest of voters against candidates who advanced as contestants of local elections. This may be because among the candidates, it is considered that no one represents his identity, whether tribal, religious, ethnic, professional, group, and others. This typology tends to be traditional and militant. In fact, according to Pratikno (Erb & Sulistiyanto, 2009), the low level of active participation of the community in the direct election of regional heads in Indonesia is a manifestation of the traditional ways or attitudes of grassroots communities in protesting the political system, the sense of aversion, pessimism, areas dominated by the elite.

The low level of voter participation in the direct election of regional heads in various regions of Indonesia, as well has nothing to do with the influence of ethnicity factors and low levels of education (Curvale, 2013), residential areas, ie between cities and villages (Mao, 2010), and communication and information issues (Mikkelsen, 2011, p. 57). This reasoning is based on the empirical fact of the recapitulation of the number of voters in the direct election of regional heads by 2015, where the number of electors to the mayors, the urban voters, whose education tends to be higher, and the **bupati**, whose voters are from rural communities, education is lower, does not indicate any significant gaps. Whereas in the case of communication and information, there is no reason for the local community not to know the existence of the election of the regional head, because the various elements involved in the direct election of regional heads, looks very active in disseminating information, either through the media or directly.

The low participation in the regional head election was surely not equivalent to the development of democratic values in the regional system, because democracy was regarded as an ideal system of governance of certain states due to the involvement of the people as the ones who held the supreme sovereignty (Gaffar, 1992, p. 106). Additionally, the implementation of democracy as an ideal concept in the governance of certain state with the supreme sovereignty under the people (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), would afford the opportunities to realize the followings: Effective participation: people have the wider chance

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to improve their political participation; Equality in voting: people have equal rights to speak out their opinions without any legal threats regarding the political matters; Gaining enlightened understanding: people have the rights to gain pure understanding from alternative resources of information; Exercising final control over the agenda: People have the opportunity to constitutionally control the government agenda regarding the policies; and Inclusion of adult: adults have the rights to elect in the executive elections (Dahl, 1998, p. 38).

The emergence of the factors above reaffirmed what had been stated by Slamet (2001, p. 43), that the public participation as the voters would not be realized unless the following supporting factors were fulfilled; the chance availability, which is the situation in which the people are aware of their participation opportunity, the provision of willingness, which is something that encourages the interest and attitude of the people to participate, such as the benefit of their participation, and the provision of wants, which is the awareness or belief on themselves that they have the ability to partake, either in the form of thoughts, power, time, facilities, and other materials.

The democratic concept that placed the public participation at its own right was an ideal life of collectiveness, which should be upheld. According to Habermas (as cited in Hardiman, 1993, p. 76), democracy was an ideal life of collectiveness. The people participating in the political sphere, such as in the direct election, was regarded to have the positive values because it made the democracy become more valuable, and influenced the government to be more responsive and affirmative to the establishment of the civilian responsibility.

The extent to which people partook in the election did not occur by itself, rather by the availability of the information and technology, supporting institutions, structures and social stratification, local culture and politics. In addition, Paige (in Saifudin, 2009, p. 19) opines that there has been causal correlation between the political awareness and public participation as voters, namely: if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are high, the public participation tends to be active; if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, the public participation tends to be pressured (apathetic); if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, people will be militant and radical; and If

the political awareness of the people is low, yet the beliefs on the government are high, people participation tends to be passive.

To establish high quality democracy and boost public participation in the regional head election, it required an attempt to make the people aware or to train them about participation not just as a right, but as an obligation of the whole society by involving multiple elements, such as educational institutions, communication media, and executives (Shehu et al., 2013). This negated the result of analysis that poverty and low education were not the barriers for the people to participate in exercising their political rights (Thananithichot, 2012), even ethnicity was not the determining factor for the political participation (Curvale et al., 2013). The public awareness was very much influenced by their motivation (Laurian, 2004).

Finally, low voter participation in the context of local direct election in Indonesia should be seen as a process of democratic maturation at the local level. If expecting an increase in voter participation, the direct elections should appear more attractive to voters, so that the public does not assume that there is no correlation between the electoral process and the performance of the regional head that the community can enjoy directly (Muhammad, 2015). In addition, improving the quality of political parties, improving the economic, and educational politic conditions of the people is a factor that should be given attention, because it has an influence on increasing the political participation of the community (Arwiyah, 2012, p. 86-90).

Conclusion

Drawing on the perspective of decentralization policy, the direct election is a meaningful breakthrough towards the process of democratic consolidation at the regional level. It will afford a wider opportunity for the people to partake in the democratic process for determining their political leadership in the regional scope. This system also allows the people to better actualize their political rights without being reduced by political elites. The direct election also generates the emergence of aspiring, competent, legitimized, and dedicated figure. This is certainly because the elected regional government will be more oriented to the people than to several political elites being his partners in the regional legislative assembly.

In addition to evidence the provision of the public sovereignty, the direct election provides a strong legitimacy for the local government to head and manage the life of the people in the region through issued policies. For this reason, the local government will be closer to the people and be more responsive to various problems and public interests. However, despite the availability of upholding the values of political democracy at the local level, the people do not fully make use such an opportunity to deliver their political sovereignty. The provision of reform in the management system of the political operation, low integrity and quality of the candidates on the public eyes, **miss administration** in determining voters, and the lack of socialization and mobilization of the voters to exercise their political rights remain the empirical problems that discourage the people to partake in the direct regional head election.

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Local Political Democratiation Policy: Voter Participation in The Direct Regional Head Elections

Abstract

Regional head election, a local political event and a symbol of democratic government, is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. Since the Indonesian reformation era, the policy regarding the regional head election has shifted from being elected by the local legislative assembly (representative system) to being elected by the people directly (direct election). Anchored in the quantitative descriptive research design, in which the data were garnered from documentation, this study aims to examine the extent to which the people partook in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election in 2015. The collected data were analyzed by means of the participatory and democracy approach within the local political landscape. The empirical findings showed that the public participation in the local election remained low given the statistical evidence 64.02% of the total voters. The study demonstrates that despite the provision of the political stage within the local scope, it does not fully encourage the people to exercise their political rights.

Keywords: Regional Head Election, Democracy, Election, Participation

Introduction

The Indonesian political choice to using the democratic system for its governmental operation has contributed to the state development both in terms of structure and culture. Regional head election is a local political event and a symbol of Indonesia as a democratic state, as stipulated in the the basic law of the Indonesian Republic 1945. Practically speaking, the policy regarding the regional head election mechanism should be based on the political lives, social dynamics, development and progress of the state democracy, and explicit regulations. While the main actors in the elections consist of community, political parties, and candidate contestants (Fenyapwain, 2013: 1).

Since Indonesian independence, the election of regional head is regulated through Law Number 5 Year 1974 regarding the local government. The law posited two functions—as an autonomous local government who led and was fully responsible for the local governance—and a regional government who represented the central government regarding general

matters at the regional levels. However, based on the policy, looks that the attitude of the very authoritative center government, because not provide the room for local community to participate in distributing the political rights at the local level.

However, since the fall of the New Orde, which was possible of reform waves in 1998, there has been a significant shift in the regional government system, which generates a new mechanism for carrying out the regional head election. In contrary to the New Order era, during which the local government was decided by the president or minister of home affairs, they no longer have had such an authority since the reformation era. The amendment of the basic law 1945 brings about significant shifts pertinent to the regional head election system, for instance, the article 18 para (4) basic law 1945, which stipulates that the governor, regent, and mayor, who respectively head the province, regency, and city, are elected democratically.

The term 'elected democratically' has been actualized in two ways, namely; firstly, the regional head election is done directly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly by each member of the regional legislative assembly (representative system); secondly, the regional head election is done directly by each regional people, without the representative system as elected by the regional legislative assembly with the stipulation that the candidate with 50%+1 voices would be determined as the winner to lead the region for five years.

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Until the regional head elections of 2015, the direct participation of every regional people is still an ideal choice in the mechanism of enforcing the political democratic rights of regional peoples. The implementation of the direct and simultaneous election on December 9, 2015, both at the provincial, district and municipal levels, was relatively democratic, safe and peaceful, which reaped a positive appreciation from a number of people, including observers as a democratic experiment which was so admirable and commendable. However, the public participation remained low. The data taken from the general election commission showed that the public participation in the direct and simultaneous regional head election on the December 9, 2015 was 64.02% on average of the total expected voters (Tshandra, 29 Desember 2015).

Even, in some regions, the level of participation was below 50%. Other reports also evidenced such a low participation in several cities and regencies, which included Medan city (26.88%), Serang regency (50.84%), Surabaya (52.18%), Jember regency (52.19%), Tuban

regency (52.25%), and Mataram city (56.94%). On the other hand, some other regions with relatively high participation were Central Mamuju regency (92.17%), South Sorong Regency (89.92%), East Bolaang Mangondow (88.83%), Tomohon city (88.47%), and North Konawe (88.24%). Despite the facts above, the general election commission had targeted to boost the public participation in the democratic event to be around 75.5% (Tshandra, 29 Desember 2015).

This low participation had come to the fore and remained mostly reported by the mass media in Indonesia. From the 358 media that reported the regional head election in the country, the public participation appeared to be appealing. As a result, issue of voting in the direct regional head elections system getting a lot of attention, because it is not in line with expectations of good local governance and decentralization policies (Erb and Sulitiyanto, 2009). This study looked into the public participation in exercising their political rights regarding the five-year democratic event in the regional level framed under the direct and simultaneous regional head election.

Methods

This descriptive quantitative research design aimed to examine the public participation in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election 2015. With reference to the locus of the data collection, this research belonged to the literature study, in which the data were collected by means of documentation technique as it made use the existing literature resources, such as books, journals, Internet, and relevant previous research findings; therefore, the data in this study were categorized into the secondary data. Subsequently, the data were analyzed through the use of theories relevant to the participatory study of people in the regional political context.

Results

The Empirical Problems of The Direct Regional Head Election

Regional head election is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. On the other words, the direct regional head election is a political expansion of the people and as a form of people's sovereignty in determining the figure of the regional leaders in accordance with the hopes and aspirations of the people and has strong political

legitimacy (Simamora, 2011: 229). Drawing on the context of the regional head election in democratic countries, the concept that underpins the the public participation has basic ideologies that people have the rights to decide their own leaders, who will latter determine the public policy for the sake of social purposes. These democratic nations posit that the people hold the supreme power over the states' sovereignty (Mudjiyanto, 2012: 1), hence their political participation should be taken into account.

Historically, the first direct election was held in 2005 in Kutai Kertanegara regency, it turns out from year to year still raises the issue, both issues related to regional readiness in conducting regional head elections, implementation issues schedule, stages and program of regional head election, fulfillment of candidate of regional head and vice regional head and other issues related to execution at field (Nuryanti, 2015: 126).

While the direct and simultaneous regional head election was held on the 9 Descember 2015, which were held in 8 provinces, 222 regencies, and 34 cities across Indonesia. However, there remains a rise of fraudulent claim regarding its implementation (Sahdan dan Haboddin, 2009: 57). Similarly, the general election commission as the legal institution admistering the national and regional head election proposes argues the same thing that the results of the first period of the direct and simulataneous regional head election in fact left several problems due to the rejection of the results by lost condidates drawing on 147 number of lawsuits. On the other hand, the primary object of the plaintiff basically centered on the accusation of fraud throughout the election. Such accusations included money politic, the involvement of state civil apparatus, partiality of the election organizer, and the data manipulation pertinent to the election (KPU, 2015: 7).

The accused frauds committed by the election organizer were also reinforced by the provision of the data of violation of the code ethics of the election committee in the Board of General Election Organizer. Since it was established on the June 12, 2012 to March 2013, it has received 90 lawsuits related to violations of the code of ethics with the details of its decision as follows; sanction of dismissal: 5 chiefs of the general election commission and 15 members, 1 chief of election guard committee and 2 members, 5 members of Independent Commission of General Election; firm sanction or warning: 4 members of the general election commission, and 6 members, and 1 member of election guard committee; and written reminding: 1 chief of the general election commission (KPU, 2015: 52).

In addition, based on the data collected from the field, the implementation of direct and simultaneous elections in 2015 has caused several problems (Budiman, 2015: 2), such as the followings:

Firstly, the selection of the candidates did not go through democratic system as they were fully determined by party officials at the central level (central board). The general election commission would only approve the candidates if they are proposed by chief of the party board. If the candidates did not have any recommendation; the general election commission would reject their candidature, which was against the theory of representation. On the other hand, the regional heads, who were not able to represent their regions, would not be able to provide the best services to the community. Moreover, within several parties was a conflict of stewardship among the members, which confused the public of their political choices.

Secondly, there remained a dynastic system of politics in the direct regional head election although the constitution no. 1 year 2014 regarding the gubernatorial, regent and mayor election has limited the spaces and opportunities for the growth of the political dynasty. Furthermore, the general election commission has stipulated the regulation no. 9 year 2015, which posits that progressive changes in diminishing the chains of dynastic politics from any angles. However, it changed after the constitutional court issued the stipulation of the election conflict No.33/ PUU-XIII/2015 regarding the election of governors, regents and mayors against the law article no 28J para (2) basic law 1945. The constitutional court initially indicated that the government had violated the human rights because it denied someone to candidate him or herself to be the regional head or vice of the regional head due to having familial relationship with the current government. Therefore, there remained the dynastic power having controls in various regions given the latest regulation. The growth of political dynasty did not mean that the public were satisfied with their performance, yet the money politics hampered the transactional politics, which brought about the dilemma about the regional governance.

Thirdly, there appeared the replacement of the two round systems with the first past the post (FPTP) in determining the winning candidates. The former allowed the candidates to gain public support by means of simple majority (minimum of 30 percent), so it relatively affirmed their legitimacy in the region. On the other hand, the latter limited the public

support (legitimacy) because the regional democracy through the regional head election would not run the second round election should there have been a disparity between the winning candidates, and the plaintiffs were small, 2 percent.

Fourth, the constitution No. 8 year 2015 rejected the political parties which proposed candidates who gained foreign donors for their campaign. The central government, regional government, national state own enterprise and others with fictive identity, yet this law did not forbid the candidates to receive any donors. With this regard, the regulation also obliged the political parties to propose candidates to open special bank accounts for the campaign purposes, yet it did not apply to the individual candidates.

Furthermore, according to the Ministry of home affairs of Indonesia, Tjahjo Kumolo (Lustrilanang, 2017: 16), there were some underlying problems arising during the direct and simultaneous regional head elections, which encouraged the anticipation of the following issues throughout the election periods: The availability of unregistered voters; Potential voters with no e-ID card; The lack of optimal role and function of the general election institution; The rise of questions regarding the issue of independency, integrity, and credibility of administering the election; The public participation after the election to become the balance for the state bureaucracy as a result of the election or *elected officials*; The lack of willingness of public in the general election; The provision of the political parties that often presented in the face of the general election; The existence of provinces with their local characteristics; Ineffective law enforcement for elections with various problems, both technical and non-technical factors; The emergence of crucial issues, such as racial issues, money politics, campaign funds, abuse of power, bureaucratic political neutrality and mobilization of state civil apparatus that harmed the integrity of elections.

The emergence of various problems in the implementation of local elections directly above, actually has been predicted before by the government, thus inviting the discourse to restore the direct electoral system into the hands of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD), even appeared in the Plenary Session of the House of Representatives (DPR RI) on September 24, 2014, on the grounds that direct elections have political costs high, vulnerable to the emergence of conflict, and does not guarantee the emergence of a good regional head (Nuryanti, 2015: 126). However, because the development of a democratic political system requires direct community involvement, the direct Regional Head Election

is finally maintained, as a manifestation of the repatriation of the "basic rights" of the community in electing its regional leaders (Sundari dan Ishak, 2017: 1).

The Degree of Voter Participation in The Direct Regional Head Election

The transformation of the regional governance system into a more democratic one as stipulated by the regional autonomy has brought a new hope to the realm of regional politics. In the democratic development perspective within local scope, the approved regional autonomy becomes a promising milestone as it affords wider opportunities for the public to participate in determining their own regional governments (Tejo in Karim, 2008: i). The existence of the direct election policy is one of the symbols of upholding democracy at the local level. It has created a stage for the community to exercise their political rights, as well as a manifestation of political modernization in the democratic state (Sundari and Ishak, 2015: 3).

The direct regional head election is a result of reforming the local government system to a more democratic direction, which aims to give local people the opportunity to directly determine their regional leaders. Direct regional head election, when viewed from the theory, then this direct election has a very strong legitimacy because the elected regional head, directly elected by its constituents. Constituents in this case are given the opportunity to participate in determining the local government. Thus, elected regional heads besides possessing strong legitimacy, are also expected to bring regional heads with an orientation to improve the welfare of their people (Nuryanti, 2015: 127).

For this reason, the election of regional government through a representative system by the local legislative assembly has been deemed irrelevant to the demands of emerging democratic values as it makes the candidates remain unrecognized by the people in the region. The phenomenon of low public participation in the 2015 direct and simultaneous regional head election was caused by several factors (Fachrudin, 14 December, 2015), as the followings:

Firstly, regulation factor; the law No. 8 year 2015 regarding the regional head election or the regulation of the general election commission No. 7 year 2015 about the electoral campaign of the governor and vice governor, regent, and vice regent, mayor and vice mayor, which limited the rooms for the candidates to socialize as stipulated by the regional head

election commission at the municipal, regency, or provincial levels, particularly regarding the installment of banners in public spaces. Such a regulation has lessened the joy of the regional head election, which harmed the public's interest in exercising their political rights.

Secondly, a number of political parties entitled to carry candidates in the local elections were experiencing internal conflicts, and there had been no verdict with permanent legal force. The internal conflicts that occurred within the political party board not only made it difficult for them to process and propose candidates who had a high degree of electability and popularity, but also resulted in voters, especially the constituents become less enthusiastic to support wholeheartedly the candidate couples proposed by the political parties.

Third, the candidates promoted by political parties or those from independent candidates were deemed to lack the electability, thereby reducing public trust on the elections, political institutions and candidates themselves as the instruments capable of making changes and community improvement. As a result, voters became apathetic and remained reluctant to go to the Voting Center.

Fourth, the people were reluctant to go to the voting center due to the absence of their name as the permanent voters, or did not gain invitation letter for the election (known as C6), which was often caused by the negligence of the regional head election commission. However, without the letter of invitation, the people could vote as long as they were registered in the election center.

Another factor that caused the low participation of the public in the direct and simultaneous regional head election, drawing on the result of the Indonesian Survey Institute, was the change of mode of campaign, which was mostly arranged by the general election commission through media, such as banner, posters, and etc (Embardi, 11 December, 2015). Furthermore, according to the Polmark survey institute, the limited amount of time given to socialize to the public also contributed to the lack participation in the regional head election (Akbar, 11 December, 2015). On the other hand, the general election commission as the administrator argued that the lack participation of the public in the 2015 regional head election was caused by the lack role of the candidates to ensure the people's awareness to exercise their political rights, which happened because the promoting team did not work.

Discussion

Dynamics of The Direct Regional Head Election Policy

The election of regional heads (Pilkada) is a contest for the legitimacy of power held by a person in order to lead the way in the process of governance and regional development. In other words, that Pilkada is a mechanism of selection and delegation of authority to someone who has the legitimacy to fill the positions of local government leadership (Surbakti, 1992: 181).

In the context of the election of regional heads, in countries that embrace democratic ideals, the idea of people's participation has an ideological basis that the people have the right to decide who will be the future leader and in determining public policy for his welfare. Countries that adopt a democratic system mean a state that views the existence of its citizens as the owner of sovereignty in the country (Mudjiyanto, 2012: 1), so that its political participation can not be ignored.

The election of regional heads has been an important issue since independence, and has become one of the main characters in the provincial and district governance system of Indonesia (Mboi, in Earb and Sulistiyanto, 2009). However, the provision of the constitution no. 32 year 2004 adding perfection to law No. 22 year 1999 about the regional government has impacted on the reform of the mechanism for the regional head election per se, which aimed to generate a better, more effective and efficient election procedure in accordance with the dynamics of political life and the development of democracy in Indonesia, where all regional heads were elected directly by the people of each region (Nugraha 2016: 73).

Direct regional head election is a manifestation of political autonomy due to the decentralization policy of local governance. It is an important means of enforcing democratic values at the local level to enable people to partake in choosing their leaders who will control and lead the regional development policies to a better direction (Sari, 2016: 87). In addition, it is a means of manifesting the sovereignty of the people (Simamora, 2011: 229), in order to get local government elected in a democratic way in accordance with the 1945 Basic Constitution of the State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Unfortunately, the local democratic process of local politics through direct local elections in Indonesia demonstrates a negative practice, largely due to the politics of money, and dominated by local elites (Aspinall, 2010), so that although Indonesia is considered

successful in building its democracy, but in terms of quality is still relatively low, the result of a political business conspiracy or hijacked interest groups and ignored the real purpose of fighting for the decentralization of local politics (Hadiz, 2004). In addition, the decentralization policy that gave birth to local direct election systems has weakened accountability in the regions (Schulze et.al, 2014). The direct mechanism of local elections with the aim of strengthening the democratic accountability of local governments is ineffective. This, among others, is seen from the indication of corruption that has not decreased significantly, but it is decentralized and disorganized (Hill 2012), because many birth corrupters at the local level (Rumesten, 2014).

They remained sceptical of the regional head candidates for the coming five years due to the fact that many regional governments in Indonesia misused their rights and were allegedly caught in corruption (Schulze, et.all, 2014). In addition to that, the people also assumed that there would be no betterment at the regional levels through the regional head election. Hence, either participating or not in the regional head election did not have any effects on the betterment of the region. This was legitimized by the fact that during the regional head election were found a number of money politics, which was reasonable that a myriad of local governments were alleged corruption as they needed to return their expenses during the election (Sari, 2016: 87).

However, there appears to be a big consequence because it generates big political campaign, which requires much funding from both the national and local budget (Sari, 2016: 87). The average expense for the mayor and regent elections is twenty five billions, and five hundred billions for the gubernatorial election. Within five years, there has been thirty billions of state funding used for the regional head election. Meanwhile, on the other hand, the participation of voters in the local direct election system is also likely to decline. However, with the change of direct local elections system is simultaneously considered to cut half of the budget (Budiman, 2015: 13).

The existence of various problems that occur in the direct election of regional heads, should not be used as a basis to say that local democratization policies or local political autonomy is not suitable for Indonesia. Local political policy must be maintained, as it can be a means of political education, deliberation, and realizing accountable local government for regional progress. In addition, according to Putnam (1994), the direct election of regional

heads can be a means of democratic participation of the community to demonstrate commitment, trust and cooperation in forming a civic community to build regional development performance. This idea also refers to the views of John Stuart Mill and proponents of participatory democracy at the local level, that opening taps for community involvement will support the creation of good governance and support for the achievement of social welfare (Suyatno, 2016).

Admittedly, the policy of local political decentralization in Indonesia has not shown significant and significant results in better local governance, but rather on budget wastage (Hill, 2012). However, for the sake of political empowerment of the people, this policy of local political democracy must remain guarded, because this political democracy is a system of government in which those who have authority to make decisions (that have the force of law) acquire and retain this authority either directly or indirectly as the result of winning free election in which the great majority of adult citizens are allowed to participate (Burns, in Saifudin, 2009: 13)

The practice of local political democracy, which places the participation of society as its essence, as in the direct elections of regional heads in Indonesia, according to Hubermas (Hardiman 1993: 76), is an ideal form of common life that must be fought for. Although the ideal situation can not be fully achieved, the most important thing is the principle of handling to achieve the "ideal state" is continuously enhanced and rejects all kinds of obstacles, either the barrier of freedom of voice of opinion or the avoidance of isolation of groups social.

Starting from some views about ideally democracy in the system of governance, both central and local, then although direct elections are still facing problems (Nuryanti, 2015: 126) and voter participation is still low (Sundari and Ishak, 2017: 5), it should not be an excuse to return the election mechanism to the representative system, sick, there are other activities, again outside the city), jobs (working and not getting permission), administration (moving, not having identity card/KTP, and not getting invitations), socialization (not knowing candidates, not knowing, and confused), and political (do not believe in candidates and saturated) (Arianto, 2011: 56-59).

As for addressing various problems in direct election of regional heads, there is no other way, unless all regional elements (government, private, and civil society) participate in totality, both with their knowledge, attitude and actions that must be directed to maintain

and run the stage the local democracy is in accordance with the established rules of the game. Not participating falsely, that participation is born because there is a certainty or paid by certain parties.

Maesure The Degree Lower of Voter Participation in Direct Regional Head Election

The reform of the system of local government administration towards a more democratic direction that carried the policy of regional autonomy has issued new hope in local political life. In the perspective of democratic development at the local level, the enactment of this regional autonomy policy is certainly a good sign, since the involvement of the community in the local political arena is increasingly wide open (Karim, 2008: i). The opening of the public political participation taps is a form of the care of democratic values at the local level as well as the objectives of the decentralization policy (Muluk, 2009).

Political participation is the core of democracy, so it is one of the logical implications of a democratic system adopted by a state, because according to Huntington and Nelson (1977: 3), political participation will not occur if a country's political life is not built on democracy. Even political participation is at the heart of democracy. Democracy can not be imagined without the ability of citizens to participate freely in the state process. In the view of Herbet McClosky (in Budiardjo 1981: 1), political participation is a voluntary activity of citizens to take part in the electoral process of the ruler and the process of forming general policies, both directly and indirectly. However, according to Rush and Althoff (2007: 122), voter voting in the general election is considered to be the least active form of active political participation, since it requires a minimum involvement, which will cease if the vote has been implemented.

In Indonesia, to facilitate the political participation of local communities through this voting action, the government issued a policy of local political democratization in the form of direct regional head elections by each community based on Law no. 32 of 2004 on local government (Hidayat in Erb and Sulistiyanto, 2009). Unfortunately, the local political democracy facilities are not well utilized by local communities. This is evident from the low level of voter participation in channeling their voting rights in the direct elections of regional heads held in various regions from 2005 to 2015 (Tshandra, December 29, 2015).

There are still many apathetic local people in the smallest active political participation (Rush and Althoff, 2007: 122), or the low participation of the public in the 2015 election at the

regional levels indicated the failure of carrying out the five-year democratic tradition given the low and high participation of the public as one of the indicators of the success of the administration of such a regional head election (*voter turn out*) (Fachrudin, 14 Desember 2015). In addition, it also indicated the lack awareness of the public regarding the political life, which impacted on the lack of public's interest in promoting the democracy in their regions, as according to Huntington and Nelson (1977: 3) who argued that the high participation of the public indicates that they were aware of and having the democratic lives in their state.

Based on empirical data, the low voter participation in direct regional head elections in various regions in Indonesia, which can only reach an average of 64.02% (Tshandra, December 29, 2015), is at least caused by three factors:

First, the mistrust of voters against candidates for regional heads, that will be able to apply the mandate and able to carry out the task of regional leadership. This attitude is triggered by the many corruption cases that hit regional heads in Indonesia, and most of them are from politicians, not professionals. These voter typologies tend to think rationally and have higher levels of education. The mistrust of the voters in transforming and bettering their lives, in the context of direct election, the primary reason for the public not to fully participate in exercising their voting rights (Laurian, 2004).

Second, pragmatic, that is, voters feel they do not get any benefit or benefit from the election of the regional head. The election of regional heads is considered to benefit only political elites who expect certain positions in local government. The typology of this voter generally comes from the lower economic community with low education level. They will choose if given material rewards, so often the target of money politics team of candidates for regional head. The low voter participation is not because it is unconscious and does not consider political participation important, but because they feel no real benefit will be obtained for themselves (Mao, 2010). The people participation was driven by the economic interest (Agus, 2016).

Third, the disinterest of voters against candidates who advanced as contestants of local elections. This may be because among the candidates, it is considered that no one represents his identity, whether tribal, religious, ethnic, professional, group, and others. This typology tends to be traditional and militant. In fact, according to Pratikno (Erb and Sulistiyanto,

2009), the low level of active participation of the community in the direct election of regional heads in Indonesia is a manifestation of the traditional ways or attitudes of grassroots communities in protesting the political system, the sense of aversion, pessimism, areas dominated by the elite.

The low level of voter participation in the direct election of regional heads in various regions of Indonesia, as well as has nothing to do with the influence of ethnicity factors and low levels of education (Curvale, 2013), residential areas, ie between cities and villages (Mao, 2010), and communication and information issues (Mikkelsen, 2011: 57). This reasoning is based on the empirical fact of the recapitulation of the number of voters in the direct election of regional heads by 2015, where the number of electors to the mayors, the urban voters, whose education tends to be higher, and the bupati, whose voters are from rural communities, education is lower, does not indicate any significant gaps. Whereas in the case of communication and information, there is no reason for the local community not to know the existence of the election of the regional head, because the various elements involved in the direct election of regional heads, looks very active in disseminating information, either through the media or directly.

The low participation in the regional head election was surely not equivalent to the development of democratic values in the regional system, because democracy was regarded as an ideal system of governance of certain states due to the involvement of the people as the ones who held the supreme sovereignty (Gaffar, 1992: 106). Additionally, the implementation of democracy as an ideal concept in the governance of certain state with the supreme sovereignty under the people (Mudjiyanto, 2012: 1), would afford the opportunities to realize the followings: Effective participation: people have the wider chance to improve their political participation; Equality in voting: people have equal rights to speak out their opinions without any legal threats regarding the political matters; Gaining enlightened understanding: people have the rights to gain pure understanding from alternative resources of information; Exercising final control over the agenda: People have the opportunity to constitutionally control the government agenda regarding the policies; and Inclusion of adult: adults have the rights to elect in the executive elections (Dahl, 1998: 38).

The emergence of the factors above reaffirmed what had been stated by Slamet (2001: 43), that the public participation as the voters would not be realized unless the following

supporting factors were fulfilled; the chance availability, which is the situation in which the people are aware of their participation opportunity, the provision of willingness, which is something that encourages the interest and attitude of the people to participate, such as the benefit of their participation, and the provision of wants, which is the awareness or belief on themselves that they have the ability to partake, either in the form of thoughts, power, time, facilities, and other materials.

The democratic concept that placed the public participation at its own right was an ideal life of collectiveness, which should be upheld. According to Huberman (as cited in Hardiman, 1993: 76), democracy was an ideal life of collectiveness. The people participation in the political sphere, such as in the direct election, was regarded to have the positive values because it made the democracy become more valuable, and influenced the government to be more responsive and affirmative to the establishment of the civilian responsibility.

The extent to which people partook in the election did not occur by itself, rather by the availability of the information and technology, supporting institutions, structures and social stratification, local culture and politics. In addition, Paige (in Saifudin, 2009: 19) opines that there has been causal correlation between the political awareness and public participation as voters, namely: If the political awareness and beliefs on the government are high, the public participation tends to be active; If the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, the public participation tends to be pressured (apathetic); If the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, people will be militant and radical; and If the political awareness of the people is low, yet the beliefs on the government are high, people participation tends to be passive.

To establish high quality democracy and boost public participation in the regional head election, it required an attempt to make the people aware or to train them about participation not just as a right, but as an obligation of the whole society by involving multiple elements, such as educational institutions, communication media, and executives (Shehu et.al, 2013). This negated the result of analysis that poverty and low education were not the barriers for the people to participate in exercising their political rights (Thananithichot, 2012), even ethnicity was not the determining factor for the political participation (Curvale et.al, 2013). The public awareness was very much influenced by their motivation (Laurian, 2004).

Finally, low voter participation in the context of local direct election in Indonesia should be seen as a process of democratic maturation at the local level. If expecting an increase in voter participation, the direct elections should appear more attractive to voters, so that the public does not assume that there is no correlation between the electoral process and the performance of the regional head that the community can enjoy directly (Muhammad, 2015, December 14. In addition, improving the quality of political parties, improving the economic, and educational politic conditions of the people is a factor that should be given attention, because it has an influence on increasing the political participation of the community (Arwiyah, 2012: 86-90).

Conclusion

Drawing on the perspective of decentralization policy, the direct election is a meaningful breakthrough towards the process of democratic consolidation at the regional level. It will afford a wider opportunity for the people to partake in the democratic process for determining their political leadership in the regional scope. This system also allows the people to better actualize their political rights without being reduced by political elites. The direct election also generates the emergence of aspiring, competent, legitimized, and dedicated figure. This is certain because the elected regional government will be more oriented to the people than to several political elites being his partners in the regional legislative assembly.

In addition to evidence the provision of the public sovereignty, the direct election provides a strong legitimacy for the local government to head and manage the life of the people in the region through issued policies. For this reason, the local government will be closer to the people and be more responsive to various problems and public interests. However, despite the availability of upholding the values of political democracy at the local level, the people do not fully make use such an opportunity to deliver their political sovereignty. The provision of reform in the management system of the political operation, low integrity and quality of the candidates on the public eyes, misadministration in determining voters, and the lack of socialization and mobilization of the voters to exercise their political rights remain the empirical problems that discourage the people to partake in the direct regional head election.

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Local Political Democratiation Policy: Voter Participation in The Direct Regional Head Elections

Abstract

Regional head election, a local political event and a symbol of democratic government, is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. Since the Indonesian reformation era, the policy regarding the regional head election has shifted from being elected by the local legislative assembly (representative system) to being elected by the people directly (direct election). Anchored in the quantitative descriptive research design, in which the data were garnered from documentation, this study aims to examine the extent to which the people partook in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election in 2015. The collected data were analyzed by means of the participatory and democracy approach within the local political landscape. The empirical findings showed that the public participation in the local election remained low given the statistical evidence 64.02% of the total voters. The study demonstrates that despite the provision of the political stage within the local scope, it does not fully encourage the people to exercise their political rights.

Keywords: Regional Head Election, Democracy, Election, Participation

Introduction

The Indonesian political choice to using the democratic system for its governmental operation has contributed to the state development both in terms of structure and culture. Regional head election is a local political event and a symbol of Indonesia as a democratic state, as stipulated in the the basic law of the Indonesian Republic 1945. Practically speaking, the policy regarding the regional head election mechanism should be based on the political lives, social dynamics, development and progress of the state democracy, and explicit regulations. While the main actors in the elections consist of community, political parties, and candidate contestants (Fenyapwain, 2013: 1).

Since Indonesian independence, the election of regional head is regulated through Law Number 5 Year 1974 regarding the local government. The law posited two functions—as an autonomous local government who led and was fully responsible for the local governance—and a regional government who represented the central government regarding general

matters at the regional levels. However, based on the policy, looks that the attitude of the very authoritative center government, because not provide the room for local community to participate in distributing the political rights at the local level.

However, since the fall of the New Orde, which was possible of reform waves in 1998, there has been a significant shift in the regional government system, which generates a new mechanism for carrying out the regional head election. In contrary to the New Order era, during which the local government was decided by the president or minister of home affairs, they no longer have had such an authority since the reformation era. The amendment of the basic law 1945 brings about significant shifts pertinent to the regional head election system, for instance, the article 18 para (4) basic law 1945, which stipulates that the governor, regent, and mayor, who respectively head the province, regency, and city, are elected democratically.

The term 'elected democratically' has been actualized in two ways, namely; firstly, the regional head election is done directly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly by each member of the regional legislative assembly (representative system); secondly, the regional head election is done directly by each regional people, without the representative system as elected by the regional legislative assembly with the stipulation that the candidate with 50%+1 voices would be determined as the winner to lead the region for five years.

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Until the regional head elections of 2015, the direct participation of every regional people is still an ideal choice in the mechanism of enforcing the political democratic rights of regional peoples. The implementation of the direct and simultaneous election on December 9, 2015, both at the provincial, district and municipal levels, was relatively democratic, safe and peaceful, which reaped a positive appreciation from a number of people, including observers as a democratic experiment which was so admirable and commendable. However, the public participation remained low. The data taken from the general election commission showed that the public participation in the direct and simultaneous regional head election on the December 9, 2015 was 64.02% on average of the total expected voters (Tshandra, 29 Desember 2015).

Even, in some regions, the level of participation was below 50%. Other reports also evidenced such a low participation in several cities and regencies, which included Medan city (26.88%), Serang regency (50.84%), Surabaya (52.18%), Jember regency (52.19%), Tuban

regency (52.25%), and Mataram city (56.94%). On the other hand, some other regions with relatively high participation were Central Mamuju regency (92.17%), South Sorong Regency (89.92%), East Bolaang Mangondow (88.83%), Tomohon city (88.47%), and North Konawe (88.24%). Despite the facts above, the general election commission had targeted to boost the public participation in the democratic event to be around 75.5% (Tshandra, 29 Desember 2015).

This low participation had come to the fore and remained mostly reported by the mass media in Indonesia. From the 358 media that reported the regional head election in the country, the public participation appeared to be appealing. As a result, issue of voting in the direct regional head elections system getting a lot of attention, because it is not in line with expectations of good local governance and decentralization policies (Erb and Sulitiyanto, 2009). This study looked into the public participation in exercising their political rights regarding the five-year democratic event in the regional level framed under the direct and simultaneous regional head election.

Methods

This descriptive quantitative research design aimed to examine the public participation in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election 2015. With reference to the locus of the data collection, this research belonged to the literature study, in which the data were collected by means of documentation technique as it made use the existing literature resources, such as books, journals, Internet, and relevant previous research findings; therefore, the data in this study were categorized into the secondary data. Subsequently, the data were analyzed through the use of theories relevant to the participatory study of people in the regional political context.

Results

The Empirical Problems of The Direct Regional Head Election

Regional head election is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. On the other words, the direct regional head election is a political expansion of the people and as a form of people's sovereignty in determining the figure of the regional leaders in accordance with the hopes and aspirations of the people and has strong political

legitimacy (Simamora, 2011: 229). Drawing on the context of the regional head election in democratic countries, the concept that underpins the the public participation has basic ideologies that people have the rights to decide their own leaders, who will latter determine the public policy for the sake of social purposes. These democratic nations posit that the people hold the supreme power over the states' sovereignty (Mudjiyanto, 2012: 1), hence their political participation should be taken into account.

Historically, the first direct election was held in 2005 in Kutai Kertanegara regency, it turns out from year to year still raises the issue, both issues related to regional readiness in conducting regional head elections, implementation issues schedule, stages and program of regional head election, fulfillment of candidate of regional head and vice regional head and other issues related to execution at field (Nuryanti, 2015: 126).

While the direct and simultaneous regional head election was held on the 9 Descember 2015, which were held in 8 provinces, 222 regencies, and 34 cities across Indonesia. However, there remains a rise of fraudulent claim regarding its implementation (Sahdan dan Haboddin, 2009: 57). Similarly, the general election commission as the legal institution admistering the national and regional head election proposes argues the same thing that the results of the first period of the direct and simulataneous regional head election in fact left several problems due to the rejection of the results by lost condidates drawing on 147 number of lawsuits. On the other hand, the primary object of the plaintiff basically centered on the accusation of fraud throughout the election. Such accusations included money politic, the involvement of state civil apparatus, partiality of the election organizer, and the data manipulation pertinent to the election (KPU, 2015: 7).

The accused frauds committed by the election organizer were also reinforced by the provision of the data of violation of the code ethics of the election committee in the Board of General Election Organizer. Since it was established on the June 12, 2012 to March 2013, it has received 90 lawsuits related to violations of the code of ethics with the details of its decision as follows; sanction of dismissal: 5 chiefs of the general election commission and 15 members, 1 chief of election guard committee and 2 members, 5 members of Independent Commission of General Election; firm sanction or warning: 4 members of the general election commission, and 6 members, and 1 member of election guard committee; and written reminding: 1 chief of the general election commission (KPU, 2015: 52).

In addition, based on the data collected from the field, the implementation of direct and simultaneous elections in 2015 has caused several problems (Budiman, 2015: 2), such as the followings:

Firstly, the selection of the candidates did not go through democratic system as they were fully determined by party officials at the central level (central board). The general election commission would only approve the candidates if they are proposed by chief of the party board. If the candidates did not have any recommendation; the general election commission would reject their candidature, which was against the theory of representation. On the other hand, the regional heads, who were not able to represent their regions, would not be able to provide the best services to the community. Moreover, within several parties was a conflict of stewardship among the members, which confused the public of their political choices.

Secondly, there remained a dynastic system of politics in the direct regional head election although the constitution no. 1 year 2014 regarding the gubernatorial, regent and mayor election has limited the spaces and opportunities for the growth of the political dynasty. Furthermore, the general election commission has stipulated the regulation no. 9 year 2015, which posits that progressive changes in diminishing the chains of dynastic politics from any angles. However, it changed after the constitutional court issued the stipulation of the election conflict No.33/ PUU-XIII/2015 regarding the election of governors, regents and mayors against the law article no 28J para (2) basic law 1945. The constitutional court initially indicated that the government had violated the human rights because it denied someone to candidate him or herself to be the regional head or vice of the regional head due to having familial relationship with the current government. Therefore, there remained the dynastic power having controls in various regions given the latest regulation. The growth of political dynasty did not mean that the public were satisfied with their performance, yet the money politics hampered the transactional politics, which brought about the dilemma about the regional governance.

Thirdly, there appeared the replacement of the two round systems with the first past the post (FPTP) in determining the winning candidates. The former allowed the candidates to gain public support by means of simple majority (minimum of 30 percent), so it relatively affirmed their legitimacy in the region. On the other hand, the latter limited the public

support (legitimacy) because the regional democracy through the regional head election would not run the second round election should there have been a disparity between the winning candidates, and the plaintiffs were small, 2 percent.

Fourth, the constitution No. 8 year 2015 rejected the political parties which proposed candidates who gained foreign donors for their campaign. The central government, regional government, national state own enterprise and others with fictive identity, yet this law did not forbid the candidates to receive any donors. With this regard, the regulation also obliged the political parties to propose candidates to open special bank accounts for the campaign purposes, yet it did not apply to the individual candidates.

Furthermore, according to the Ministry of home affairs of Indonesia, Tjahjo Kumolo (Lustrilang, 2017: 16), there were some underlying problems arising during the direct and simultaneous regional head elections, which encouraged the anticipation of the following issues throughout the election periods: The availability of unregistered voters; Potential voters with no e-ID card; The lack of optimal role and function of the general election institution; The rise of questions regarding the issue of independency, integrity, and credibility of administering the election; The public participation after the election to become the balance for the state bureaucracy as a result of the election or *elected officials*; The lack of willingness of public in the general election; The provision of the political parties that often presented in the face of the general election; The existence of provinces with their local characteristics; Ineffective law enforcement for elections with various problems, both technical and non-technical factors; The emergence of crucial issues, such as racial issues, money politics, campaign funds, abuse of power, bureaucratic political neutrality and mobilization of state civil apparatus that harmed the integrity of elections.

The emergence of various problems in the implementation of local elections directly above, actually has been predicted before by the government, thus inviting the discourse to restore the direct electoral system into the hands of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD), even appeared in the Plenary Session of the House of Representatives (DPR RI) on September 24, 2014, on the grounds that direct elections have political costs high, vulnerable to the emergence of conflict, and does not guarantee the emergence of a good regional head (Nuryanti, 2015: 126). However, because the development of a democratic political system requires direct community involvement, the direct Regional Head Election

is finally maintained, as a manifestation of the repatriation of the "basic rights" of the community in electing its regional leaders (Sundari dan Ishak, 2017: 1).

The Degree of Voter Participation in The Direct Regional Head Election

The transformation of the regional governance system into a more democratic one as stipulated by the regional autonomy has brought a new hope to the realm of regional politics. In the democratic development perspective within local scope, the approved regional autonomy becomes a promising milestone as it affords wider opportunities for the public to participate in determining their own regional governments (Tejo in Karim, 2008: i). The existence of the direct election policy is one of the symbols of upholding democracy at the local level. It has created a stage for the community to exercise their political rights, as well as a manifestation of political modernization in the democratic state (Sundari and Ishak, 2015: 3).

The direct regional head election is a result of reforming the local government system to a more democratic direction, which aims to give local people the opportunity to directly determine their regional leaders. Direct regional head election, when viewed from the theory, then this direct election has a very strong legitimacy because the elected regional head, directly elected by its constituents. Constituents in this case are given the opportunity to participate in determining the local government. Thus, elected regional heads besides possessing strong legitimacy, are also expected to bring regional heads with an orientation to improve the welfare of their people (Nuryanti, 2015: 127).

For this reason, the election of regional government through a representative system by the local legislative assembly has been deemed irrelevant to the demands of emerging democratic values as it makes the candidates remain unrecognized by the people in the region. The phenomenon of low public participation in the 2015 direct and simultaneous regional head election was caused by several factors (Fachrudin, 14 December, 2015), as the followings:

Firstly, regulation factor; the law No. 8 year 2015 regarding the regional head election or the regulation of the general election commission No. 7 year 2015 about the electoral campaign of the governor and vice governor, regent, and vice regent, mayor and vice mayor, which limited the rooms for the candidates to socialize as stipulated by the regional head

election commission at the municipal, regency, or provincial levels, particularly regarding the installment of banners in public spaces. Such a regulation has lessened the joy of the regional head election, which harmed the public's interest in exercising their political rights.

Secondly, a number of political parties entitled to carry candidates in the local elections were experiencing internal conflicts, and there had been no verdict with permanent legal force. The internal conflicts that occurred within the political party board not only made it difficult for them to process and propose candidates who had a high degree of electability and popularity, but also resulted in voters, especially the constituents become less enthusiastic to support wholeheartedly the candidate couples proposed by the political parties.

Third, the candidates promoted by political parties or those from independent candidates were deemed to lack the electability, thereby reducing public trust on the elections, political institutions and candidates themselves as the instruments capable of making changes and community improvement. As a result, voters became apathetic and remained reluctant to go to the Voting Center.

Fourth, the people were reluctant to go to the voting center due to the absence of their name as the permanent voters, or did not gain invitation letter for the election (known as C6), which was often caused by the negligence of the regional head election commission. However, without the letter of invitation, the people could vote as long as they were registered in the election center.

Another factor that caused the low participation of the public in the direct and simultaneous regional head election, drawing on the result of the Indonesian Survey Institute, was the change of mode of campaign, which was mostly arranged by the general election commission through media, such as banner, posters, and etc (Embardi, 11 December, 2015). Furthermore, according to the Polmark survey institute, the limited amount of time given to socialize to the public also contributed to the lack participation in the regional head election (Akbar, 11 December, 2015). On the other hand, the general election commission as the administrator argued that the lack participation of the public in the 2015 regional head election was caused by the lack role of the candidates to ensure the people's awareness to exercise their political rights, which happened because the promoting team did not work.

Discussion

Dynamics of The Direct Regional Head Election Policy

The election of regional heads (Pilkada) is a contest for the legitimacy of power held by a person in order to lead the way in the process of governance and regional development. In other words, that Pilkada is a mechanism of selection and delegation of authority to someone who has the legitimacy to fill the positions of local government leadership (Surbakti, 1992: 181).

In the context of the election of regional heads, in countries that embrace democratic ideals, the idea of people's participation has an ideological basis that the people have the right to decide who will be the future leader and in determining public policy for his welfare. Countries that adopt a democratic system mean a state that views the existence of its citizens as the owner of sovereignty in the country (Mudjiyanto, 2012: 1), so that its political participation can not be ignored.

The election of regional heads has been an important issue since independence, and has become one of the main characters in the provincial and district governance system of Indonesia (Mboi, in Earb and Sulistiyanto, 2009). However, the provision of the constitution no. 32 year 2004 adding perfection to law No. 22 year 1999 about the regional government has impacted on the reform of the mechanism for the regional head election per se, which aimed to generate a better, more effective and efficient election procedure in accordance with the dynamics of political life and the development of democracy in Indonesia, where all regional heads were elected directly by the people of each region (Nugraha 2016: 73).

Direct regional head election is a manifestation of political autonomy due to the decentralization policy of local governance. It is an important means of enforcing democratic values at the local level to enable people to partake in choosing their leaders who will control and lead the regional development policies to a better direction (Sari, 2016: 87). In addition, it is a means of manifesting the sovereignty of the people (Simamora, 2011: 229), in order to get local government elected in a democratic way in accordance with the 1945 Basic Constitution of the State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Unfortunately, the local democratic process of local politics through direct local elections in Indonesia demonstrates a negative practice, largely due to the politics of money, and dominated by local elites (Aspinall, 2010), so that although Indonesia is considered

successful in building its democracy, but in terms of quality is still relatively low, the result of a political business conspiracy or hijacked interest groups and ignored the real purpose of fighting for the decentralization of local politics (Hadiz, 2004). In addition, the decentralization policy that gave birth to local direct election systems has weakened accountability in the regions (Schulze et.al, 2014). The direct mechanism of local elections with the aim of strengthening the democratic accountability of local governments is ineffective. This, among others, is seen from the indication of corruption that has not decreased significantly, but it is decentralized and disorganized (Hill 2012), because many birth corrupters at the local level (Rumesten, 2014).

They remained sceptical of the regional head candidates for the coming five years due to the fact that many regional governments in Indonesia misused their rights and were allegedly caught in corruption (Schulze, et.all, 2014). In addition to that, the people also assumed that there would be no betterment at the regional levels through the regional head election. Hence, either participating or not in the regional head election did not have any effects on the betterment of the region. This was legitimized by the fact that during the regional head election were found a number of money politics, which was reasonable that a myriad of local governments were alleged corruption as they needed to return their expenses during the election (Sari, 2016: 87).

However, there appears to be a big consequence because it generates big political campaign, which requires much funding from both the national and local budget (Sari, 2016: 87). The average expense for the mayor and regent elections is twenty five billions, and five hundred billions for the gubernatorial election. Within five years, there has been thirty billions of state funding used for the regional head election. Meanwhile, on the other hand, the participation of voters in the local direct election system is also likely to decline. However, with the change of direct local elections system is simultaneously considered to cut half of the budget (Budiman, 2015: 13).

The existence of various problems that occur in the direct election of regional heads, should not be used as a basis to say that local democratization policies or local political autonomy is not suitable for Indonesia. Local political policy must be maintained, as it can be a means of political education, deliberation, and realizing accountable local government for regional progress. In addition, according to Putnam (1994), the direct election of regional

heads can be a means of democratic participation of the community to demonstrate commitment, trust and cooperation in forming a civic community to build regional development performance. This idea also refers to the views of John Stuart Mill and proponents of participatory democracy at the local level, that opening taps for community involvement will support the creation of good governance and support for the achievement of social welfare (Suyatno, 2016).

Admittedly, the policy of local political decentralization in Indonesia has not shown significant and significant results in better local governance, but rather on budget wastage (Hill, 2012). However, for the sake of political empowerment of the people, this policy of local political democracy must remain guarded, because this political democracy is a system of government in which those who have authority to make decisions (that have the force of law) acquire and retain this authority either directly or indirectly as the result of winning free election in which the great majority of adult citizens are allowed to participate (Burns, in Saifudin, 2009: 13)

The practice of local political democracy, which places the participation of society as its essence, as in the direct elections of regional heads in Indonesia, according to Hubermas (Hardiman 1993: 76), is an ideal form of common life that must be fought for. Although the ideal situation can not be fully achieved, the most important thing is the principle of handling to achieve the "ideal state" is continuously enhanced and rejects all kinds of obstacles, either the barrier of freedom of voice of opinion or the avoidance of isolation of groups social.

Starting from some views about ideally democracy in the system of governance, both central and local, then although direct elections are still facing problems (Nuryanti, 2015: 126) and voter participation is still low (Sundari and Ishak, 2017: 5), it should not be an excuse to return the election mechanism to the representative system, sick, there are other activities, again outside the city), jobs (working and not getting permission), administration (moving, not having identity card/KTP, and not getting invitations), socialization (not knowing candidates, not knowing, and confused), and political (do not believe in candidates and saturated) (Arianto, 2011: 56-59).

As for addressing various problems in direct election of regional heads, there is no other way, unless all regional elements (government, private, and civil society) participate in totality, both with their knowledge, attitude and actions that must be directed to maintain

and run the stage the local democracy is in accordance with the established rules of the game. Not participating falsely, that participation is born because there is a certainty or paid by certain parties.

Maesure The Degree Lower of Voter Participation in Direct Regional Head Election

The reform of the system of local government administration towards a more democratic direction that carried the policy of regional autonomy has issued new hope in local political life. In the perspective of democratic development at the local level, the enactment of this regional autonomy policy is certainly a good sign, since the involvement of the community in the local political arena is increasingly wide open (Karim, 2008: i). The opening of the public political participation taps is a form of the care of democratic values at the local level as well as the objectives of the decentralization policy (Muluk, 2009).

Political participation is the core of democracy, so it is one of the logical implications of a democratic system adopted by a state, because according to Huntington and Nelson (1977: 3), political participation will not occur if a country's political life is not built on democracy. Even political participation is at the heart of democracy. Democracy can not be imagined without the ability of citizens to participate freely in the state process. In the view of Herbet McClosky (in Budiardjo 1981: 1), political participation is a voluntary activity of citizens to take part in the electoral process of the ruler and the process of forming general policies, both directly and indirectly. However, according to Rush and Althoff (2007: 122), voter voting in the general election is considered to be the least active form of active political participation, since it requires a minimum involvement, which will cease if the vote has been implemented.

In Indonesia, to facilitate the political participation of local communities through this voting action, the government issued a policy of local political democratization in the form of direct regional head elections by each community based on Law no. 32 of 2004 on local government (Hidayat in Erb and Sulistiyanto, 2009). Unfortunately, the local political democracy facilities are not well utilized by local communities. This is evident from the low level of voter participation in channeling their voting rights in the direct elections of regional heads held in various regions from 2005 to 2015 (Tshandra, December 29, 2015).

There are still many apathetic local people in the smallest active political participation (Rush and Althoff, 2007: 122), or the low participation of the public in the 2015 election at the

regional levels indicated the failure of carrying out the five-year democratic tradition given the low and high participation of the public as one of the indicators of the success of the administration of such a regional head election (*voter turn out*) (Fachrudin, 14 Desember 2015). In addition, it also indicated the lack awareness of the public regarding the political life, which impacted on the lack of public's interest in promoting the democracy in their regions, as according to Huntington and Nelson (1977: 3) who argued that the high participation of the public indicates that they were aware of and having the democratic lives in their state.

Based on empirical data, the low voter participation in direct regional head elections in various regions in Indonesia, which can only reach an average of 64.02% (Tshandra, December 29, 2015), is at least caused by three factors:

First, the mistrust of voters against candidates for regional heads, that will be able to apply the mandate and able to carry out the task of regional leadership. This attitude is triggered by the many corruption cases that hit regional heads in Indonesia, and most of them are from politicians, not professionals. These voter typologies tend to think rationally and have higher levels of education. The mistrust of the voters in transforming and bettering their lives, in the context of direct election, the primary reason for the public not to fully participate in exercising their voting rights (Laurian, 2004).

Second, pragmatic, that is, voters feel they do not get any benefit or benefit from the election of the regional head. The election of regional heads is considered to benefit only political elites who expect certain positions in local government. The typology of this voter generally comes from the lower economic community with low education level. They will choose if given material rewards, so often the target of money politics team of candidates for regional head. The low voter participation is not because it is unconscious and does not consider political participation important, but because they feel no real benefit will be obtained for themselves (Mao, 2010). The people participation was driven by the economic interest (Agus, 2016).

Third, the disinterest of voters against candidates who advanced as contestants of local elections. This may be because among the candidates, it is considered that no one represents his identity, whether tribal, religious, ethnic, professional, group, and others. This typology tends to be traditional and militant. In fact, according to Pratikno (Erb and Sulistiyanto,

2009), the low level of active participation of the community in the direct election of regional heads in Indonesia is a manifestation of the traditional ways or attitudes of grassroots communities in protesting the political system, the sense of aversion, pessimism, areas dominated by the elite.

The low level of voter participation in the direct election of regional heads in various regions of Indonesia, as well as has nothing to do with the influence of ethnicity factors and low levels of education (Curvale, 2013), residential areas, ie between cities and villages (Mao, 2010), and communication and information issues (Mikkelsen, 2011: 57). This reasoning is based on the empirical fact of the recapitulation of the number of voters in the direct election of regional heads by 2015, where the number of electors to the mayors, the urban voters, whose education tends to be higher, and the bupati, whose voters are from rural communities, education is lower, does not indicate any significant gaps. Whereas in the case of communication and information, there is no reason for the local community not to know the existence of the election of the regional head, because the various elements involved in the direct election of regional heads, looks very active in disseminating information, either through the media or directly.

The low participation in the regional head election was surely not equivalent to the development of democratic values in the regional system, because democracy was regarded as an ideal system of governance of certain states due to the involvement of the people as the ones who held the supreme sovereignty (Gaffar, 1992: 106). Additionally, the implementation of democracy as an ideal concept in the governance of certain state with the supreme sovereignty under the people (Mudjiyanto, 2012: 1), would afford the opportunities to realize the followings: Effective participation: people have the wider chance to improve their political participation; Equality in voting: people have equal rights to speak out their opinions without any legal threats regarding the political matters; Gaining enlightened understanding: people have the rights to gain pure understanding from alternative resources of information; Exercising final control over the agenda: People have the opportunity to constitutionally control the government agenda regarding the policies; and Inclusion of adult: adults have the rights to elect in the executive elections (Dahl, 1998: 38).

The emergence of the factors above reaffirmed what had been stated by Slamet (2001: 43), that the public participation as the voters would not be realized unless the following

supporting factors were fulfilled; the chance availability, which is the situation in which the people are aware of their participation opportunity, the provision of willingness, which is something that encourages the interest and attitude of the people to participate, such as the benefit of their participation, and the provision of wants, which is the awareness or belief on themselves that they have the ability to partake, either in the form of thoughts, power, time, facilities, and other materials.

The democratic concept that placed the public participation at its own right was an ideal life of collectiveness, which should be upheld. According to Huberman (as cited in Hardiman, 1993: 76), democracy was an ideal life of collectiveness. The people participation in the political sphere, such as in the direct election, was regarded to have the positive values because it made the democracy become more valuable, and influenced the government to be more responsive and affirmative to the establishment of the civilian responsibility.

The extent to which people partook in the election did not occur by itself, rather by the availability of the information and technology, supporting institutions, structures and social stratification, local culture and politics. In addition, Paige (in Saifudin, 2009: 19) opines that there has been causal correlation between the political awareness and public participation as voters, namely: If the political awareness and beliefs on the government are high, the public participation tends to be active; If the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, the public participation tends to be pressured (apathetic); If the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, people will be militant and radical; and If the political awareness of the people is low, yet the beliefs on the government are high, people participation tends to be passive.

To establish high quality democracy and boost public participation in the regional head election, it required an attempt to make the people aware or to train them about participation not just as a right, but as an obligation of the whole society by involving multiple elements, such as educational institutions, communication media, and executives (Shehu et.al, 2013). This negated the result of analysis that poverty and low education were not the barriers for the people to participate in exercising their political rights (Thananithichot, 2012), even ethnicity was not the determining factor for the political participation (Curvale et.al, 2013). The public awareness was very much influenced by their motivation (Laurian, 2004).

Finally, low voter participation in the context of local direct election in Indonesia should be seen as a process of democratic maturation at the local level. If expecting an increase in voter participation, the direct elections should appear more attractive to voters, so that the public does not assume that there is no correlation between the electoral process and the performance of the regional head that the community can enjoy directly (Muhammad, 2015, December 14. In addition, improving the quality of political parties, improving the economic, and educational politic conditions of the people is a factor that should be given attention, because it has an influence on increasing the political participation of the community (Arwiyah, 2012: 86-90).

Conclusion

Drawing on the perspective of decentralization policy, the direct election is a meaningful breakthrough towards the process of democratic consolidation at the regional level. It will afford a wider opportunity for the people to partake in the democratic process for determining their political leadership in the regional scope. This system also allows the people to better actualize their political rights without being reduced by political elites. The direct election also generates the emergence of aspiring, competent, legitimized, and dedicated figure. This is certain because the elected regional government will be more oriented to the people than to several political elites being his partners in the regional legislative assembly.

In addition to evidence the provision of the public sovereignty, the direct election provides a strong legitimacy for the local government to head and manage the life of the people in the region through issued policies. For this reason, the local government will be closer to the people and be more responsive to various problems and public interests. However, despite the availability of upholding the values of political democracy at the local level, the people do not fully make use such an opportunity to deliver their political sovereignty. The provision of reform in the management system of the political operation, low integrity and quality of the candidates on the public eyes, misadministration in determining voters, and the lack of socialization and mobilization of the voters to exercise their political rights remain the empirical problems that discourage the people to partake in the direct regional head election.

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Local Political Democratiation Policy: Voter Participation in The Direct Regional Head Elections

Abstract

Regional head election, a local political event and a symbol of democratic government, is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. Since the Indonesian reformation era, the policy regarding the regional head election has shifted from being elected by the local legislative assembly (representative system) to being elected by the people directly (direct election). Anchored in the quantitative descriptive research design, in which the data were garnered from documentation, this study aims to examine the extent to which the people partook in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election in 2015. The collected data were analyzed by means of the participatory approach within the local political landscape. The empirical findings showed that the public participation in the local election remained low given the statistical evidence 64.02% of the total voters. The study demonstrates that despite the provision of the polical stage within the local scope, it does not fully encourage the people to exercise their political rights.

Keywords: Regional Head Election, Democracy, Election, Participation

Introduction

Drawing on the context of the regional head election in democratic countries, the concept that underpins the the public participation has basic ideologies that people have the rights to decide their own leaders, who will latter determine the public policy for the sake of social purposes. These democratic nations posit that the people hold the supreme power over the states' sovereignty (Mudjiyanto, 2012: 1), hence their political participation should be taken into account. The Indonesian political choice to using the democratic system for its governmental operation has contributed to the state development both in terms of structure and culture. Regional head election is a local political event and a symbol of Indonesia as a democratic state, as stipulated in the the basic law of the Indonesian Republic 1945.

As a political stance, regional head election is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. On the other words, the direct regional head election is a political expansion of the people and as a form of people's sovereignty in determining the

figure of the regional leaders in accordance with the hopes and aspirations of the people and has strong political legitimacy (Simamora, 2011: 229). Practically speaking, the policy regarding the regional head election mechanism should be based on the political lives, social dynamics, and development and progress of the state democracy. While the main actors in the elections consist of community, political parties, and candidate contestants (Fenyapwain, 2013: 1).

Subsequently, to get a local government having legitimacy and trustee in accommodating the needs of the people in the region through the regional head election, it certainly needs the regional head election system with proper and explicit regulations, based on the provision of second legal relief, so guarantee all the procedures of impossible opportunities on the way constitutional. For Indonesian political context, responding to the need of this optional implementation system, there appeared the law no. 5 years 1974 regarding the local government, which stipulated that the local government was elected and proposed by the local legislative assembly and was officially inaugurated by the President of the Minister of Home Affairs. The law posited two functions—as an autonomous local government who led and was fully responsible for the local governance—and a regional government who represented the central government regarding general matters at the regional levels.

Based on the policy opened in the above terms of terms, looks that the attitude of the very authoritative center government, because not provide the room for local community to participate in distributing the political rights at the local level. The accountability and functions of the regional head function finally are then limited by the provision of such a Regional Head Election system. Drawing on the constitution article 16 law no. 5 year 1974, it was the regional legislative assembly that proposed and elected several candidates of regional government level I (governor) and that of level II (regent and mayor), who were subsequently inaugurated by the President or Minister of Home Affairs, who held the authority to decide who would become the local governments regardless of the number of voices gained in the regional house representative. This system provided more statutory rights for the President to inaugurate the local governments with similar vision and mission as his, so that the elected regional leaders fervently supported the central government's

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policy in the regions which afforded the president more opportunities to carry out his authority in the regions.

However, since the fall of the New Orde, which was possible of reform waves in 1998, there has been a significant shift in the regional government system, which generates a new mechanism for carrying out the regional head election. In contrary to the New Order era, during which the local government was decided by the president or minister of home affairs, they no longer have had such an authority since the reformation era. The amendment of the basic law 1945 brings about significant shifts pertinent to the regional head election system, for instance, the article 18 para (4) basic law 1945, which stipulates that the governor, regent, and mayor, who respectively head the province, regency, and city, are elected democratically.

Since the provision of the democratic policy for the local election, the term 'elected democratically' has been actualized in two ways, namely firstly, the regional head election is done directly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly by each member of the regional legislative assembly (representative system) with the stipulation that each candidate gaining most votings will be decided as the head and vice head of the local government by the regional legislative assembly and inaugurated by the President; secondly, the regional head election that affords the people wider oppornities to determine their own local government without the representative system as elected by the regional legislative assembly with the stipulation that the candidate with 50%+1 voices would be determined as the winner of the political contest for achieving the legitimized power democratically to lead the region for five years. However, from two mechanisms of policy democratization policy regions since the reform of local political policy in indonesia, up to 2015, selection of the regional head of the property before optional options as the means of enforcement of local community political democracy rights. This study looked into the public participation in exercising their political rights regarding the five-year democratic event in the regional level framed under the direct and simultaneous regional head election.

Methods

This descriptive quantitative research design aimed to examine the public participation in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election 2015. With reference to the locus of the data collection, this research belonged to the literature

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study, in which the data were collected by means of documentation technique as it made use the existing literature resources, such as books, journals, Internet, and relevant previous research findings; therefore, the data in this study were categorized into the secondary data. Subsequently, the data were analyzed through the use of theories relevant to the participatory study of people in the regional political context.

Results

The Empirical Problems of The Direct Regional Head Election

In democratic states, the people sovereignty is explicitly admitted, and the direct election is a reward and judgment about the right of the people to choose and determine the regional policy, which ensures their prosperity as a whole mandated to the elected local governments as the heads of regions. Historically, the first direct election was held in 2005 in Kutai Kertanegara regency, it turns out from year to year still raises the issue, both issues related to regional readiness in conducting regional head elections, implementation issues schedule, stages and program of regional head election, fulfillment of candidate of regional head and vice regional head and other issues related to execution at field (Nuryanti, 2015: 126).

While the direct and simultaneous regional head election was held on the 9 December 2015, which were held in 8 provinces, 222 regencies, and 34 cities across Indonesia. However, there remains a rise of fraudulent claim regarding its implementation (Sahdan dan Haboddin, 2009: 57). Similarly, the general election commission as the legal institution administering the national and regional head election proposes argues the same thing that the results of the first period of the direct and simultaneous regional head election in fact left several problems due to the rejection of the results by lost candidates drawing on 147 number of lawsuits (Suara KPU, 2015: 6). In addition, the constitution has facilitated such electoral disputes to be proven through the constitutional court with the general election commission as the defendant. On the other hand, the primary object of the plaintiff basically centered on the accusation of fraud throughout the election. Such accusations included money politic, the involvement of state civil apparatus, partiality of the election organizer, and the data manipulation pertinent to the election (KPU, 2015: 7).

The accused frauds committed by the election organizer were also reinforced by the provision of the data of violation of the code ethics of the election committee in the Board of General Election Organizer. Since it was established on the June 12, 2012 to March 2013, it has received 90 lawsuits related to violations of the code of ethics with the details of its decision as follows; sanction of dismissal: 5 chiefs of the general election commission and 15 members, 1 chief of election guard committee and 2 members, 5 members of Independent Commission of General Election; firm sanction or warning: 4 members of the general election commission, and 6 members, and 1 member of election guard committee; and written reminding: 1 chief of the general election commission (KPU, 2015: 52).

In addition, based on the data collected from the field, the implementation of direct and simultaneous elections in 2015 has caused several problems (Budiman, 2015: 2), such as the followings:

Firstly, the selection of the candidates did not go through democratic system as they were fully determined by party officials at the central level (central board). The general election commission would only approve the candidates if they are proposed by chief of the party board. If the the candidates did not have any recommendation; the general election commission would reject their candidature, which was against the theory of representation. On the other hand, the regional heads, who were not able to represent their regions, would not be able to provide the best services to the community. Moreover, within several parties was a conflict of stewardship among the members, which confused the public of their political choices.

Secondly, there remained a dynastic system of politics in the direct regional head election although the constitution no. 1 year 2014 regarding the gubernatorial, regent and mayor election has limited the spaces and opportunities for the growth of the political dynasty. Furthermore, the general election commission has stipulated the regulation no. 9 year 2015, which posits that progressive changes in diminishing the chains of dynastic politics from any angles. However, it changed after the constitutional court issued the stipulation of the election conflict No.33/ PUU-XIII/2015 regarding the election of governors, regents and mayors against the law article no 28J para (2) basic law 1945. The constitutional court initially indicated that the government had violated the human rights because it denied someone to candidate him or herself to be the regional head or vice of the regional head due to having

familial relationship with the current government. Therefore, there remained the dynastic power having controls in various regions given the latest regulation. The growth of political dynasty did not mean that the public were satisfied with their performance, yet the money politic hampered the transactional politic, which brought about the dilemma about the regional governance.

Thirdly, there appeared the replacement of the two round systems with the first past the post (FPTP) in determining the winning candidates. The former allowed the candidates to gain public support by means of simple majority (minimum of 30 percent), so it relatively affirmed their legitimacy in the region. On the other hand, the latter limited the public support (legitimacy) because the regional democracy through the regional head election would not run the second round election should there have been a disparity between the winning candidates, and the plaintiffs were small, 2 percent.

Fourth, the constitution No. 8 year 2015 rejected the political parties which proposed candidates who gained foreign donors for their campaign. The central government, regional government, national state own enterprise and others with fictive identity, yet this law did not forbid the candidates to receive any donors. With this regard, the regulation also obliged the political parties to propose candidates to open special bank accounts for the campaign purposes, yet it did not apply to the individual candidates.

Furthermore, according to the Ministry of home affairs of Indonesia, Tjahjo Kumolo (Lustrilanang, 2017: 16), there were eleven underlying problems arising during the direct and simultaneous regional head elections, which encouraged the anticipation of the following issues throughout the election periods: The availability of unregistered voters, which always remained as the problem; Potential voters with no e-ID card, which hampered the process of determining the permanent voters; The lack of optimal role and function of the general election institution; The rise of questions regarding the issue of independency, integrity, and credibility of administering the election; The public participation after the election to become the balance for the state bureaucracy as a result of the election or *elected officials*; The lack of willingness of public in the general election; The provision of the political parties that often presented in the face of the general election, yet were often absent after the election; The existence of provinces with their local characteristics in Indonesia, so that non-election problems (non-electoral) remained another separate problem for the election process

and election organizers; Ineffective law enforcement for elections with various problems, both technical and non-technical factors; The emergence of crucial issues, such as racial issues, money politics, campaign funds, abuse of power, bureaucratic political neutrality and mobilization of state civil apparatus that harmed the integrity of elections; and There were still some regions that had not signed the regional donation document agreement for the secured elections.

The emergence of various problems in the implementation of local elections directly above, actually has been predicted before by the government, thus inviting the discourse to restore the direct electoral system into the hands of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD), even appeared in the Plenary Session of the House of Representatives (DPR RI) on September 24, 2014, on the grounds that direct elections have political costs high, vulnerable to the emergence of conflict, and does not guarantee the emergence of a good regional head (Nuryanti, 2015: 126). However, because the development of a democratic political system requires direct community involvement, the direct Regional Head Election is finally maintained, as a manifestation of the repatriation of the "basic rights" of the community in electing its regional leaders (Sundari dan Ishak, 2017: 1).

The Degree of Voter Participation in The Direct Regional Head Election

The transformation of the regional governance system into a more democratic one as stipulated by the regional autonomy has brought a new hope to the realm of regional politics. In the democratic development perspective within local scope, the approved regional autonomy becomes a promising milestone as it affords wider opportunities for the public to participate in determining their own regional governments (Tejo in Karim, 2008: i). The existence of the direct election policy is one of the symbols of upholding democracy at the local level. It has created a stage for the community to exercise their political rights, as well as a manifestation of political modernization in the democratic state (Sundari dan Ishak, 2015: 3).

The direct regional head election is a result of reforming the local government system to a more democratic direction, which aims to give local people the opportunity to directly determine their regional leaders. Direct regional head election, when viewed from the theory, then this direct election has a very strong legitimacy because the elected regional

head, directly elected by its constituents. Constituents in this case are given the opportunity to participate in determining the local government. Thus, elected regional heads besides possessing strong legitimacy, are also expected to bring regional heads with an orientation to improve the welfare of their people (Nuryanti, 2015: 127). For this reason, the election of regional government through a representative system by the local legislative assembly has been deemed irrelevant to the demands of emerging democratic values as it makes the candidates remain unrecognized by the people in the region.

The dynamics of local politics in Indonesia in relation to the direct election as stipulated in the law no 32 Year 2004 regarding the election of Governor, Regent and Mayor have undergone the ups and downs periods because it was once returned to the use of representative mechanism, which was elected by regional legislative assembly as promulgated by the Law No. 22 of 2014 due to the huge expenses that the candidates had to spend for all the operation of their candidature (Sari, 2016: 90). Another reason is that the direct election is considered to potentially lead to corruption, decrease the effectiveness of government administration, and increase the escalation of conflict (Nugraha, 2016: 59). Apart from this issue, the system gains its perfection to be more adaptive and open, in which the individual candidates are allowed to participate even without any political parties, as stipulated in the law No. 12 year 2008.

The direct election has become the answer to the claim for decentralization after the New Order era, which results in the provision of wider opportunities, local community autonomy, and democracy. The decentralized the authority is, the democratic the governance will be. Such a political autonomy given to the regions, such as the direct regional head election, is a fresh air for the sustainability and development of democratic values at the regional level. However, there appears to be a big consequence because it generates big political campaign, which requires much funding from both the national and local budget (Sari, 2016: 87). The average expense for the mayor and regent elections is twenty five billions, and five hundred billions for the gubernatorial election. Within five years, there has been thirty billions of state funding used for the regional head election. Nonetheless, the provision of the simultaneous election may cut half of the budget (Budiman, 2015: 13).

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In general, the implementation of the direct and simultaneous election on December 9, 2015, both at the provincial, district and municipal levels, was relatively democratic, safe and peaceful, which reaped a positive appreciation from a number of people, including observers as a democratic experiment which was so admirable and commendable. However, the public participation remained low. The data taken from the general election commission showed that the public participation in the direct and simultaneous regional head election on the December 9, 2015 was 64.02% on average of the total expected voters.

This low participation had come to the fore and remained mostly reported by the mass media in Indonesia. From the 358 media that reported the regional head election in the country, the public participation appeared to be appealing. Even, in some regions, the level of participation was below 50%. Other reports also evidenced such a low participation in several cities and regencies, which included Medan city (26.88%), Serang regency (50.84%), Surabaya (52.18%), Jember regency (52.19%), Tuban regency (52.25%), and Mataram city (56.94%). On the other hand, some other regions with relatively high participation were Central Mamuju regency (92.17%), South Sorong Regency (89.92%), East Bolaang Mangondow (88.83%), Tomohon city (88.47%), and North Konawe (88.24%). Despite the facts above, the general election commission had targeted to boost the public participation in the democratic event to be around 75.5% (Tshandra, 29 Desember 2015).

The phenomenon of low public participation in the 2015 direct and simultaneous regional head election was caused by several factors (Fachrudin, 14 December, 2015), as the followings:

Firstly, regulation factor; the law No. 8 year 2015 regarding the regional head election or the regulation of the general election commission No. 7 year 2015 about the electoral campaign of the governor and vice governor, regent, and vice regent, mayor and vice mayor, which limited the rooms for the candidates to socialize as stipulated by the regional head election commission at the municipal, regency, or provincial levels, particularly regarding the installment of banners in public spaces. Such a regulation has lessened the joy of the regional head election, which harmed the public's interest in exercising their political rights.

Secondly, a number of political parties entitled to carry candidates in the local elections were experiencing internal conflicts, and there had been no verdict with permanent legal force. The internal conflicts that occurred within the political party board not only made it

difficult for them to process and propose candidates who had a high degree of electability and popularity, but also resulted in voters, especially the constituents become less enthusiastic to support wholeheartedly the candidate couples proposed by the political parties.

Third, the candidates promoted by political parties or those from independent candidates were deemed to lack the electability, thereby reducing public trust on the elections, political institutions and candidates themselves as the instruments capable of making changes and community improvement. As a result, voters became apathetic and remained reluctant to go to the Voting Center.

Fourth, the people were reluctant to go to the voting center due to the absence of their name as the permanent voters, or did not gain invitation letter for the election (known as C6), which was often caused by the negligence of the regional head election commission. However, without the letter of invitation, the people could vote as long as they were registered in the election center.

Another factor that caused the low participation of the public in the direct and simultaneous regional head election, drawing on the result of the Indonesian Survey Institute, was the change of mode of campaign, which was mostly arranged by the general election commission through media, such as banner, posters, and etc (Embardi, 11 December, 2015). Furthermore, according to the Polmark survey institute, the limited amount of time given to socialize to the public also contributed to the lack participation in the regional head election (Akbar, 11 December, 2015). On the other hand, the general election commission as the administrator argued that the lack participation of the public in the 2015 regional head election was caused by the lack role of the candidates to ensure the people's awareness to exercise their political rights, which happened because the promoting team did not work.

Discussion

Dynamics of The Direct Regional Head Election Policy

The direct regional head election, an important instrument for carrying out the governance, has become the national political consensus after the promulgation of the regional autonomy in Indonesia, as stipulated in the law no. 22 year 1999 as a replacement of the law no. 5 year 1974 regarding the regional government. Law no. 22 year 1999 stipulated

that the regional head election was administered in more democratic way, yet it was held through the representative system or indirect election, in which the head and vice head of the local government were elected directly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly by each member of the regional legislative assembly for which the winning candidates would be officially legalized by the President. However, the provision of the constitution no. 32 year 2004 adding perfection to law No. 22 year 1999 about the regional government has impacted on the reform of the mechanism for the regional head election per se, which aimed to generate a better, more effective and efficient election procedure in accordance with the dynamics of political life and the development of democracy in Indonesia, where all regional heads were elected directly by the people of each region (Nugraha 2016: 73).

Direct regional head election is a manifestation of political autonomy due to the decentralization policy of local governance. It is an important means of enforcing democratic values at the local level to enable people to partake in choosing their leaders who will control and lead the regional development policies to a better direction (Sari, 2016: 87). In addition, it is a means of manifesting the sovereignty of the people in order to get local government elected in a democratic way in accordance with the 1945 Basic Constitution of the State of the Republic of Indonesia.

The existence of direct regional head election, which has been running since 2005, is a changed procedure of the local government election based on constitutional mandate as regulated in Law no. 32 of 2004 concerning the regional government article 56 or article 119 and Government Regulation (PP) No. 6/2005 on Procedures for the election, legalization, appointment and dismissal of regional head and deputy regional head. The direct regional head election is a refinement of the regional government election system by the regional legislative assembly as stipulated in Law no. 22 of 1999 on Regional Government and Government Regulation No.151 of 2000 on procedures for elections, legalization, appointment, and dismissal of regional head and deputy regional head; hence, the existence of Law no. 32 2004 has brought a new insight to the regional political autonomy.

However, the emergence of the idea to bring back the representative system with the aforementioned reasons has certainly fueled controversy among the public. Although it is claimed that the indirect election system may reduce corruption cases, such a representative system of election shows the decline of democracy. Therefore, as a response to the issue,

there appeared the government regulation no. 1 year 2014 which stipulated that the local election be done directly by the people for the purpose of upholding the democratic values.

Subsequently, to empower the basis for the return of the direct election mechanism, government issued the regulation no 1 year 2015 regarding the government regulation determination as a replacement of the law no 1 year 2014 concerning the shift in the law no 22 year 2014 pertinent to the regional head election for the governor, regent and mayor, which was generally known as the regional head election law that stipulated the indirect election system by the regional legislative assembly. The provision of the law no. 1 year 2015 also experienced an amendment as evident in the promulgation of the constitution no 8 year 2015, which is the first amended form of the law no. 1 year 2015. After one year, there issued the the law no. 10 year 2016, which is the second amendment of the law no. 1 year 2015. Despite the essential changes in the law as the perfection to the election mechanism drawing on the law no. 10 year 2016, which is legalized through the annual meeting of the people representative on June 2, 2016, the spirit to sustain the public participation remains affirmed.

Maesure The Degree Lower of Voter Participation in Direct Regional Head Election

The low participation of the public in the 2015 election at the regional levels indicated the failure of carrying out the five-year democratic tradition given the low and high participation of the public as one of the indicators of the success of the administration of such a regional head election (*voter turn out*) (Fachrudin, 14 Desember 2015). In addition, it also indicated the lack awareness of the public regarding the political life, which impacted on the lack of public's interest in promoting the democracy in their regions, as according to Huntington and Nelson (1977: 3) who argued that the high participation of the public indicates that they were aware of and having the democratic lives in their state.

The immergence of the factors above reaffirmed what had been stated by Slamet (2001: 43), that the public participation as the voters would not be realized unless the following supporting factors were fulfilled; the chance availability, which is the situation in which the people are aware of their participation opportunity, the provision of willingness, which is something that encourages the interest and attitude of the people to participate, such as the benefit of their participation, and the provision of wants, which is the awareness or belief on themselves that they have the ability to partake, either in the form of thoughts, power, time, facilities, and other materials.

The low participation in the regional head election was surely not equivalent to the development of democratic values in the regional system, because democracy was regarded as an ideal system of governance of certain states due to the involvement of the people as the ones who held the supreme sovereignty (Gaffar (1992: 106). Additionally, the implementation of democracy as an ideal concept in the governance of certain state with the supreme sovereignty under the people (Mudjiyanto, 2012: 1), would afford the opportunities to realize the followings: Effective participation: people have the wider chance to improve their political participation; Equality in voting: people have equal rights to speak out their opinions without any legal threats regarding the political matters; Gaining enlightened understanding: people have the rights to gain pure understanding from alternative resources of information; Exercising final control over the agenda: People have the opportunity to constitutionally control the government agenda regarding the policies; and Inclusion of adult: adults have the rights to elect in the executive elections (Dahl, 1998: 38).

The democratic concept that placed the public participation at its own right was an ideal life of collectiveness, which should be upheld. According to Hubermas (as cited in Hardiman, 1993: 76), democracy was an ideal life of collectiveness. The people participation in the political sphere, such as in the direct election, was regarded to have the positive values because it made the democracy become more valuable, and influenced the government to be more responsive and affirmative to the establishment of the civilian responsibility. Sociologically, the reasons for the people to participate in the regional head election were their family, parents' political affiliation, husband or wife who was accidentally becoming the candidate, and social environments, such as religious influence, social strata, geopolitics, sexes and ages. While psychologically, the people participation was driven by the economic interest, issues raised by the political parties, and interest in the candidates or figurative factor (Agus, 2016: 9).

The low participation of the public caused by the lack of socialization and mobilization affirmed what Fahrudin siad (2011: 44), that the extent to which people partook in the election did not occur by itself, rather by the availability of the information and technology, supporting institutions, structures and social stratification, local culture and politics. In addition, Paige (in Saifudin, 2009: 19) opines that there has been causal correlation between the political awareness and public participation as voters, namely: If the political awareness

and beliefs on the government are high, the public participation tends to be active; If the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, the public participation tends to be pressured (apathetic); If the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, people will be militant and radical; and If the political awareness of the people is low, yet the beliefs on the government are high, people participation tends to be passive.

Subsequently, the mistrust of the voters in the candidates and political institutions in transforming and bettering their lives, in the context of direct election, remained the primary reason for the public not to fully participate in exercising their voting rights (Laurian, 2004). They remained sceptical of the regional head candidates for the coming five years due to the fact that many regional governments in Indonesia misused their rights and were allegedly caught in corruption. In addition to that, the people also assumed that there would be no betterment at the regional levels through the regional head election. Hence, either participating or not in the regional head election did not have any effects on the betterment of the region. This was legitimized by the fact that during the regional head election were found a number of money politics, which was reasonable that a myriad of local governments were alleged corruption as they needed to return their expenses during the election.

To establish high quality democracy and boost public participation in the regional head election, it required an attempt to make the people aware or to train them by involving multiple elements, such as educational institutions, communication media, and executives (Shehu et.al, 2013). This negated the result of analysis that poverty and low education were not the barriers for the people to participate in exercising their political rights (Thananithichot, 2012), even ethnicity was not the determining factor for the political participation (Curvale et.al, 2013). The public awareness was very much influenced by their motivation (Laurian, 2004).

Finally, although direct elections are still facing problems (Nuryanti, 2015: 126) and voter participation is still low (Sundari and Ishak, 2017: 5), it should not be an excuse to return the election mechanism to the representative system, since, there are other activities, again outside the city), jobs (working and not getting permission), administration (moving, not having identity card/KTP, and not getting invitations), socialization (not knowing candidates, not knowing, and confused), and political (do not believe in candidates and saturated) (Arianto, 2011: 56-59). If expecting an increase in voter participation, the direct

elections should appear more attractive to voters, so that the public does not assume that there is no correlation between the electoral process and the performance of the regional head that the community can enjoy directly (Muhammad, 2015, December 14. In addition, improving the quality of political parties and improving the economic and educational conditions of the people is a factor that should be given attention, because it has an influence on increasing the political participation of the community (Arwiyah, 2012: 86-90).

Conclusion

Drawing on the perspective of decentralization policy, the direct election is a meaningful breakthrough towards the process of democratic consolidation at the regional level. It will afford a wider opportunity for the people to partake in the democratic process for determining their political leadership in the regional scope. This system also allows the people to better actualize their political rights without being reduced by political elites. The direct election also generates the emergence of aspiring, competent, legitimized, and dedicated figure. This is certain because the elected regional government will be more oriented to the people than to several political elites being his partners in the regional legislative assembly.

In addition to evidence the provision of the public sovereignty, the direct election provides a strong legitimacy for the local government to head and manage the life of the people in the region through issued policies. For this reason, the local government will be closer to the people and be more responsive to various problems and public interests. However, despite the availability of upholding the values of political democracy at the local level, the people do not fully make use such an opportunity to deliver their political sovereignty. The provision of reform in the management system of the political operation, low integrity and quality of the candidates on the public eyes, misadministration in determining voters, and the lack of socialization and mobilization of the voters to exercise their political rights remain the empirical problems that discourage the people to partake in the direct regional head election.

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Revision Summary

Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik

Journal Name:	Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik
Manuscript Number:	
Title of the Manuscript:	Local Political Democratization Policy: Voter Participation in The Direct Regional Head Elections
Type of the Article	

Reviewer's Comment	Author's Comment
<p><i>(please insert reviewer comment)</i></p> <p>This article is not well-written and is not coherent as a refereed journal article. The introduction does not provide a clear 'map' of the article. The question has not been posed in the introduction. The critical examination of previous literatures on local politics and democratisation in Indonesia written both Indonesian and foreign scholars has not been mentioned in great details. Arguments and counter arguments among scholars are not well-presented. For example, ideally, the sub-section on 'measure the degree lower of voter participation in direct regional head election (pp. 12-15) should be placed in the beginning of the article. They are also many discussions on the laws and regulations on local election which are unnecessary because the main theme of this article is about voter participation and democratisation.</p> <p>Read again an edited book on Pilkada in 2005/2016 published in English, <i>Deepening Democracy in Indonesia? Direct Elections for Local Leaders</i>, edited by Maribeth Erb and Priyambudi Sulistiyanto, Singapore: ISEAS, 2009.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◎ Articles on this subject written by Vedi Hadiz, Marcus Meitzner, Edward Aspinall and others. ◎ Recent data on the current Pilkada elections are needed to support your arguments, regarding to low voter participation. Much of the points on this subject has been examined by scholars before and what is the author's new arguments on this subject. That's the important contribution to make. 	<p><i>(please write down the revision based on reviewer comment in the manuscript)</i></p> <p>I have refined some of the shortcomings of articles based on reviewer's suggestions, such as moving data about the percentage of voters in each region to the beginning of the post, eliminating articles related to election laws and regulations, organizing narrative and argumentation systematics about the low degree of voter participation, adding the sources of references and references that reviewers recommend in accordance with the focus of writing, such as Maribeth Erb and Priambudi Sulistiyanto, Aspinall, Hadiz, Schulez, and several additional articles.</p>

<p>The manuscript lack of theoretical framework, specially in discussing concept of participation relate to direct election and democratization. Subsequently, the manuscript doesn't strong argument in discussing the relation between participation in direct election and democratization.</p> <p>The main suggestion for the manuscript: try to build strong theoretical foundation on participation in direct election and local democracy</p>	<p>The authors have included several studies of participation and democracy based on several theories to strengthen the author's argumentation on the reality of low voter participation in local elections and incorporate some of the authors' suggestions as a solution to improve direct electoral governance and voter participation.</p>
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Local Political Democratiation Policy: Voter Participation in the Direct Regional Head Elections

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Abstract

The regional head election, a local political event and a symbol of democratic government, is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. Since the Indonesian reformation era, the policy regarding the regional head election has shifted from being elected by the local legislative assembly (representative system) to being elected by the people directly (direct election). Anchored in the quantitative descriptive research design, in which the data was garnered from documentation, this study aims to examine the extent to which the people partook in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election in 2015. The collected data was analyzed by means of the participatory and democracy approach within the local political landscape. The empirical findings showed that the public participation in the local election remained low given the statistical evidence (64.02% of the total voters). The study demonstrates that despite the provision of the political stage within the local scope, it does not fully encourage the people to exercise their political rights.

Keywords:

regional head election; democracy; election; participation

Introduction

The Indonesian political choice in using the democratic system for its governmental operation has contributed to the state development both in terms of structure and culture. The regional head election is a local political event and a symbol of Indonesia as a democratic state, as stipulated in the basic law of the Indonesian Republic 1945. Practically speaking, the policy regarding the regional head election mechanism should be based on the political lives, social dynamics, development and progress of the state democracy, and on explicit regulations. The main actors in the elections consist of community, political parties, and candidate contestants (Fenyapwain, 2013, p. 1).

Since Indonesia's independence, the election of the regional head is regulated through Law Number 5 Year 1974 regarding the local government. The law posited two functions: as an autonomous local government who led and was fully responsible for the local governance and as a regional government who represented the central government regarding general matters at the regional levels. However, based on the policy of Law Number 5 Year 1974, looks that the attitude of the very authoritative center government, because not provide the room for local community to participate in distributing the political rights at the local level.

However, since the fall of the New Order, which was possible because of reform waves in 1998, there has been a significant shift in the regional government system, which generates a new mechanism for carrying out the regional head election. In contrary to the New Orde era, the regional head was decided by the president or minister of home affairs; they no longer have had such an authority since the Reformation era. The amendment of the basic law 1945 brings about significant shifts pertinent to the regional head election system, for instance, the article 18 para (4) basic law 1945, which stipulates that the governor, regent, and mayor, who respectively head the province, regency, and city, are elected democratically.

The term *elected democratically* has been actualized in two ways. Firstly, the regional head election is done directly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly by each member of the regional legislative assembly (representative system). Secondly, the regional head election is done directly by each regional people, without the representative system as elected by the regional legislative assembly with the stipulation that the candidate with 50%+1 voices would be determined as the winner to lead the region for five years.

Until the regional head elections of 2015, the direct participation of every regional people is still an ideal choice in the mechanism of enforcing the political democratic rights of regional peoples. The implementation of the direct and simultaneous election on December 9, 2015, both at the provincial, district and municipal levels, was relatively democratic, safe and peaceful, which reaped a positive appreciation from a number of people, including observers, as a democratic experiment that was so admirable and commendable. However, the public participation remained low. The data taken from the general election commission showed the public participation in the direct and simultaneous

regional head election on the December 9, 2015 was 64.02 percent on average of the total expected voters (Tashandra, 2015).

Even in some regions, the level of participation was below 50 percent. Other reports also evidenced such a low participation in several cities and regencies, which included Medan city (26.88 percent), Serang regency (50.84 percent), Surabaya (52.18 percent), Jember regency (52.19 percent), Tuban regency (52.25 percent), and Mataram city (56.94 percent). On the other hand, some other regions with relatively high participation were Central Mamuju regency (92.17 percent), South Sorong Regency (89.92 percent), East Bolaang Mangondow (88.83 percent), Tomohon city (88.47 percent), and North Konawe (88.24 percent). Despite the facts above, the general election commission targeted the public participation in the democratic event to be around 75.5 percent (Tashandra, 2015).

This low participation had come to the fore and remained mostly reported by the mass media in Indonesia. From the 358 media outlets that reported the regional head election in the country, the public participation appeared to be appealing. As a result, the issue of voting in the direct regional head elections system got a lot of attention, because it was not in line with expectations of good local governance and decentralization policies (Erb & Sulityanto, 2009). This study looked into the public participation in exercising their political rights regarding the five-year democratic event in the regional level framed under the direct and simultaneous regional head election.

Methods

This research is designed as a descriptive qualitative research that intends to study the case of low voter participation in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election 2015. With reference to the locus of the data collection, this research belonged to the literature study, in which the data was collected by means of a documentation technique as it made use of the existing literature resources, such as books, journals, Internet, and relevant previous research findings; therefore, the data in this study was categorized into secondary data. Subsequently, the data was analyzed through the use of theories relevant to the participatory study of people in the regional political context.

Results

The Empirical Problems of the Direct Regional Head Election

The regional head election is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. In other words, the direct regional head election is a political expansion of the people and as a form of the people's sovereignty in determining the figure of the regional leaders in accordance with the hopes and aspirations of the people, and it has strong political legitimacy (Simamora, 2011, p. 229). Drawing on the context of the regional head election in democratic countries, the concept that underpins the public participation has basic ideologies that people have the right to decide their own leaders, who will later determine the public policy for the sake of social purposes. These democratic nations posit that the people hold the supreme power over the states' sovereignty (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), hence their political participation should be taken into account.

Historically, the first direct election was held in 2005 in Kutai Kertanegara Regency. It turns out from year to year and raises issues related to regional readiness in conducting regional head elections, implementation issues schedule, stages and program of regional head election, fulfillment of candidate of regional head and vice regional head and other issues related to execution at field (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126).

The direct and simultaneous regional head election was held on December 9, 2015, in 8 provinces, 222 regencies, and 34 cities across Indonesia. However, there remains a rise of fraudulent claim regarding its implementation (Sahdan & Haboddin, 2009, p. 57). Similarly, the general election commission as the legal institution administering the national and regional head election argues the same thing that the results of the first period of the direct and simultaneous regional head election argued for. In fact, it left several problems due to the rejection of the results by lost candidates drawing on 147 lawsuits. On the other hand, the primary object of the plaintiff basically centered on the accusation of fraud throughout the election. Such accusations included money politic, the involvement of a state civil apparatus, partiality of the election organizer, and the data manipulation pertinent to the election (KPU, 2015, p. 7).

The accused frauds committed by the election organizer were also reinforced by the provision of the data of violation of the code of ethics of the election committee in the Board

of General Election Organizer. Since it was established on June 12, 2012 to March 2013, it has received 90 lawsuits related to violations of the code of ethics with the details of its decision as follows; sanction of dismissal: 5 chiefs of the general election commission and 15 members, 1 chief of election guard committee and 2 members, 5 members of Independent Commission of General Election; firm sanction or warning: 4 members of the general election commission, and 6 members, and 1 member of election guard committee; and written reminding: 1 chief of the general election commission (KPU, 2015, p. 52).

In addition, based on the data collected from the field, the implementation of direct and simultaneous elections in 2015 caused several problems (Budiman, 2015, p. 2), such as the following:

Firstly, the selection of the candidates did not go through a democratic system as they were fully determined by party officials at the central level (central board). The general election commission would only approve the candidates if they were proposed by the chief of the party board. If the candidates did not have any recommendation, the general election commission would reject their candidature, which was against the theory of representation. On the other hand, the regional heads, who were not able to represent their regions, would not be able to provide the best services to the community. Moreover, within several parties was a conflict of stewardship among the members, which confused the public of their political choices.

Secondly, there remained a dynastic system of politics in the direct regional head election, although the constitution No. 1 Year 2014 regarding the governor, regent and mayor election had limited the spaces and opportunities for the growth of the political dynasty. Furthermore, the general election commission had stipulated the regulation No. 9 Year 2015, which posits that progressive changes in diminishing the chains of dynastic politic from any angle. However, it changed after the constitutional court issued the stipulation of the election conflict No. 33/PUU-XIII/2015 regarding the election of governors, regents and mayors against the law article No. 28J para (2) basic law 1945. The constitutional court initially indicated the government had violated human rights because it denied someone to candidate him or herself to be the regional head or vice of the regional head due to having a familial relationship with the current government. Therefore, there remained the dynastic power having controls in various regions given the latest regulation. The growth of the

political dynasty did not mean that the public was satisfied with their performance, yet the money politic hampered the transactional politic, which brought about the dilemma about the regional governance.

Thirdly, there appeared the replacement of the two-round systems with the first past the post (FPTP) in determining the winning candidates. The former allowed the candidates to gain public support by means of a simple majority (a minimum of 30 percent), so it relatively affirmed their legitimacy in the region. On the other hand, the latter limited the public support (legitimacy) because the regional democracy through the regional head election would not run the second round of elections should there have been a disparity between the winning candidates, and the plaintiffs were small (2 percent).

Fourth, the constitution No. 8 Year 2015 rejected the political parties that proposed candidates who gained foreign donors for their campaign. The central government, regional government, national state-owned enterprise and others with fictive identity, yet this law did not forbid the candidates from receiving any donors. With this regard, the regulation also obliged the political parties to propose candidates to open special bank accounts for the campaign purposes, yet it did not apply to the individual candidates.

Furthermore, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs of Indonesia, Tjahjo Kumolo (Lustrilanang, 2017, p. 16), there were some underlying problems arising during the direct and simultaneous regional head elections, which encouraged the anticipation of the following issues throughout the election periods: the availability of unregistered voters; Potential voters with no e-ID card; the lack of optimal role and function of the general election institution; the rise of questions regarding the issue of independency, integrity, and credibility of administering the election; the public participation after the election to become the balance for the state bureaucracy as a result of the election or *elected officials*; the lack of willingness of public in the general election; the provision of the political parties that often presented in the face of the general election; the existence of provinces with their local characteristics; ineffective law enforcement for elections with various problems, both technical and non-technical factors; the emergence of crucial issues, such as racial issues, money politics, campaign funds, abuse of power, bureaucratic political neutrality and mobilization of state civil apparatus that harmed the integrity of elections.

The emergence of various problems in the implementation of local elections directly above has been predicted before by the government, thus inviting the discourse to restore the direct electoral system into the hands of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD). This even appeared in the Plenary Session of the House of Representatives (DPR RI) on September 24, 2014, on the grounds that direct elections have high political costs, are vulnerable to the emergence of conflict, and do not guarantee the emergence of a good regional head (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126). However, because the development of a democratic political system requires direct community involvement, the direct Regional Head Election is finally maintained, as a manifestation of the repatriation of the "basic rights" of the community in electing its regional leaders (Sundari & Ishak, 2017, p. 1).

The Degree of Voter Participation in the Direct Regional Head Election

The transformation of the regional governance system into a more democratic one as stipulated by the regional autonomy has brought new hope to the realm of regional politics. In the democratic development perspective within the local scope, the approved regional autonomy becomes a promising milestone as it affords wider opportunities for the public to participate in determining their regional governments (Tejo in Karim, 2008, p. i). The existence of the direct election policy is one of the symbols of upholding democracy at the local level. It has created a stage for the community to exercise their political rights, as well as to manifest political modernization in the democratic state (Sundari & Ishak, 2015, p. 3).

The direct regional head election is a result of reforming the local government system to a more democratic direction, which aims to give local people the opportunity to determine their regional leaders directly. A direct regional head election, when viewed from the theory, has a very strong legitimacy because the elected regional head is directly elected by its constituents. Constituents in this case are given the opportunity to participate in determining the local government. Thus, elected regional heads, besides possessing strong legitimacy, are expected to bring regional heads with an orientation to improve the welfare of their people (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 127).

For this reason, the election of regional government through a representative system by the local legislative assembly has been deemed irrelevant to the demands of emerging democratic values as it makes the candidates remain unrecognized by the people in the

region. The phenomenon of low public participation in the 2015 direct and simultaneous regional head election was caused by several factors (Fachrudin, 2015), as follows:

Firstly, the regulation factor; the law No. 8 year 2015 regarding the regional head election or the regulation of the general election commission No. 7 year 2015 about the electoral campaign of the governor and vice governor, regent, and vice regent, mayor and vice mayor, which limited the rooms for the candidates to socialize as stipulated by the regional head election commission at the municipal, regency, or provincial levels, particularly regarding the installment of banners in public spaces. Such a regulation lessened the joy of the regional head election, which harmed the public's interest in exercising their political rights.

Secondly, a number of political parties entitled to carry candidates in the local elections were experiencing internal conflicts, and there had been no verdict with permanent legal force. The internal conflicts that occurred within the political party board not only made it difficult for them to process and propose candidates who had a high degree of electability and popularity, but also resulted in voters, especially the constituents, becoming less enthusiastic to support wholeheartedly the candidate couples proposed by the political parties.

Third, the candidates promoted by political parties or those from independent candidates were deemed to lack the electability, thereby reducing public trust on the elections, political institutions and candidates themselves as the instruments capable of making changes and community improvement. As a result, voters became apathetic and remained reluctant to go to the voting center.

Fourth, the people were reluctant to go to the voting center due to the absence of their name as permanent voters, or they did not gain an invitation letter for the election (known as C6), which was often caused by the negligence of the regional head election commission. However, without the letter of invitation, the people could vote as long as they were registered in the election center.

Another factor that caused the low participation of the public in the direct and simultaneous regional head election, drawing on the result of the Indonesian Survey Institute, was the change of mode of campaign, which was mostly arranged by the general election commission through media, such as banners, posters, etc. (Ambardi, 2015).

Furthermore, according to the Polmark Survey Institute, the limited amount of time given to socialize to the public also contributed to the lack of participation in the regional head election (Akbar, 2015). On the other hand, the general election commission argued that the lack of participation of the public in the 2015 regional head election was caused by the lack of the role of the candidates to ensure the people's awareness to exercise their political rights, which happened because the promoting team did not work.

Discussion

Dynamics of the Direct Regional Head Election Policy

The election of regional heads (Pilkada) is a contest for the legitimacy of power held by a person in order to lead the way in the process of governance and regional development. In other words, Pilkada is a mechanism of selection and delegation of authority to someone who has the legitimacy to fill the positions of local government leadership (Surbakti, 1992, p. 181).

In the context of the election of regional heads, in countries that embrace democratic ideals, the idea of people's participation has an ideological basis that the people have the right to decide who will be the future leader and to determine public policy for their welfare. Countries that adopt a democratic system are states that view the existence of its citizens as the owner of sovereignty in the country (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), so that its political participation cannot be ignored.

The election of regional heads has been an important issue since independence, and it has become one of the main characters in the provincial and district governance system of Indonesia (Mboi, in Earb & Sulistiyanto, 2009). However, the provision of the constitution No. 32 Year 2004 adding perfection to law No. 22 Year 1999 about the regional government has impacted on the reform of the mechanism for the regional head election per se, which aimed to generate a better, more effective and efficient election procedure in accordance with the dynamics of political life and the development of democracy in Indonesia, where all regional heads were elected directly by the people of each region (Nugraha 2016, p. 73).

The direct regional head election is a manifestation of political autonomy due to the decentralization policy of local governance. It is an important means of enforcing democratic values at the local level to enable people to partake in choosing their leaders who control and

lead the regional development policies in a better direction (Sari, 2016, p. 87). In addition, it is a means of manifesting the sovereignty of the people (Simamora, 2011, p. 229), in order to get local government elected in a democratic way in accordance with the 1945 Basic Constitution of the State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Unfortunately, the local democratic process of local politics through direct local elections in Indonesia demonstrates a negative practice, largely due to the politics of money, and is dominated by local elites (Aspinall, 2010), so that although Indonesia is considered successful in building its democracy, in terms of quality, it is still relatively low, which is a result of the political business conspiracy or hijacked interest groups; it ignored the real purpose of fighting for the decentralization of local politics (Hadiz, 2004). In addition, the decentralization policy that gave birth to local direct election systems has weakened accountability in the regions (Sjahrir et. al, 2014). The direct mechanism of local elections with the aim of strengthening the democratic accountability of local governments is ineffective. This, among others, is seen from the indication of corruption that has not decreased significantly, but it is decentralized and disorganized (Hill, 2012).

The direct election policy of regional heads as a form of community independence in determining their leaders at the local level has in fact resulted in a spate of corruption at the local level (Rumesten, 2014). In fact, the Ministry of Internal Affairs noted that during the years 2005 to 2015, more than 350 provincial and district heads dealt with law enforcement because of an abuse of authority. This means that the direct election of regional heads as a form of circulation of leadership at the local level has only led to a type of leadership that is coincidentally chosen by the people and has considerable capital, not because of the competence and creativity of its leadership (Labolo, 2015, vi).

They remained skeptical of the regional head candidates for the coming five years due to the fact that many regional governments in Indonesia misused their rights and were allegedly caught in corruption (Sjahrir et. al, 2014). In addition to that, the people also assumed there would be no betterment at the regional levels through the regional head election. Hence, either participating or not in the regional head election did not have any effect on the betterment of the region. This was legitimized by the fact that during the regional head election, there were a number of money politics, so it was reasonable that a

myriad of local governments were allegedly corrupt as they needed to return their expenses during the election (Sari, 2016, p. 87).

However, there appears to be a big consequence because it generates big political campaigns, which requires much funding from both the national and local budgets (Sari, 2016, p. 87). The average expense for the mayor and regent elections is twenty-five billion, and five hundred billion for the governor election. Within five years, there has been thirty billion in state funding used for the regional head election. Meanwhile, on the other hand, the participation of voters in the local direct election system is also likely to decline. However, with the change of direct local elections, the system is simultaneously considered to cut half of the budget (Budiman, 2015, p. 13).

The existence of various problems that occur in the direct election of regional heads should not be used as a basis to say that local democratization policies or local political autonomy is not suitable for Indonesia. Local political policy must be maintained, as it can be a means of political education, deliberation, and realizing accountable local government for regional progress. In addition, according to Putnam et al. (1994), the direct election of regional heads can be a means of democratic participation of the community to demonstrate commitment, trust and cooperation in forming a civic community to build regional development performance. This idea also refers to the views of John Stuart Mill and proponents of participatory democracy at the local level, that opening taps for community involvement will support the creation of good governance and support for the achievement of social welfare (Suyatno, 2016).

Admittedly, the policy of local political decentralization in Indonesia has not shown significant results in better local governance, but rather on budget wastage (Hill, 2012). However, for the sake of political empowerment of the people, this policy of local political democracy must remain guarded, because this political democracy is a system of government in which those who have authority to make decisions (that have the force of law) acquire and retain this authority either directly or indirectly as the result of winning the free election in which the great majority of adult citizens are allowed to participate (Burns, in Saifudin, 2009: 13)

The practice of local political democracy, which places the participation of society as its essence, as in the direct elections of regional heads in Indonesia, according to Habermas

(Hardiman, 1993, p. 76), is an ideal form of common life that must be fought for. Although the ideal situation cannot be fully achieved, the most important thing is that the principle of handling to achieve the "ideal state" is continuously enhanced and rejects all kinds of obstacles, either the barrier of freedom of voice of opinion or the avoidance of isolation of social groups.

Starting from some views about ideal democracy in the system of governance, both central and local, direct elections are still facing problems (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126) and voter participation is still low (Sundari & Ishak, 2017, p. 5). This should not be an excuse to return the election mechanism to the representative system, since, there are other activities, again outside the city), jobs (working and not getting permission), administration (moving, not having identity card/KTP, and not getting invitations), socialization (not knowing candidates, not knowing, and confused), and political (do not believe in candidates and saturated) (Arianto, 2011, p. 56-59).

As for addressing various problems in the direct election of regional heads, there is no other way, unless all regional elements (government, private, and civil society) participate in totality, with their knowledge, attitude and actions that must be directed to maintain and run the stage the local democracy is in accordance with the established rules of the game. Not participating falsely, that participation is born because there is a certainty or payment by certain parties.

Measure the Degree Lower of Voter Participation in Direct Regional Head Election

The reform of the system of local government administration towards a more democratic direction that carried the policy of regional autonomy has issued new hope in local political life. In the perspective of democratic development at the local level, the enactment of this regional autonomy policy is certainly a good sign, since the involvement of the community in the local political arena is increasingly wide open (Karim, 2008, p. i). The opening of the public political participation taps is a form of the care of democratic values at the local level as well as the objectives of the decentralization policy (Muluk, 2009).

Political participation is the core of democracy, so it is one of the logical implications of a democratic system adopted by a state, because political participation will not occur if a country's political life is not built on democracy (Huntington and Nelson, 1977, p. 3). Even

political participation is at the heart of democracy. Democracy cannot be imagined without the ability of citizens to participate freely in the state process. In the view of Herbert McClosky (in Budiardjo 1981, p. 1), political participation is a voluntary activity of citizens to take part in the electoral process of the ruler and the process of forming general policies, both directly and indirectly. However, voter voting in the general election is considered to be the least active form of active political participation, since it requires minimum involvement, which will cease if the vote has been implemented (Rush & Althoff, 2007, p. 122).

In Indonesia, to facilitate the political participation of local communities through this voting action, the government issued a policy of local political democratization in the form of direct regional head elections by each community based on Law No. 32 Year 2004 on local government (Hidayat in Erb & Sulistiyanto, 2009). Unfortunately, the local political democracy facilities are not well utilized by local communities. This is evident from the low level of voter participation in channeling their voting rights in the direct elections of regional heads held in various regions from 2005 to 2015 (Tashandra, 2015).

There are still many apathetic local people in the smallest active political participation (Rush & Althoff, 2007, p. 122). The low participation of the public in the 2015 election at the regional levels indicated the failure of carrying out the five-year democratic tradition given the low and high participation of the public as one of the indicators of the success of the administration of such a regional head election (*voter turn out*) (Fachrudin, 2015). In addition, it also indicated the lack awareness of the public regarding the political life, which impacted on the lack of public's interest in promoting the democracy in their regions, as according to Huntington and Nelson (1977, p. 3) who argued that the high participation of the public indicates that they were aware of and having the democratic lives in their state.

Based on empirical data, the low voter participation in direct regional head elections in various regions in Indonesia, which can only reach an average of 64.02 percent (Tshandra, 2015), is at least caused by three factors:

First, the mistrust of voters against candidates for regional heads to apply the mandate and ability to carry out the task of regional leadership. This attitude is triggered by the many corruption cases that hit regional heads in Indonesia, and most of them are from politicians, not professionals. These voter typologies tend to think rationally and have higher levels of education. The mistrust of the voters in transforming and bettering their lives, in the context

of direct election, the primary reason for the public not to fully participate in exercising their voting rights (Laurian, 2004).

Second, pragmatic, that is, voters feel they do not get any benefit from the election of the regional head. The election of regional heads is considered to benefit only political elites who expect certain positions in local government. The typology of this voter generally comes from the lower economic community with low education levels. They will choose if given material rewards, so often the target of money politics team of candidates for regional head. The low voter participation is not because it is unconscious and does not consider political participation important, but because they feel no real benefit will be obtained for themselves (Mao, 2010). The people participation was driven by the economic interest (Agus, 2016).

Third, the disinterest of voters against candidates who advanced as contestants of local elections. This may be because among the candidates, it is considered that no one represents his identity, whether tribal, religious, ethnic, professional, group, and others. This typology tends to be traditional and militant. In fact, according to Pratikno (Erb & Sulistiyanto, 2009), the low level of active participation of the community in the direct election of regional heads in Indonesia is a manifestation of the traditional ways or attitudes of grassroots communities in protesting the political system, the sense of aversion, pessimism, areas dominated by the elite.

The low level of voter participation in the direct election of regional heads in various regions of Indonesia has nothing to do with the influence of ethnicity factors and low levels of education (Curvale, 2013), residential areas between cities and villages (Mao, 2010), and communication and information issues (Mikkelsen, 2011, p. 57). This reasoning is based on the empirical fact of the recapitulation of the number of voters in the direct election of regional heads by 2015, where the number of electors to the mayors, the urban voters, whose education tends to be higher, and the district head, whose voters are from rural communities, education is lower, does not indicate any significant gaps. Whereas in the case of communication and information, there is no reason for the local community not to know the existence of the election of the regional head, because the various elements involved in the direct election of regional heads, looks very active in disseminating information, either through the media or directly.

The low participation in the regional head election was surely not equivalent to the development of democratic values in the regional system, because democracy was regarded as an ideal system of governance of certain states due to the involvement of the people as the ones who held the supreme sovereignty (Gaffar, 1992, p. 106). Additionally, the implementation of democracy as an ideal concept in the governance of certain states with the supreme sovereignty under the people (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), would afford the opportunities to realize the following: effective participation: people have the wider chance to improve their political participation; equality in voting: people have equal rights to speak out their opinions without any legal threats regarding the political matters; gaining enlightened understanding: people have the rights to gain pure understanding from alternative resources of information; exercising final control over the agenda: People have the opportunity to constitutionally control the government agenda regarding the policies; and inclusion of adults: adults have the rights to elect in the executive elections (Dahl, 1998, p. 38).

The emergence of the factors above reaffirmed what had been stated by Slamet (2001, p. 43), that the public participation as voters would not be realized unless the following supporting factors were fulfilled: the chance availability, which is the situation in which the people are aware of their participation opportunity, the provision of willingness, which is something that encourages the interest and attitude of the people to participate, such as the benefit of their participation, and the provision of wants, which is the awareness or belief on themselves that they have the ability to partake, either in the form of thoughts, power, time, facilities, and other materials.

The democratic concept that placed the public participation at its own right was an ideal life of collectiveness, which should be upheld. According to Habermas (as cited in Hardiman, 1993, p. 76), democracy was an ideal life of collectiveness. The people participating in the political sphere, such as in the direct election, was regarded to have the positive values because it made the democracy become more valuable, and influenced the government to be more responsive and affirmative to the establishment of the civilian responsibility.

The extent to which people partook in the election did not occur by itself, but rather by the availability of the information and technology, supporting institutions, structures and

social stratification, local culture and politics. In addition, Paige (in Saifudin, 2009, p. 19) opines that there has been causal correlation between the political awareness and public participation as voters: if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are high, the public participation tends to be active; if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, the public participation tends to be pressured (apathetic); if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, people will be militant and radical; and If the political awareness of the people is low, yet the beliefs in the government are high, people participation tends to be passive.

To establish high quality democracy and to boost public participation in the regional head election required an attempt to make the people aware or to train them about participation, not just as a right but as an obligation of the whole society by involving multiple elements, such as educational institutions, communication media, and executives (Shehu et al., 2013). This negated the result of analysis that poverty and low education were not the barriers for the people to participate in exercising their political rights (Thananithichot, 2012); even ethnicity was not the determining factor for the political participation (Curvale et al., 2013). The public awareness was very much influenced by their motivation (Laurian, 2004).

Finally, low voter participation in the context of the local direct election in Indonesia should be seen as a process of democratic maturation at the local level. If expecting an increase in voter participation, the direct elections should appear more attractive to voters, so the public does not assume there is no correlation between the electoral process and the performance of the regional head that the community can enjoy directly (Muhammad, 2015). In addition, improving the quality of political parties and improving the economic and educational political conditions of the people is a factor that should be given attention, because it has an influence on increasing the political participation of the community (Arwiyah, 2012, p. 86-90).

Conclusion

Drawing on the perspective of decentralization policy, the direct election is a meaningful breakthrough towards the process of democratic consolidation at the regional level. It will afford a wider opportunity for the people to partake in the democratic process

for determining their political leadership in the regional scope. This system also allows the people to better actualize their political rights without being reduced by political elites. The direct election also generates the emergence of aspiring, competent, legitimized, and dedicated figure. This is certainly because the elected regional government will be more oriented to the people than to several political elites being his partners in the regional legislative assembly.

In addition to evidence of the provision of the public sovereignty, the direct election provides a strong legitimacy for the local government to head and manage the life of the people in the region through issued policies. For this reason, the local government will be closer to the people and more responsive to various problems and public interests. However, despite the availability of upholding the values of political democracy at the local level, the people do not fully make use such an opportunity to deliver their political sovereignty. The provision of reform in the management system of the political operation, low integrity and quality of the candidates on the public eyes, administrative issues in determining voters, and the lack of socialization and mobilization of the voters to exercise their political rights remain the empirical problems that discourage the people to partake in the direct regional head election.

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Form Review

Journal Name:	Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik
Manuscript Number:	
Title of the Manuscript:	Local Political Democratisation Policy: Voter Participation in the District Regional Head Elections
Type of the Article	

PART 1: Review Comments*

	Reviewer's comment
<p><u>Compulsory</u> REVISION comments</p> <p>Major revision is required</p>	<p>This article is not well-written and is not coherent as a refereed journal article. The introduction does not provide a clear 'map' of the article. The question has not been posed in the introduction. The critical examination of previous literatures on local politics and democratisation in Indonesia written both Indonesian and foreign scholars has not been mentioned in great details. Arguments and counter arguments among scholars are not well-presented. For example, ideally, the sub-section on 'measure the degree lower of voter participation in direct regional head election (pp. 12-15) should be placed in the beginning of the article. They are also many discussions on the laws and regulations on local election which are unnecessary because the main theme of this article is about voter participation and democratisation.</p>
<p><u>Optional/General</u> comments</p> <p>Literatures on local elections in Indonesia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read again an edited book on Pilkada in 2005/2016 published in English, <i>Deepening Democracy in Indonesia? Direct Elections for Local Leaders</i>, edited by Maribeth Erb and Priyambudi Sulistiyanto, Singapore: ISEAS, 2009. • Articles on this subject written by Vedi Hadiz, Marcus Meitzner, Edward Aspinall and others. • Recent data on the current Pilkada elections are needed to support your arguments, regarding to low voter participation. Much of the points on this subject has been examined by scholars before and what is the author's new arguments on this subject. That's the important contribution to make.

PART 2: Ethical Issues*

(If yes, kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)

Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?	N/A
Are there competing interest issues in this manuscript?	N/A

If plagiarism is suspected, please provide related proofs or web links.	N/A
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PART 3: Manuscript Features*

(Kindly please write down the explanation)

	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
Originality of the work		x
Subject relevance	x	
Strong arguments		x
Professional/industrial relevance	x	
Completeness of the work		x
Acknowledgement of the work of others by references		x
Organisation of the manuscript		x
Clarity in writing tables graphs and illustrations	N/A	

PART 4: Objective Evaluation:

Guideline	MARKS of this manuscript*
Accept As Is	
Acceptable with minor revision	
Acceptable with major revision	V
Rejected	

* Denotes required field

Form Review

Journal Name:	Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik
Manuscript Number:	31222-72625-2-RV
Title of the Manuscript:	Local Political Democratization Policy: Voter Participation in The Direct Regional Head Elections
Type of the Article	Journal

PART 1: Review Comments*

	Reviewer's comment
<u>Compulsory</u> REVISION comments	The manuscript lack of theoretical framework, specially in discussing concept of participation relate to direct election and democratization. Subsequently, the manuscript doesn't strong argument in discussing the relation between participation in direct election and democratization.
<u>Optional/General</u> comments	The main suggestion for the manuscript: try to build strong theoretical foundation on participation in direct election and local democracy

PART 2: Ethical Issues*

(If yes, kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)

Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?	No. The manuscript use academic guideline correctly as his/her reference in the manuscript.
Are there competing interest issues in this manuscript?	No
If plagiarism is suspected, <u>please provide related proofs or web links.</u>	No

PART 3: Manuscript Features*

(Kindly please write down the explanation)

	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
Originality of the work		There is no novelty in the manuscript in order to explain between participation in direct election and democratisation
Subject relevance	The subject quite relevance,, however, lack of analytical in discussing the issue	
Strong arguments		Not having strong argument (common sense). The manuscript need framing to analyze the issue

Professional/industrial relevance	The manuscript have potential professional relevance, however, lack of explanation in the text	
Completeness of the work		The article need theoretical foundation or analytical framework to discuss the issue
Acknowledgement of the work of others by references	The manuscript have acknowledge the other work in his/her references	
Organisation of the manuscript	The organization of the manuscript relatively quite systematic.	
Clarity in writing tables graphs and illustrations	No table and graphs in the manuskrips.	

PART 4: Objective Evaluation:

Guideline	MARKS of this manuscript*
Accept As Is	
Acceptable with minor revision	
Acceptable with major revision	V
Rejected	

* Denotes required field

regional government system, which generates a new mechanism for carrying out the regional head election. In contrary to the New Orde era, the regional head was decided by the president or minister of home affairs; they no longer have had such an authority since the Reformation era. The amendment of the basic law 1945 brings about significant shifts pertinent to the regional head election system, for instance, the article 18 para (4) basic law 1945, which stipulates that the governor, regent, and mayor, who respectively head the province, regency, and city, are elected democratically.

The term *elected democratically* has been actualized in two ways. Firstly, the regional head election is done directly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly by each member of the regional legislative assembly (representative system). Secondly, the regional head election is done directly by each regional people, without the representative system as elected by the regional legislative assembly with the stipulation that the candidate with 50%+1 voices would be determined as the winner to lead the region for five years.

Until the regional head elections of 2015, the direct participation of every regional people is still an ideal choice in the mechanism of enforcing the political democratic rights of regional peoples. The implementation of the direct and simultaneous election on December 9, 2015, both at the provincial, district and municipal levels, was relatively democratic, safe and peaceful, which reaped a positive appreciation from a number of people, including observers, as a democratic experiment that was so admirable and commendable. However, the public participation remained low. The data taken from the general election commission showed the public participation in the direct and simultaneous regional head election on the December 9, 2015 was 64.02 percent on average of the total expected voters (Tashandra, 2015).

Even in some regions, the level of participation was below 50 percent. Other

reports also evidenced such a low participation in several cities and regencies, which included Medan city (26.88 percent), Serang regency (50.84 percent), Surabaya (52.18 percent), Jember regency (52.19 percent), Tuban regency (52.25 percent), and Mataram city (56.94 percent). On the other hand, some other regions with relatively high participation were Central Mamuju regency (92.17 percent), South Sorong Regency (89.92 percent), East Bolaang Mangondow (88.83 percent), Tomohon city (88.47 percent), and North Konawe (88.24 percent). Despite the facts above, the general election commission targeted the public participation in the democratic event to be around 75.5 percent (Tashandra, 2015).

This low participation had come to the fore and remained mostly reported by the mass media in Indonesia. From the 358 media outlets that reported the regional head election in the country, the public participation appeared to be appealing. As a result, the issue of voting in the direct regional head elections system got a lot of attention, because it was not in line with expectations of good local governance and decentralization policies (Erb & Sulitianto, 2009). This study looked into the public participation in exercising their political rights regarding the five-year democratic event in the regional level framed under the direct and simultaneous regional head election.

Methods

This research is designed as a descriptive qualitative research that intends to study the case of low voter participation in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election 2015. With reference to the locus of the data collection, this research belonged to the literature study, in which the data was collected by means of a documentation technique as it made use of the existing literature resources, such as books, journals, Internet, and relevant previous research findings; therefore, the data in this study was categorized into secondary

data. Subsequently, the data was analyzed through the use of theories relevant to the participatory study of people in the regional political context.

Results

The Empirical Problems of the Direct Regional Head Election

The regional head election is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. In other words, the direct regional head election is a political expansion of the people and as a form of the people's sovereignty in determining the figure of the regional leaders in accordance with the hopes and aspirations of the people, and it has strong political legitimacy (Simamora, 2011, p. 229). Drawing on the context of the regional head election in democratic countries, the concept that underpins the public participation has basic ideologies that people have the right to decide their own leaders, who will later determine the public policy for the sake of social purposes. These democratic nations posit that the people hold the supreme power over the states' sovereignty (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), hence their political participation should be taken into account.

Historically, the first direct election was held in 2005 in Kutai Kertanegara Regency. It turns out from year to year and raises issues related to regional readiness in conducting regional head elections, implementation issues schedule, stages and program of regional head election, fulfillment of candidate of regional head and vice regional head and other issues related to execution at field (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126).

The direct and simultaneous regional head election was held on December 9, 2015, in 8 provinces, 222 regencies, and 34 cities across Indonesia. However, there remains a rise of fraudulent claim regarding its implementation (Sahdan & Haboddin, 2009, p. 57). Similarly, the general election commission as the legal

institution administering the national and regional head election argues the same thing that the results of the first period of the direct and simultaneous regional head election argued for. In fact, it left several problems due to the rejection of the results by lost candidates drawing on 147 lawsuits. On the other hand, the primary object of the plaintiff basically centered on the accusation of fraud throughout the election. Such accusations included money politic, the involvement of a state civil apparatus, partiality of the election organizer, and the data manipulation pertinent to the election (KPU, 2015, p. 7).

The accused frauds committed by the election organizer were also reinforced by the provision of the data of violation of the code of ethics of the election committee in the Board of General Election Organizer. Since it was established on June 12, 2012 to March 2013, it has received 90 lawsuits related to violations of the code of ethics with the details of its decision as follows; sanction of dismissal: 5 chiefs of the general election commission and 15 members, 1 chief of election guard committee and 2 members, 5 members of Independent Commission of General Election; firm sanction or warning: 4 members of the general election commission, and 6 members, and 1 member of election guard committee; and written reminding: 1 chief of the general election commission (KPU, 2015, p. 52).

In addition, based on the data collected from the field, the implementation of direct and simultaneous elections in 2015 caused several problems (Budiman, 2015, p. 2), such as the following:

Firstly, the selection of the candidates did not go through a democratic system as they were fully determined by party officials at the central level (central board). The general election commission would only approve the candidates if they were proposed by the chief of the party board. If the candidates did not have any recommendation, the general election

commission would reject their candidature, which was against the theory of representation. On the other hand, the regional heads, who were not able to represent their regions, would not be able to provide the best services to the community. Moreover, within several parties was a conflict of stewardship among the members, which confused the public of their political choices.

Secondly, there remained a dynastic system of politics in the direct regional head election, although the constitution No. 1 Year 2014 regarding the governor, regent and mayor election had limited the spaces and opportunities for the growth of the political dynasty. Furthermore, the general election commission had stipulated the regulation No. 9 Year 2015, which posits that progressive changes in diminishing the chains of dynastic politic from any angle. However, it changed after the constitutional court issued the stipulation of the election conflict No. 33/PUU-XIII/2015 regarding the election of governors, regents and mayors against the law article No. 28J para (2) basic law 1945. The constitutional court initially indicated the government had violated human rights because it denied someone to candidate him or herself to be the regional head or vice of the regional head due to having a familial relationship with the current government. Therefore, there remained the dynastic power having controls in various regions given the latest regulation. The growth of the political dynasty did not mean that the public was satisfied with their performance, yet the money politic hampered the transactional politic, which brought about the dilemma about the regional governance.

Thirdly, there appeared the replacement of the two-round systems with the first past the post (FPTP) in determining the winning candidates. The former allowed the candidates to gain public support by means of a simple majority (a minimum of 30 percent), so it relatively affirmed their legitimacy in the region. On the other hand, the latter limited

the public support (legitimacy) because the regional democracy through the regional head election would not run the second round of elections should there have been a disparity between the winning candidates, and the plaintiffs were small (2 percent).

Fourth, the constitution No. 8 Year 2015 rejected the political parties that proposed candidates who gained foreign donors for their campaign. The central government, regional government, national state-owned enterprise and others with fictive identity, yet this law did not forbid the candidates from receiving any donors. With this regard, the regulation also obliged the political parties to propose candidates to open special bank accounts for the campaign purposes, yet it did not apply to the individual candidates.

Furthermore, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs of Indonesia, Tjahjo Kumolo (Lustrilang, 2017, p. 16), there were some underlying problems arising during the direct and simultaneous regional head elections, which encouraged the anticipation of the following issues throughout the election periods: the availability of unregistered voters; Potential voters with no e-ID card; the lack of optimal role and function of the general election institution; the rise of questions regarding the issue of independency, integrity, and credibility of administering the election; the public participation after the election to become the balance for the state bureaucracy as a result of the election or *elected officials*; the lack of willingness of public in the general election; the provision of the political parties that often presented in the face of the general election; the existence of provinces with their local characteristics; ineffective law enforcement for elections with various problems, both technical and non-technical factors; the emergence of crucial issues, such as racial issues, money politics, campaign funds, abuse of power, bureaucratic political neutrality and mobilization of state civil apparatus that harmed the integrity of elections.

The emergence of various problems in the implementation of local elections directly above has been predicted before by the government, thus inviting the discourse to restore the direct electoral system into the hands of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD). This even appeared in the Plenary Session of the House of Representatives (DPR RI) on September 24, 2014, on the grounds that direct elections have high political costs, are vulnerable to the emergence of conflict, and do not guarantee the emergence of a good regional head (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126). However, because the development of a democratic political system requires direct community involvement, the direct Regional Head Election is finally maintained, as a manifestation of the repatriation of the "basic rights" of the community in electing its regional leaders (Sundari & Ishak, 2017, p. 1).

The Degree of Voter Participation in the Direct Regional Head Election

The transformation of the regional governance system into a more democratic one as stipulated by the regional autonomy has brought new hope to the realm of regional politics. In the democratic development perspective within the local scope, the approved regional autonomy becomes a promising milestone as it affords wider opportunities for the public to participate in determining their regional governments (Tejo in Karim, 2008, p. i). The existence of the direct election policy is one of the symbols of upholding democracy at the local level. It has created a stage for the community to exercise their political rights, as well as to manifestat political modernization in the democratic state (Sundari & Ishak, 2015, p. 3).

The direct regional head election is a result of reforming the local government system to a more democratic direction, which aims to give local people the opportunity to determine their regional leaders directly. A direct regional head election, when viewed from the theory,

has a very strong legitimacy because the elected regional head is directly elected by its constituents. Constituents in this case are given the opportunity to participate in determining the local government. Thus, elected regional heads, besides possessing strong legitimacy, are expected to bring regional heads with an orientation to improve the welfare of their people (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 127).

For this reason, the election of regional government through a representative system by the local legislative assembly has been deemed irrelevant to the demands of emerging democratic values as it makes the candidates remain unrecognized by the people in the region. The phenomenon of low public participation in the 2015 direct and simultaneous regional head election was caused by several factors (Fachrudin, 2015), as follows:

Firstly, the regulation factor; the law No. 8 year 2015 regarding the regional head election or the regulation of the general election commission No. 7 year 2015 about the electoral campaign of the governor and vice governor, regent, and vice regent, mayor and vice mayor, which limited the rooms for the candidates to socialize as stipulated by the regional head election commission at the municipal, regency, or provincial levels, particularly regarding the installment of banners in public spaces. Such a regulation lessened the joy of the regional head election, which harmed the public's interest in exercising their political rights.

Secondly, a number of political parties entitled to carry candidates in the local elections were experiencing internal conflicts, and there had been no verdict with permanent legal force. The internal conflicts that occurred within the political party board not only made it difficult for them to process and propose candidates who had a high degree of electability and popularity, but also resulted in voters, especially the constituents, becoming less enthusiastic to support wholeheartedly the candidate couples proposed by the political parties.

Third, the candidates promoted by political parties or those from independent candidates were deemed to lack the electability, thereby reducing public trust on the elections, political institutions and candidates themselves as the instruments capable of making changes and community improvement. As a result, voters became apathetic and remained reluctant to go to the voting center.

Fourth, the people were reluctant to go to the voting center due to the absence of their name as permanent voters, or they did not gain an invitation letter for the election (known as C6), which was often caused by the negligence of the regional head election commission. However, without the letter of invitation, the people could vote as long as they were registered in the election center.

Another factor that caused the low participation of the public in the direct and simultaneous regional head election, drawing on the result of the Indonesian Survey Institute, was the change of mode of campaign, which was mostly arranged by the general election commission through media, such as banners, posters, etc. (Ambardi, 2015). Furthermore, according to the Polmark Survey Institute, the limited amount of time given to socialize to the public also contributed to the lack of participation in the regional head election (Akbar, 2015). On the other hand, the general election commission argued that the lack of participation of the public in the 2015 regional head election was caused by the lack of the role of the candidates to ensure the people's awareness to exercise their political rights, which happened because the promoting team did not work.

Discussion

Dynamics of the Direct Regional Head Election Policy

The election of regional heads (Pilkada) is a contest for the legitimacy of power held by a person in order to lead the way in the process of

governance and regional development. In other words, Pilkada is a mechanism of selection and delegation of authority to someone who has the legitimacy to fill the positions of local government leadership (Surbakti, 1992, p. 181).

In the context of the election of regional heads, in countries that embrace democratic ideals, the idea of people's participation has an ideological basis that the people have the right to decide who will be the future leader and to determine public policy for their welfare. Countries that adopt a democratic system are states that view the existence of its citizens as the owner of sovereignty in the country (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), so that its political participation cannot be ignored.

The election of regional heads has been an important issue since independence, and it has become one of the main characters in the provincial and district governance system of Indonesia (Mboi, in Earb & Sulistiyanto, 2009). However, the provision of the constitution No. 32 Year 2004 adding perfection to law No. 22 Year 1999 about the regional government has impacted on the reform of the mechanism for the regional head election per se, which aimed to generate a better, more effective and efficient election procedure in accordance with the dynamics of political life and the development of democracy in Indonesia, where all regional heads were elected directly by the people of each region (Nugraha 2016, p. 73).

The direct regional head election is a manifestation of political autonomy due to the decentralization policy of local governance. It is an important means of enforcing democratic values at the local level to enable people to partake in choosing their leaders who control and lead the regional development policies in a better direction (Sari, 2016, p. 87). In addition, it is a means of manifesting the sovereignty of the people (Simamora, 2011, p. 229), in order to get local government elected in a democratic way in accordance with the 1945 Basic Constitution of the State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Unfortunately, the local democratic process of local politics through direct local elections in Indonesia demonstrates a negative practice, largely due to the politics of money, and is dominated by local elites (Aspinall, 2010), so that although Indonesia is considered successful in building its democracy, in terms of quality, it is still relatively low, which is a result of the political business conspiracy or hijacked interest groups; it ignored the real purpose of fighting for the decentralization of local politics (Hadiz, 2004). In addition, the decentralization policy that gave birth to local direct election systems has weakened accountability in the regions (Sjahrir et. al, 2014). The direct mechanism of local elections with the aim of strengthening the democratic accountability of local governments is ineffective. This, among others, is seen from the indication of corruption that has not decreased significantly, but it is decentralized and disorganized (Hill, 2012).

The direct election policy of regional heads as a form of community independence in determining their leaders at the local level has in fact resulted in a spate of corruption at the local level (Rumesten, 2014). In fact, the Ministry of Internal Affairs noted that during the years 2005 to 2015, more than 350 provincial and district heads dealt with law enforcement because of an abuse of authority. This means that the direct election of regional heads as a form of circulation of leadership at the local level has only led to a type of leadership that is coincidentally chosen by the people and has considerable capital, not because of the competence and creativity of its leadership (Labolo, 2015, vi).

They remained skeptical of the regional head candidates for the coming five years due to the fact that many regional governments in Indonesia misused their rights and were allegedly caught in corruption (Sjahrir et. al, 2014). In addition to that, the people also assumed there would be no betterment at the regional levels through the regional head

election. Hence, either participating or not in the regional head election did not have any effect on the betterment of the region. This was legitimized by the fact that during the regional head election, there were a number of money politics, so it was reasonable that a myriad of local governments were allegedly corrupt as they needed to return their expenses during the election (Sari, 2016, p. 87).

However, there appears to be a big consequence because it generates big political campaigns, which requires much funding from both the national and local budgets (Sari, 2016, p. 87). The average expense for the mayor and regent elections is twenty-five billion, and five hundred billion for the governor election. Within five years, there has been thirty billion in state funding used for the regional head election. Meanwhile, on the other hand, the participation of voters in the local direct election system is also likely to decline. However, with the change of direct local elections, the system is simultaneously considered to cut half of the budget (Budiman, 2015, p. 13).

The existence of various problems that occur in the direct election of regional heads should not be used as a basis to say that local democratization policies or local political autonomy is not suitable for Indonesia. Local political policy must be maintained, as it can be a means of political education, deliberation, and realizing accountable local government for regional progress. In addition, according to Putnam et al. (1994), the direct election of regional heads can be a means of democratic participation of the community to demonstrate commitment, trust and cooperation in forming a civic community to build regional development performance. This idea also refers to the views of John Stuart Mill and proponents of participatory democracy at the local level, that opening taps for community involvement will support the creation of good governance and support for the achievement of social welfare (Suyatno, 2016).

Admittedly, the policy of local political decentralization in Indonesia has not shown significant results in better local governance, but rather on budget wastage (Hill, 2012). However, for the sake of political empowerment of the people, this policy of local political democracy must remain guarded, because this political democracy is a system of government in which those who have authority to make decisions (that have the force of law) acquire and retain this authority either directly or indirectly as the result of winning the free election in which the great majority of adult citizens are allowed to participate (Burns, in Saifudin, 2009: 13)

The practice of local political democracy, which places the participation of society as its essence, as in the direct elections of regional heads in Indonesia, according to Habermas (Hardiman, 1993, p. 76), is an ideal form of common life that must be fought for. Although the ideal situation cannot be fully achieved, the most important thing is that the principle of handling to achieve the “ideal state” is continuously enhanced and rejects all kinds of obstacles, either the barrier of freedom of voice of opinion or the avoidance of isolation of social groups.

Starting from some views about ideal democracy in the system of governance, both central and local, direct elections are still facing problems (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126) and voter participation is still low (Sundari & Ishak, 2017, p. 5). This should not be an excuse to return the election mechanism to the representative system, since, there are other activities, again outside the city), jobs (working and not getting permission), administration (moving, not having identity card/KTP, and not getting invitations), socialization (not knowing candidates, not knowing, and confused), and political (do not believe in candidates and saturated) (Arianto, 2011, p. 56-59).

As for addressing various problems in the direct election of regional heads, there is no other way, unless all regional elements (government,

private, and civil society) participate in totality, with their knowledge, attitude and actions that must be directed to maintain and run the stage the local democracy is in accordance with the established rules of the game. Not participating falsely, that participation is born because there is a certainty or payment by certain parties.

Measure the Degree Lower of Voter Participation in Direct Regional Head Election

The reform of the system of local government administration towards a more democratic direction that carried the policy of regional autonomy has issued new hope in local political life. In the perspective of democratic development at the local level, the enactment of this regional autonomy policy is certainly a good sign, since the involvement of the community in the local political arena is increasingly wide open (Karim, 2008, p. i). The opening of the public political participation taps is a form of the care of democratic values at the local level as well as the objectives of the decentralization policy (Muluk, 2009).

Political participation is the core of democracy, so it is one of the logical implications of a democratic system adopted by a state, because political participation will not occur if a country’s political life is not built on democracy (Huntington and Nelson, 1977, p. 3). Even political participation is at the heart of democracy. Democracy cannot be imagined without the ability of citizens to participate freely in the state process. In the view of Herbet McClosky (in Budiardjo 1981, p. 1), political participation is a voluntary activity of citizens to take part in the electoral process of the ruler and the process of forming general policies, both directly and indirectly. However, voter voting in the general election is considered to be the least active form of active political participation, since it requires minimum involvement, which will cease if the vote has been implemented (Rush & Althoff, 2007, p. 122).

In Indonesia, to facilitate the political participation of local communities through this voting action, the government issued a policy of local political democratization in the form of direct regional head elections by each community based on Law No. 32 Year 2004 on local government (Hidayat in Erb & Sulistiyanto, 2009). Unfortunately, the local political democracy facilities are not well utilized by local communities. This is evident from the low level of voter participation in channeling their voting rights in the direct elections of regional heads held in various regions from 2005 to 2015 (Tashandra, 2015).

There are still many apathetic local people in the smallest active political participation (Rush & Althoff, 2007, p. 122). The low participation of the public in the 2015 election at the regional levels indicated the failure of carrying out the five-year democratic tradition given the low and high participation of the public as one of the indicators of the success of the administration of such a regional head election (*voter turn out*) (Fachrudin, 2015). In addition, it also indicated the lack awareness of the public regarding the political life, which impacted on the lack of public's interest in promoting the democracy in their regions, as according to Huntington and Nelson (1977, p. 3) who argued that the high participation of the public indicates that they were aware of and having the democratic lives in their state.

Based on empirical data, the low voter participation in direct regional head elections in various regions in Indonesia, which can only reach an average of 64.02 percent (Tshandra, 2015), is at least caused by three factors:

First, the mistrust of voters against candidates for regional heads to apply the mandate and ability to carry out the task of regional leadership. This attitude is triggered by the many corruption cases that hit regional heads in Indonesia, and most of them are from politicians, not professionals. These voter typologies tend to think rationally and have

higher levels of education. The mistrust of the voters in transforming and bettering their lives, in the context of direct election, the primary reason for the public not to fully participate in exercising their voting rights (Laurian, 2004).

Second, pragmatic, that is, voters feel they do not get any benefit from the election of the regional head. The election of regional heads is considered to benefit only political elites who expect certain positions in local government. The typology of this voter generally comes from the lower economic community with low education levels. They will choose if given material rewards, so often the target of money politics team of candidates for regional head. The low voter participation is not because it is unconscious and does not consider political participation important, but because they feel no real benefit will be obtained for themselves (Mao, 2010). The people participation was driven by the economic interest (Agus, 2016).

Third, the disinterest of voters against candidates who advanced as contestants of local elections. This may be because among the candidates, it is considered that no one represents his identity, whether tribal, religious, ethnic, professional, group, and others. This typology tends to be traditional and militant. In fact, according to Pratikno (Erb & Sulistiyanto, 2009), the low level of active participation of the community in the direct election of regional heads in Indonesia is a manifestation of the traditional ways or attitudes of grassroots communities in protesting the political system, the sense of aversion, pessimism, areas dominated by the elite.

The low level of voter participation in the direct election of regional heads in various regions of Indonesia has nothing to do with the influence of ethnicity factors and low levels of education (Curvale, 2013), residential areas between cities and villages (Mao, 2010), and communication and information issues (Mikkelsen, 2011, p. 57). This reasoning is based on the empirical fact of the recapitulation of

the number of voters in the direct election of regional heads by 2015, where the number of electors to the mayors, the urban voters, whose education tends to be higher, and the district head, whose voters are from rural communities, education is lower, does not indicate any significant gaps. Whereas in the case of communication and information, there is no reason for the local community not to know the existence of the election of the regional head, because the various elements involved in the direct election of regional heads, looks very active in disseminating information, either through the media or directly.

The low participation in the regional head election was surely not equivalent to the development of democratic values in the regional system, because democracy was regarded as an ideal system of governance of certain states due to the involvement of the people as the ones who held the supreme sovereignty (Gaffar, 1992, p. 106). Additionally, the implementation of democracy as an ideal concept in the governance of certain states with the supreme sovereignty under the people (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), would afford the opportunities to realize the following: effective participation: people have the wider chance to improve their political participation; equality in voting: people have equal rights to speak out their opinions without any legal threats regarding the political matters; gaining enlightened understanding: people have the rights to gain pure understanding from alternative resources of information; exercising final control over the agenda: People have the opportunity to constitutionally control the government agenda regarding the policies; and inclusion of adults: adults have the rights to elect in the executive elections (Dahl, 1998, p. 38).

The emergence of the factors above reaffirmed what had been stated by Slamet (2001, p. 43), that the public participation as voters would not be realized unless the

following supporting factors were fulfilled: the chance availability, which is the situation in which the people are aware of their participation opportunity, the provision of willingness, which is something that encourages the interest and attitude of the people to participate, such as the benefit of their participation, and the provision of wants, which is the awareness or belief on themselves that they have the ability to partake, either in the form of thoughts, power, time, facilities, and other materials.

The democratic concept that placed the public participation at its own right was an ideal life of collectiveness, which should be upheld. According to Habermas (as cited in Hardiman, 1993, p. 76), democracy was an ideal life of collectiveness. The people participating in the political sphere, such as in the direct election, was regarded to have the positive values because it made the democracy become more valuable, and influenced the government to be more responsive and affirmative to the establishment of the civilian responsibility.

The extent to which people partook in the election did not occur by itself, but rather by the availability of the information and technology, supporting institutions, structures and social stratification, local culture and politics. In addition, Paige (in Saifudin, 2009, p. 19) opines that there has been causal correlation between the political awareness and public participation as voters: if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are high, the public participation tends to be active; if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, the public participation tends to be pressured (apathetic); if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, people will be militant and radical; and If the political awareness of the people is low, yet the beliefs in the government are high, people participation tends to be passive.

To establish high quality democracy and to boost public participation in the regional head election required an attempt to make the people

aware or to train them about participation, not just as a right but as an obligation of the whole society by involving multiple elements, such as educational institutions, communication media, and executives (Shehu et al., 2013). This negated the result of analysis that poverty and low education were not the barriers for the people to participate in exercising their political rights (Thananithichot, 2012); even ethnicity was not the determining factor for the political participation (Curvale et al., 2013). The public awareness was very much influenced by their motivation (Laurian, 2004).

Finally, low voter participation in the context of the local direct election in Indonesia should be seen as a process of democratic maturation at the local level. If expecting an increase in voter participation, the direct elections should appear more attractive to voters, so the public does not assume there is no correlation between the electoral process and the performance of the regional head that the community can enjoy directly (Muhammad, 2015). In addition, improving the quality of political parties and improving the economic and educational political conditions of the people is a factor that should be given attention, because it has an influence on increasing the political participation of the community (Arwiyah, 2012, p. 86-90).

Conclusion

Drawing on the perspective of decentralization policy, the direct election is a meaningful breakthrough towards the process of democratic consolidation at the regional level. It will afford a wider opportunity for the people to partake in the democratic process for determining their political leadership in the regional scope. This system also allows the people to better actualize their political rights without being reduced by political elites. The direct election also generates the emergence of aspiring, competent, legitimized, and dedicated figure. This is certainly because

the elected regional government will be more oriented to the people than to several political elites being his partners in the regional legislative assembly.

In addition to evidence of the provision of the public sovereignty, the direct election provides a strong legitimacy for the local government to head and manage the life of the people in the region through issued policies. For this reason, the local government will be closer to the people and more responsive to various problems and public interests. However, despite the availability of upholding the values of political democracy at the local level, the people do not fully make use such an opportunity to deliver their political sovereignty. The provision of reform in the management system of the political operation, low integrity and quality of the candidates on the public eyes, administrative issues in determining voters, and the lack of socialization and mobilization of the voters to exercise their political rights remain the empirical problems that discourage the people to partake in the direct regional head election.

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regional government system, which generates a new mechanism for carrying out the regional head election. In contrary to the New Orde era, the regional head was decided by the president or minister of home affairs; they no longer have had such an authority since the Reformation era. The amendment of the basic law 1945 brings about significant shifts pertinent to the regional head election system, for instance, the article 18 para (4) basic law 1945, which stipulates that the governor, regent, and mayor, who respectively head the province, regency, and city, are elected democratically.

The term *elected democratically* has been actualized in two ways. Firstly, the regional head election is done directly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly by each member of the regional legislative assembly (representative system). Secondly, the regional head election is done directly by each regional people, without the representative system as elected by the regional legislative assembly with the stipulation that the candidate with 50%+1 voices would be determined as the winner to lead the region for five years.

Until the regional head elections of 2015, the direct participation of every regional people is still an ideal choice in the mechanism of enforcing the political democratic rights of regional peoples. The implementation of the direct and simultaneous election on December 9, 2015, both at the provincial, district and municipal levels, was relatively democratic, safe and peaceful, which reaped a positive appreciation from a number of people, including observers, as a democratic experiment that was so admirable and commendable. However, the public participation remained low. The data taken from the general election commission showed the public participation in the direct and simultaneous regional head election on the December 9, 2015 was 64.02 percent on average of the total expected voters (Tashandra, 2015).

Even in some regions, the level of participation was below 50 percent. Other

reports also evidenced such a low participation in several cities and regencies, which included Medan city (26.88 percent), Serang regency (50.84 percent), Surabaya (52.18 percent), Jember regency (52.19 percent), Tuban regency (52.25 percent), and Mataram city (56.94 percent). On the other hand, some other regions with relatively high participation were Central Mamuju regency (92.17 percent), South Sorong Regency (89.92 percent), East Bolaang Mangondow (88.83 percent), Tomohon city (88.47 percent), and North Konawe (88.24 percent). Despite the facts above, the general election commission targeted the public participation in the democratic event to be around 75.5 percent (Tashandra, 2015).

This low participation had come to the fore and remained mostly reported by the mass media in Indonesia. From the 358 media outlets that reported the regional head election in the country, the public participation appeared to be appealing. As a result, the issue of voting in the direct regional head elections system got a lot of attention, because it was not in line with expectations of good local governance and decentralization policies (Erb & Sulitiyanto, 2009). This study looked into the public participation in exercising their political rights regarding the five-year democratic event in the regional level framed under the direct and simultaneous regional head election.

Methods

This research is designed as a descriptive qualitative research that intends to study the case of low voter participation in the first round of the direct and simultaneous regional head election 2015. With reference to the locus of the data collection, this research belonged to the literature study, in which the data was collected by means of a documentation technique as it made use of the existing literature resources, such as books, journals, Internet, and relevant previous research findings; therefore, the data in this study was categorized into secondary

data. Subsequently, the data was analyzed through the use of theories relevant to the participatory study of people in the regional political context.

Results

The Empirical Problems of the Direct Regional Head Election

The regional head election is a contest for a legitimized power of regional leaders, who are given authority and responsibility to administer and lead the regional apparatus and development. In other words, the direct regional head election is a political expansion of the people and as a form of the people's sovereignty in determining the figure of the regional leaders in accordance with the hopes and aspirations of the people, and it has strong political legitimacy (Simamora, 2011, p. 229). Drawing on the context of the regional head election in democratic countries, the concept that underpins the public participation has basic ideologies that people have the right to decide their own leaders, who will later determine the public policy for the sake of social purposes. These democratic nations posit that the people hold the supreme power over the states' sovereignty (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), hence their political participation should be taken into account.

Historically, the first direct election was held in 2005 in Kutai Kertanegara Regency. It turns out from year to year and raises issues related to regional readiness in conducting regional head elections, implementation issues schedule, stages and program of regional head election, fulfillment of candidate of regional head and vice regional head and other issues related to execution at field (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126).

The direct and simultaneous regional head election was held on December 9, 2015, in 8 provinces, 222 regencies, and 34 cities across Indonesia. However, there remains a rise of fraudulent claim regarding its implementation (Sahdan & Haboddin, 2009, p. 57). Similarly, the general election commission as the legal

institution administering the national and regional head election argues the same thing that the results of the first period of the direct and simultaneous regional head election argued for. In fact, it left several problems due to the rejection of the results by lost candidates drawing on 147 lawsuits. On the other hand, the primary object of the plaintiff basically centered on the accusation of fraud throughout the election. Such accusations included money politic, the involvement of a state civil apparatus, partiality of the election organizer, and the data manipulation pertinent to the election (KPU, 2015, p. 7).

The accused frauds committed by the election organizer were also reinforced by the provision of the data of violation of the code of ethics of the election committee in the Board of General Election Organizer. Since it was established on June 12, 2012 to March 2013, it has received 90 lawsuits related to violations of the code of ethics with the details of its decision as follows; sanction of dismissal: 5 chiefs of the general election commission and 15 members, 1 chief of election guard committee and 2 members, 5 members of Independent Commission of General Election; firm sanction or warning: 4 members of the general election commission, and 6 members, and 1 member of election guard committee; and written reminding: 1 chief of the general election commission (KPU, 2015, p. 52).

In addition, based on the data collected from the field, the implementation of direct and simultaneous elections in 2015 caused several problems (Budiman, 2015, p. 2), such as the following:

Firstly, the selection of the candidates did not go through a democratic system as they were fully determined by party officials at the central level (central board). The general election commission would only approve the candidates if they were proposed by the chief of the party board. If the candidates did not have any recommendation, the general election

commission would reject their candidature, which was against the theory of representation. On the other hand, the regional heads, who were not able to represent their regions, would not be able to provide the best services to the community. Moreover, within several parties was a conflict of stewardship among the members, which confused the public of their political choices.

Secondly, there remained a dynastic system of politics in the direct regional head election, although the constitution No. 1 Year 2014 regarding the governor, regent and mayor election had limited the spaces and opportunities for the growth of the political dynasty. Furthermore, the general election commission had stipulated the regulation No. 9 Year 2015, which posits that progressive changes in diminishing the chains of dynastic politic from any angle. However, it changed after the constitutional court issued the stipulation of the election conflict No. 33/PUU-XIII/2015 regarding the election of governors, regents and mayors against the law article No. 28J para (2) basic law 1945. The constitutional court initially indicated the government had violated human rights because it denied someone to candidate him or herself to be the regional head or vice of the regional head due to having a familial relationship with the current government. Therefore, there remained the dynastic power having controls in various regions given the latest regulation. The growth of the political dynasty did not mean that the public was satisfied with their performance, yet the money politic hampered the transactional politic, which brought about the dilemma about the regional governance.

Thirdly, there appeared the replacement of the two-round systems with the first past the post (FPTP) in determining the winning candidates. The former allowed the candidates to gain public support by means of a simple majority (a minimum of 30 percent), so it relatively affirmed their legitimacy in the region. On the other hand, the latter limited

the public support (legitimacy) because the regional democracy through the regional head election would not run the second round of elections should there have been a disparity between the winning candidates, and the plaintiffs were small (2 percent).

Fourth, the constitution No. 8 Year 2015 rejected the political parties that proposed candidates who gained foreign donors for their campaign. The central government, regional government, national state-owned enterprise and others with fictive identity, yet this law did not forbid the candidates from receiving any donors. With this regard, the regulation also obliged the political parties to propose candidates to open special bank accounts for the campaign purposes, yet it did not apply to the individual candidates.

Furthermore, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs of Indonesia, Tjahjo Kumolo (Lustrilang, 2017, p. 16), there were some underlying problems arising during the direct and simultaneous regional head elections, which encouraged the anticipation of the following issues throughout the election periods: the availability of unregistered voters; Potential voters with no e-ID card; the lack of optimal role and function of the general election institution; the rise of questions regarding the issue of independency, integrity, and credibility of administering the election; the public participation after the election to become the balance for the state bureaucracy as a result of the election or *elected officials*; the lack of willingness of public in the general election; the provision of the political parties that often presented in the face of the general election; the existence of provinces with their local characteristics; ineffective law enforcement for elections with various problems, both technical and non-technical factors; the emergence of crucial issues, such as racial issues, money politics, campaign funds, abuse of power, bureaucratic political neutrality and mobilization of state civil apparatus that harmed the integrity of elections.

The emergence of various problems in the implementation of local elections directly above has been predicted before by the government, thus inviting the discourse to restore the direct electoral system into the hands of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD). This even appeared in the Plenary Session of the House of Representatives (DPR RI) on September 24, 2014, on the grounds that direct elections have high political costs, are vulnerable to the emergence of conflict, and do not guarantee the emergence of a good regional head (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126). However, because the development of a democratic political system requires direct community involvement, the direct Regional Head Election is finally maintained, as a manifestation of the repatriation of the "basic rights" of the community in electing its regional leaders (Sundari & Ishak, 2017, p. 1).

The Degree of Voter Participation in the Direct Regional Head Election

The transformation of the regional governance system into a more democratic one as stipulated by the regional autonomy has brought new hope to the realm of regional politics. In the democratic development perspective within the local scope, the approved regional autonomy becomes a promising milestone as it affords wider opportunities for the public to participate in determining their regional governments (Tejo in Karim, 2008, p. i). The existence of the direct election policy is one of the symbols of upholding democracy at the local level. It has created a stage for the community to exercise their political rights, as well as to manifestat political modernization in the democratic state (Sundari & Ishak, 2015, p. 3).

The direct regional head election is a result of reforming the local government system to a more democratic direction, which aims to give local people the opportunity to determine their regional leaders directly. A direct regional head election, when viewed from the theory,

has a very strong legitimacy because the elected regional head is directly elected by its constituents. Constituents in this case are given the opportunity to participate in determining the local government. Thus, elected regional heads, besides possessing strong legitimacy, are expected to bring regional heads with an orientation to improve the welfare of their people (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 127).

For this reason, the election of regional government through a representative system by the local legislative assembly has been deemed irrelevant to the demands of emerging democratic values as it makes the candidates remain unrecognized by the people in the region. The phenomenon of low public participation in the 2015 direct and simultaneous regional head election was caused by several factors (Fachrudin, 2015), as follows:

Firstly, the regulation factor; the law No. 8 year 2015 regarding the regional head election or the regulation of the general election commission No. 7 year 2015 about the electoral campaign of the governor and vice governor, regent, and vice regent, mayor and vice mayor, which limited the rooms for the candidates to socialize as stipulated by the regional head election commission at the municipal, regency, or provincial levels, particularly regarding the installment of banners in public spaces. Such a regulation lessened the joy of the regional head election, which harmed the public's interest in exercising their political rights.

Secondly, a number of political parties entitled to carry candidates in the local elections were experiencing internal conflicts, and there had been no verdict with permanent legal force. The internal conflicts that occurred within the political party board not only made it difficult for them to process and propose candidates who had a high degree of electability and popularity, but also resulted in voters, especially the constituents, becoming less enthusiastic to support wholeheartedly the candidate couples proposed by the political parties.

Third, the candidates promoted by political parties or those from independent candidates were deemed to lack the electability, thereby reducing public trust on the elections, political institutions and candidates themselves as the instruments capable of making changes and community improvement. As a result, voters became apathetic and remained reluctant to go to the voting center.

Fourth, the people were reluctant to go to the voting center due to the absence of their name as permanent voters, or they did not gain an invitation letter for the election (known as C6), which was often caused by the negligence of the regional head election commission. However, without the letter of invitation, the people could vote as long as they were registered in the election center.

Another factor that caused the low participation of the public in the direct and simultaneous regional head election, drawing on the result of the Indonesian Survey Institute, was the change of mode of campaign, which was mostly arranged by the general election commission through media, such as banners, posters, etc. (Ambardi, 2015). Furthermore, according to the Polmark Survey Institute, the limited amount of time given to socialize to the public also contributed to the lack of participation in the regional head election (Akbar, 2015). On the other hand, the general election commission argued that the lack of participation of the public in the 2015 regional head election was caused by the lack of the role of the candidates to ensure the people's awareness to exercise their political rights, which happened because the promoting team did not work.

Discussion

Dynamics of the Direct Regional Head Election Policy

The election of regional heads (Pilkada) is a contest for the legitimacy of power held by a person in order to lead the way in the process of

governance and regional development. In other words, Pilkada is a mechanism of selection and delegation of authority to someone who has the legitimacy to fill the positions of local government leadership (Surbakti, 1992, p. 181).

In the context of the election of regional heads, in countries that embrace democratic ideals, the idea of people's participation has an ideological basis that the people have the right to decide who will be the future leader and to determine public policy for their welfare. Countries that adopt a democratic system are states that view the existence of its citizens as the owner of sovereignty in the country (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), so that its political participation cannot be ignored.

The election of regional heads has been an important issue since independence, and it has become one of the main characters in the provincial and district governance system of Indonesia (Mboi, in Earb & Sulistiyanto, 2009). However, the provision of the constitution No. 32 Year 2004 adding perfection to law No. 22 Year 1999 about the regional government has impacted on the reform of the mechanism for the regional head election per se, which aimed to generate a better, more effective and efficient election procedure in accordance with the dynamics of political life and the development of democracy in Indonesia, where all regional heads were elected directly by the people of each region (Nugraha 2016, p. 73).

The direct regional head election is a manifestation of political autonomy due to the decentralization policy of local governance. It is an important means of enforcing democratic values at the local level to enable people to partake in choosing their leaders who control and lead the regional development policies in a better direction (Sari, 2016, p. 87). In addition, it is a means of manifesting the sovereignty of the people (Simamora, 2011, p. 229), in order to get local government elected in a democratic way in accordance with the 1945 Basic Constitution of the State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Unfortunately, the local democratic process of local politics through direct local elections in Indonesia demonstrates a negative practice, largely due to the politics of money, and is dominated by local elites (Aspinall, 2010), so that although Indonesia is considered successful in building its democracy, in terms of quality, it is still relatively low, which is a result of the political business conspiracy or hijacked interest groups; it ignored the real purpose of fighting for the decentralization of local politics (Hadiz, 2004). In addition, the decentralization policy that gave birth to local direct election systems has weakened accountability in the regions (Sjahrir et. al, 2014). The direct mechanism of local elections with the aim of strengthening the democratic accountability of local governments is ineffective. This, among others, is seen from the indication of corruption that has not decreased significantly, but it is decentralized and disorganized (Hill, 2012).

The direct election policy of regional heads as a form of community independence in determining their leaders at the local level has in fact resulted in a spate of corruption at the local level (Rumesten, 2014). In fact, the Ministry of Internal Affairs noted that during the years 2005 to 2015, more than 350 provincial and district heads dealt with law enforcement because of an abuse of authority. This means that the direct election of regional heads as a form of circulation of leadership at the local level has only led to a type of leadership that is coincidentally chosen by the people and has considerable capital, not because of the competence and creativity of its leadership (Labolo, 2015, vi).

They remained skeptical of the regional head candidates for the coming five years due to the fact that many regional governments in Indonesia misused their rights and were allegedly caught in corruption (Sjahrir et. al, 2014). In addition to that, the people also assumed there would be no betterment at the regional levels through the regional head

election. Hence, either participating or not in the regional head election did not have any effect on the betterment of the region. This was legitimized by the fact that during the regional head election, there were a number of money politics, so it was reasonable that a myriad of local governments were allegedly corrupt as they needed to return their expenses during the election (Sari, 2016, p. 87).

However, there appears to be a big consequence because it generates big political campaigns, which requires much funding from both the national and local budgets (Sari, 2016, p. 87). The average expense for the mayor and regent elections is twenty-five billion, and five hundred billion for the governor election. Within five years, there has been thirty billion in state funding used for the regional head election. Meanwhile, on the other hand, the participation of voters in the local direct election system is also likely to decline. However, with the change of direct local elections, the system is simultaneously considered to cut half of the budget (Budiman, 2015, p. 13).

The existence of various problems that occur in the direct election of regional heads should not be used as a basis to say that local democratization policies or local political autonomy is not suitable for Indonesia. Local political policy must be maintained, as it can be a means of political education, deliberation, and realizing accountable local government for regional progress. In addition, according to Putnam et al. (1994), the direct election of regional heads can be a means of democratic participation of the community to demonstrate commitment, trust and cooperation in forming a civic community to build regional development performance. This idea also refers to the views of John Stuart Mill and proponents of participatory democracy at the local level, that opening taps for community involvement will support the creation of good governance and support for the achievement of social welfare (Suyatno, 2016).

Admittedly, the policy of local political decentralization in Indonesia has not shown significant results in better local governance, but rather on budget wastage (Hill, 2012). However, for the sake of political empowerment of the people, this policy of local political democracy must remain guarded, because this political democracy is a system of government in which those who have authority to make decisions (that have the force of law) acquire and retain this authority either directly or indirectly as the result of winning the free election in which the great majority of adult citizens are allowed to participate (Burns, in Saifudin, 2009: 13)

The practice of local political democracy, which places the participation of society as its essence, as in the direct elections of regional heads in Indonesia, according to Habermas (Hardiman, 1993, p. 76), is an ideal form of common life that must be fought for. Although the ideal situation cannot be fully achieved, the most important thing is that the principle of handling to achieve the "ideal state" is continuously enhanced and rejects all kinds of obstacles, either the barrier of freedom of voice of opinion or the avoidance of isolation of social groups.

Starting from some views about ideal democracy in the system of governance, both central and local, direct elections are still facing problems (Nuryanti, 2015, p. 126) and voter participation is still low (Sundari & Ishak, 2017, p. 5). This should not be an excuse to return the election mechanism to the representative system, since, there are other activities, again outside the city), jobs (working and not getting permission), administration (moving, not having identity card/KTP, and not getting invitations), socialization (not knowing candidates, not knowing, and confused), and political (do not believe in candidates and saturated) (Arianto, 2011, p. 56-59).

As for addressing various problems in the direct election of regional heads, there is no other way, unless all regional elements (government,

private, and civil society) participate in totality, with their knowledge, attitude and actions that must be directed to maintain and run the stage the local democracy is in accordance with the established rules of the game. Not participating falsely, that participation is born because there is a certainty or payment by certain parties.

Measure the Degree Lower of Voter Participation in Direct Regional Head Election

The reform of the system of local government administration towards a more democratic direction that carried the policy of regional autonomy has issued new hope in local political life. In the perspective of democratic development at the local level, the enactment of this regional autonomy policy is certainly a good sign, since the involvement of the community in the local political arena is increasingly wide open (Karim, 2008, p. i). The opening of the public political participation taps is a form of the care of democratic values at the local level as well as the objectives of the decentralization policy (Muluk, 2009).

Political participation is the core of democracy, so it is one of the logical implications of a democratic system adopted by a state, because political participation will not occur if a country's political life is not built on democracy (Huntington and Nelson, 1977, p. 3). Even political participation is at the heart of democracy. Democracy cannot be imagined without the ability of citizens to participate freely in the state process. In the view of Herbert McClosky (in Budiardjo 1981, p. 1), political participation is a voluntary activity of citizens to take part in the electoral process of the ruler and the process of forming general policies, both directly and indirectly. However, voter voting in the general election is considered to be the least active form of active political participation, since it requires minimum involvement, which will cease if the vote has been implemented (Rush & Althoff, 2007, p. 122).

In Indonesia, to facilitate the political participation of local communities through this voting action, the government issued a policy of local political democratization in the form of direct regional head elections by each community based on Law No. 32 Year 2004 on local government (Hidayat in Erb & Sulistiyanto, 2009). Unfortunately, the local political democracy facilities are not well utilized by local communities. This is evident from the low level of voter participation in channeling their voting rights in the direct elections of regional heads held in various regions from 2005 to 2015 (Tashandra, 2015).

There are still many apathetic local people in the smallest active political participation (Rush & Althoff, 2007, p. 122). The low participation of the public in the 2015 election at the regional levels indicated the failure of carrying out the five-year democratic tradition given the low and high participation of the public as one of the indicators of the success of the administration of such a regional head election (*voter turn out*) (Fachrudin, 2015). In addition, it also indicated the lack awareness of the public regarding the political life, which impacted on the lack of public's interest in promoting the democracy in their regions, as according to Huntington and Nelson (1977, p. 3) who argued that the high participation of the public indicates that they were aware of and having the democratic lives in their state.

Based on empirical data, the low voter participation in direct regional head elections in various regions in Indonesia, which can only reach an average of 64.02 percent (Tshandra, 2015), is at least caused by three factors:

First, the mistrust of voters against candidates for regional heads to apply the mandate and ability to carry out the task of regional leadership. This attitude is triggered by the many corruption cases that hit regional heads in Indonesia, and most of them are from politicians, not professionals. These voter typologies tend to think rationally and have

higher levels of education. The mistrust of the voters in transforming and bettering their lives, in the context of direct election, the primary reason for the public not to fully participate in exercising their voting rights (Laurian, 2004).

Second, pragmatic, that is, voters feel they do not get any benefit from the election of the regional head. The election of regional heads is considered to benefit only political elites who expect certain positions in local government. The typology of this voter generally comes from the lower economic community with low education levels. They will choose if given material rewards, so often the target of money politics team of candidates for regional head. The low voter participation is not because it is unconscious and does not consider political participation important, but because they feel no real benefit will be obtained for themselves (Mao, 2010). The people participation was driven by the economic interest (Agus, 2016).

Third, the disinterest of voters against candidates who advanced as contestants of local elections. This may be because among the candidates, it is considered that no one represents his identity, whether tribal, religious, ethnic, professional, group, and others. This typology tends to be traditional and militant. In fact, according to Pratikno (Erb & Sulistiyanto, 2009), the low level of active participation of the community in the direct election of regional heads in Indonesia is a manifestation of the traditional ways or attitudes of grassroots communities in protesting the political system, the sense of aversion, pessimism, areas dominated by the elite.

The low level of voter participation in the direct election of regional heads in various regions of Indonesia has nothing to do with the influence of ethnicity factors and low levels of education (Curvale, 2013), residential areas between cities and villages (Mao, 2010), and communication and information issues (Mikkelsen, 2011, p. 57). This reasoning is based on the empirical fact of the recapitulation of

the number of voters in the direct election of regional heads by 2015, where the number of electors to the mayors, the urban voters, whose education tends to be higher, and the district head, whose voters are from rural communities, education is lower, does not indicate any significant gaps. Whereas in the case of communication and information, there is no reason for the local community not to know the existence of the election of the regional head, because the various elements involved in the direct election of regional heads, looks very active in disseminating information, either through the media or directly.

The low participation in the regional head election was surely not equivalent to the development of democratic values in the regional system, because democracy was regarded as an ideal system of governance of certain states due to the involvement of the people as the ones who held the supreme sovereignty (Gaffar, 1992, p. 106). Additionally, the implementation of democracy as an ideal concept in the governance of certain states with the supreme sovereignty under the people (Mudjiyanto, 2012, p. 1), would afford the opportunities to realize the following: effective participation: people have the wider chance to improve their political participation; equality in voting: people have equal rights to speak out their opinions without any legal threats regarding the political matters; gaining enlightened understanding: people have the rights to gain pure understanding from alternative resources of information; exercising final control over the agenda: People have the opportunity to constitutionally control the government agenda regarding the policies; and inclusion of adults: adults have the rights to elect in the executive elections (Dahl, 1998, p. 38).

The emergence of the factors above reaffirmed what had been stated by Slamet (2001, p. 43), that the public participation as voters would not be realized unless the

following supporting factors were fulfilled: the chance availability, which is the situation in which the people are aware of their participation opportunity, the provision of willingness, which is something that encourages the interest and attitude of the people to participate, such as the benefit of their participation, and the provision of wants, which is the awareness or belief on themselves that they have the ability to partake, either in the form of thoughts, power, time, facilities, and other materials.

The democratic concept that placed the public participation at its own right was an ideal life of collectiveness, which should be upheld. According to Habermas (as cited in Hardiman, 1993, p. 76), democracy was an ideal life of collectiveness. The people participating in the political sphere, such as in the direct election, was regarded to have the positive values because it made the democracy become more valuable, and influenced the government to be more responsive and affirmative to the establishment of the civilian responsibility.

The extent to which people partook in the election did not occur by itself, but rather by the availability of the information and technology, supporting institutions, structures and social stratification, local culture and politics. In addition, Paige (in Saifudin, 2009, p. 19) opines that there has been causal correlation between the political awareness and public participation as voters: if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are high, the public participation tends to be active; if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, the public participation tends to be pressured (apathetic); if the political awareness and beliefs on the government are low, people will be militant and radical; and If the political awareness of the people is low, yet the beliefs in the government are high, people participation tends to be passive.

To establish high quality democracy and to boost public participation in the regional head election required an attempt to make the people

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