

Combining Clientelism and Incumbency Advantage: Political Strategy in Candidate Selection for the 2017 Local Head Election in Bekasi Regency

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Abstract

This article discusses the post-clientelist initiatives used by political parties in the selection of candidates within the party to determine the regent and vice regents nominated for the local election. Candidate selection is the political domain of political parties, but in the context of figure-based politics, parties tend to play more as political vehicle in the candidacy of local head. Through this role, resource exchanges take place between parties and candidates within the internal party candidacy arena. Using qualitative methods through in-depth interviews and observations of candidate selection in the Bekasi Regent 2017 election, this article seeks to reveal how post-clientelist initiatives are used by party elites to optimize the incumbency advantage as main political resource in the candidate selection to determine who will pair the incumbent. The results show that the dominance of party elites in candidate selection process determines how financial resources and political support are optimized to win the incumbent. Decision to choose the vice-regent from the same party while still forming coalitions with other parties indicates that post-clientelistic strategy is operated both internally and externally. This practice confirms the tendency of the candidate selection model to be more inclusive because it involves other parties, but remains pragmatic.

Keywords:

Post-clientelist; Incumbency Advantage; Candidate Selection

INTRODUCTION

This article is about the post-losing of a governor/vice governor clientelistic

initiatives used by political parties in the selection of candidates within the party to determine the regent and vice regents nominated for the local election. The selection of candidates is in most cases a nonpublic and largely unknown political process. Nonetheless, it is one of the most relevant elements affecting the quality of democracies since criteria and procedures to select candidates lead to electoral lists from which citizens select their representatives (Cordero, Jaime-

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Castillo & Coller, 2016). The phase of candidacy is chosen as the focus in this article because of the strategic role of this phase. Cordero, et.al. (2016) reveal that what is behind every selection process in multilevel democracies is the tension between regional or local political leadership and the central headquarters of parties. How this tension is managed and solved is a matter of political strategy in managing power relations.

The study on local election generally focuses on the phase of campaign which obviously shows how candidates compete against each other to get the vote (Hill, 2009; Lindsay, 2009). In those studies, local election becomes the arena for actors, both candidates and political parties, to build their self-images as popular as possible among the public. The other studies focus on the figure of candidates competing in local election, which resulted in research on the incumbency (Gordon, S. C. & Landa, 2009; Iskandar, 2015; Lestari, 2011; Stone, 2011; Sulistiyanto, 2009). Those studies reveal the incumbents' strategy to win local election, while some studies also reveal why the incumbents lose in the next period of local election, though they have advantages such as access to bureaucracy, experience, and popularity

among public. Meanwhile, studies focusing on the dimension of power structure reveal varieties of power relations which mark the practice of politics at some levels of election, including elections for local leaders, such as patronage and clientelism (Aspinall, 2014), politics of dynasty (Agustino & Yusoff, 2010), informal network (Paskarina, 2016; Sulistiyanto, 2009), oligarchy and cartel of political parties (Ambardi, 2009; Mietzner, 2013).

Some studies elaborated before show the breadth of research dimension of elections for local head, both in the dimension of structure and agency, but most of the research analyze the dynamics at the stage of campaign because at this stage the battle among the political actors is relatively easy to observe. A number of research studies which focus on the selection of candidates generally make political parties as the unit of analysis because it is the function of political parties (Daalder, 1992; Pennings & Hazan, 2001; Poguntke, et.al., 2016). Nevertheless, the dynamics of politics in Indonesia show a different phenomenon. While the capacity of political parties is decreasing, the emergence of potential figures as candidates is more frequently promoted

by institutions other than political parties. Moreover, the opportunity given to independent candidates to join competition in elections for local head has made figure-based politics and support from volunteers play a bigger role in promoting the candidates.

Politicians also have to attract voters from wider sections of the population, including through populist measures. Thus, figure-based politics is not just increase popular participation, but also creating new strategies to obtain public support. Therefore the competition is expanding in variety of strategies to distribute resources or at least complement distribution of patronage by way of 'post-clientelist' initiatives (Manor, 2013). This change has come about as patronage distribution has become costly and insufficient for maintaining popularity and political legitimacy.

Earlier studies have shown that many contemporary clientelistic linkages assume the existence of exchanges between patrons (parties) and clients (voters) with the help of brokers (party organizations) (Gallego, 2015; Gans-Morse, Mazuca, & Nichter, 2014; Gherghina & Volintiru, 2017; Kitschelt, 2000; Munro, 2014; Rofieq & Nuryono, 2016). In this scheme, the exchange

takes the form of resource allocation or access (from parties to voters) and of electoral support (from voters to parties). Although useful, these explanations are unclear what happens in those settings where brokers have low capacity because party membership organizations are minimal.

Given the opportunity of regime changes in many of the most frequently covered cases of clientelism, the literature gradually focused on the connection between political transformations and the adaptive reactions of agents involved in clientelistic practices (Gherghina & Volintiru, 2017). Patronage is sometimes misallocated, so that key interest groups that are the intended recipients do not receive enough to maintain their loyalty. Patronage distribution alone is an inadequate response to mounting demands from organized interests and from ordinary people who have become more politically aware, assertive and impatient. Post-clientelist initiatives do not replace patronage distribution, they supplement it (Manor, 2013).

Post-clientelist initiatives entail efforts to execute development projects, and to deliver goods and services, in ways that conform to authoritative norms, so that they are implemented in an impersonal

manner through disciplined and relatively impartial bureaucratic channels according to policy criteria, rules and sometimes laws established by political leaders (Manor, 2013). Furthermore, Manor (2013) categorize post-clientelist initiatives into 7 strategies, which are: (1) curtailing clientelism; (2) supplementing clientelism; (3) classic clientelism; (4) classic clientelism, centralized; (5) radically centralized, partisan clientelism; (6) systematically reinforcing clientelism; and (7) 'Feckless Governments', that obviously ignoring clientelism and post-clientelism. These strategies indicate how political actors' response to clientelism as political strategy to obtain public support. Those who ignore and even what to diminish clientelism tend to practice curtailing clientelism and feckless government. Meanwhile, those who try to adapt clientelism with popular representation, tend to practice the other initiatives, especially supplementing clientelism (Gherghina & Volintiru, 2017; Manor, 2013)

Although those strategies are useful to identify which pattern of post-clientelism operated in the local election, but they do not reveal what resources significant as base for political bargaining, and how these resources transacted in

candidate selection phase within political parties. There are 3 types of resource conventionally associated with organizational strength: money, staff and members (Poguntke, et.al., 2016). All are potentially important resources that can help parties to win elections. In this case, all are also the bases for political bargaining between parties and candidates who seek for support in candidacy. Marijan (2016) uses the concept of capital to describe resources needed to compete in election, which are political scapital, social capital, and economic capital. From these concepts, the meaning of resources implies to any material, relation, networks, and even symbol which could be capitalize to obtain public support.

Post-clientelist initiatives applied as political strategy by incumbent Regent of Bupati to strengthen her bargaining position in candidate selection within her party and later on to optimize public vote for her. Politically, she is the head of Golkar party regional structure in Bekasi Regency, which is the majority party in Bekasi Regency. Socially, she is the daughter of Haji Muhammad Yasin, one of local bosses in Bekasi. Although both have become sufficient capital for the incumbent to win the local election, but

the candidacy in this second period is also vulnerable to the possibility of defeat. In various other local elections, incumbents face considerable competition from a new candidate with high popularity. Therefore, although incumbents have advantages, but the candidacy in the second period also needs to be balanced with the right choice for the vice figure, which can maximize the incumbency advantage.

This article focuses on the process of candidacy selection to investigate the process of competition, negotiation, and compromise occurring at the beginning of the emergence of candidates and pairs of candidates. In the practice of politics in Indonesia, a number of mechanisms have been developed by political parties to choose candidates and/or pairs of candidates who will compete in general and local elections for local heads, among other things, through the mechanism of convention and coalitions among parties. However, the political process which actually occurs in the mechanism has not yet been clearly revealed (Hazan & Rahat, 2010). In fact, due to the oligarchical character of political parties, politics of cartel, and patronage that marks the relation between elites and mass, between elites and brokers, and between

brokers and mass, the selection mechanism of candidates is full with the struggle of interests. On the other side, informal mechanism outside the party also determines the selection process of candidates, particularly in determining the running mate for the candidates.

By revealing the power struggle at the stage of candidacy, both in formal and informal mechanisms, this article intends to identify how post-clientelist initiatives are operated to optimize incumbency advantage in determining the pair of candidates and to win the election. The result gives contribution to a deeper analysis on the institutionalization of democracy in concurrent election, particularly in the matter of political parties and political actors in candidate selection.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses qualitative approach, aiming to gain indepth and comprehensive information about how political actors respond to changing context of candidate selection, and vice versa, how local political context of power networks shape or reshape actors' behavior. This interaction is considered as pattern of power that emerged in candidate selection.

To elaborate how the networks of power operate, this study collects primary data through in-depth interviews with a number of key informants, which are the campaign teams (*tim sukses*) and parties' elites who have important role as decision makers in internal party. Besides through in-depth interviews, data were also collected through observation when researchers' joint in the meetings of parties or campaign teams to obtain visual impression of the process and interaction among actors in important moments of the selection of candidates. Observation is also an instrument of data triangulation hence validity of the data obtained from interviews can be tested.

The obtained data subsequently would be analyzed based on categories of data which were arranged referring to the problem formulation, comprising: (1) identification of the political context of power networks; (2) significant resources to bargain; and (3) post-clientelist initiatives applied in distributing resources.

Interpretation of the obtained data became part of analysis to reveal the post-clientelist strategy operated in candidacy within political parties and what kind of resources significant as bargaining power for candidates.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Political Setting of Local Election in Bekasi Regency

The election of Bekasi Regent holds the record as the election for local head with the largest budget at the level of regencies/cities in Indonesia in the 2017 Concurrent Elections for Local Head, with the approved budget of IDR129 billion. The number of polling stations of the election is also the highest with 3.958 polling stations (Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 2017). The election for Local Head of Bekasi Regency had 5 pairs of candidates, two of them were female candidates. Five of the 10 candidates of regents and vice regents were members of the Bekasi Legislative Council for 2014-2019. Besides that, there were 2 (two) pairs of independent candidates. The five pairs of candidates competed in the Bekasi Regent Local Election were:

1. Obon Tabroni and Bambang Sumaryono

Both were independent candidates with the background of the industry. They were unique because the pairs came from professions known to frequently be in conflict, a laborer and a manager of a company. Obon Tabroni is a labor activist who is also Vice President of Federation

of Indonesian Metal Workers Unions, while Bambang was a member of top management of a company. Bambang is not a new figure in Bekasi Regency. Since the 2007 Election for Local Head Region, Bambang has been known as a member of the campaign team of a former candidate. Networking with senior politicians was considered to be political capital owned by Bambang to enlarge support from the mass. The presence of Bambang also gave a signal and guarantee for business sector for a conducive environment for doing business and industry. It was taken into consideration because Bambang was a former member of top management of PT Wavin Duta Jaya, the biggest pipe factory in Indonesia. Bambang, who has lived in South Tambun -- one of sub-district in Bekasi Regency -- since 1991, was known for his ability to make networks with leading figures in the region. Thus, there was potential for earning votes considering that South Tambun was the electoral district with the most voters. Besides that, Bambang's managerial capacity was considered to be influential in managing supporters of the pair who

were known to have thousands of volunteers.

2. Meiliana Kartika Kadir and Abdul Kholik
 Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan* or PDI-P) carried the Chairman of the Branch Executive Council of PDI-P of Bekasi Regency, Meiliana Kartika Kadir who was paired with the Chairman of the Branch Executive Council of National Awakening Party (*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa* or PKB) of Bekasi Regency, Abdul Kholik (Lik). Lik was known to have the basis of big families and networking with businessmen in Bekasi Regency and other area surroundings. This pair was supported by a coalition of political parties: PDI-P, PKB, Crescent Star Party (*Partai Bulan Bintang* or PBB), and United Development Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* or PPP).
3. Neneng Hasanah Yasin and Eka Supria Atmaja
 Golkar (Functional Groups Party or *Golongan Karya*) was the only party in Bekasi Regency which could

nominate a pair of candidates without making a coalition because it had majority voters with ten seats in the Bekasi Legislative Council. Neneng Hasanah Yasin was the incumbent Bekasi Regent of the previous period, while Eka Supria Atmaja was the speaker of the Bekasi Legislative Council who had submitted the resignation when he decided to compete in the 2017 as Bekasi Regent and Vice Regent Election. Before becoming the candidate of deputy regent accompanying the incumbent, Eka was the Head of Waluya Village, Sub-District of North Cikarang. Eka also had mass-based force from his family that was considered to have big influence among the public. Eka's network with businessmen was also utilized to increase the potential of votes for the pair candidates.

This pair was carried by a coalition of political parties: Golkar, National Mandate Party (*Partai Amanat Nasional* or PAN), People's Conscience Party (*Hati Nurani Rakyat* or Hanura), and National Democrat Party (*Nasional Demokrat* or Nasdem).

4. Sa'duddin and Ahmad Dhani

Both were supported by Prosperous Justice Party (*Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* or PKS), Great Indonesia Movement Party (*Partai Gerakan Indonesia Raya* or Gerindra), and Democratic Party (*Partai Demokrat* or PD). Compared to the other candidates of vice regents, Ahmad Dhani's popularity was the highest. His profession as a celebrity and his personality which often became controversy increased Ahmad Dhani's popularity. The condition of the region of Bekasi Regency, most of which is rural areas, where their communities still look up to somebody for their popularity, was considered to be good potential. Besides that, Ahmad Dhani's participation in the Action of 4 November which demanded a legal process for the case of blasphemy of the former Governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahja Purnama or Ahok, has made his name well-known. It became important capital for Ahmad Dhani to attract the sympathy of residence voters of Bekasi Regency whose religious aspect was considered to be robust.

This pair was supported by a coalition of political parties: PKS, Gerindra, and PD.

5. lin Farihin and K.H. Mahmud (IMAM)

This pair was independent candidates, supported by about 157 thousand of people in Bekasi Regency, proven by the amount of ID cards as the requirement for supporting independent candidates. lin Farihin was a member of the Bekasi Legislative Council for the period of 2014-2019. Besides that, lin was also the chairman of PBB and the chairman of National Committee of Indonesian Youth (*Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia* or KNPI) of Bekasi Regency. K.H. Mahmudin al-Hafiz who became the candidate of deputy regent is an influential scholar in Bekasi Regency and he also serves as the Chairman of Mosque Council of Bekasi Regency for the period of 2017-2022. Besides that, at the local level, K.H. is also known as a teacher who had networks with religious figures, public figures, and Islamic boarding schools in Bekasi Regency. He is also known for his closeness with art activities in Bekasi.

Each candidate, both nominating as head of the region or as vice local head, is a political actor who has the resources. Competition in the election of Bekasi Regent is basically a battle of capacity and capability of actors in optimizing the resources or capital they have. Incumbent candidate has an advantage in terms of access and ownership of resources because of their position as incumbent, thus having a greater opportunity to optimize support from the government bureaucracy, establishing performance performance claims from the achievements of development programs during their tenure and fostering support networks of other political actors through the approach of programmatic politics. However, other candidates who are not an incumbent also have similar resources, such as popularity, financial support, and social legitimacy of the organization's affiliation.

Identifying Significant Resources for Political Bargaining

The presence of five pairs of candidates in the Election for Local Leaders of Bekasi Regency showed the big potential of Bekasi as a governmental area. Local own revenues of Bekasi Regency are one of the highest in West

Java. In 2014, the local own revenues of Bekasi Regency were IDR 1,124 trillion, exceeding the local own revenues of Bekasi City which amounted to IDR 1,042 trillion. Likewise, it also exceeded the local own revenues of Depok City which only amounted to IDR 588,606 billion. Local Revenues and Expenditures Budget of Bekasi Regency in 2017 has amounted to over IDR 5 trillion. The high achievement of local own revenues proves that Bekasi Regency is rich of resources.

The industrial sector which comprises hundreds of businesses becomes the heart of the economy of Bekasi Regency. Contribution of processing industry to the domestic product of Bekasi regency has reached 78 percent. Bekasi Regency also becomes a home for about 400 thousand workers whose economy depends on the industrial sector. Workers of Bekasi may be proud of their minimum wage, which is one of the highest minimum wages in Indonesia. In 2017 it has reached an amount of IDR 3,530 million, far exceeding the minimum wage of the Jakarta Special Capital Region which only amounts to IDR 3,355 million. Indeed, the minimum wage of Bekasi Regency is slightly less than that of Bekasi City which amounts to IDR 3,601 million or

Karawang Regency which has the highest minimum wage of IDR 3,605 million.

Bekasi Regency, which is semi-urbanized in the presence of industry, raises the middle class as well as the workers as a voting entity with its own interests (Savirani, 2017). The existence of labor is also a resource for candidates to build a mass base outside of political parties. Couples of individual candidates Obon Tabroni and Bambang Sumaryono, for example, are figures who use labor and labor issues to build a support base. With the large number of workers in Bekasi Regency, this has become a significant source of both candidates (Savirani, 2017), as evidenced by the belief of these candidate pairs to run through individual channels.

The presence of candidate pairs through individual channels and political parties shows a heterogeneous political configuration in Bekasi Regency, as a result of its social and economic position. Although the development of the region in Bekasi Regency is directed to the development of industry, but the agricultural area still dominates the area of Bekasi Regency. The distinction between industry and agriculture is not only in terms of regional development, but also has implications for the character of

its social dynamics. Urbanized districts are the centre of locations where there are concentrated factories and labor houses. In contrast, the rural districts are a sub-district where Bekasi residents who are not labor live. Spreading in 23 districts or 187 villages/sub-districts, there were 3,958 polling stations.

The participation rate of the 2017 Election for Bekasi Leaders decreased to 60.9% compared to the 2012 Election for Local Leaders (Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 2017). Meanwhile, it turned out that at the district level, urban regions, which tend to have a dense population, had a low participation rate. In fact, districts with the highest participation rate were located in the "rural" regions such as Bojongmangu (72.1%), Sukakarya (71.2%), and Pebayuran (70.5%). In South Tambun, a region with dense population, the rate was just 57.0% and in Cibitung it was 58.1% (Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 2017).

In almost all districts Neneng obtained the most votes. Out of 23 districts, Neneng won 20 districts. Neneng won with a landslide win (over 50%) in Districts of Bojongmangu, Central Cikarang, Pebayuran, Setu, and Tarumajaya. Only in South Tambun, North Tambun, and Babelan, Neneng

obtained votes less than Sa'duddin's. Out of 187 villages/sub-districts, Neneng also won the most, 146 villages. Then, Sa'duddin won 27 villages, Obon Tabroni won 8 vilages, and lin Farihin won 6 villages. In eight districts, Neneng even won all villages in the districts. They were Districts of Bojongmangu, Central Cikarang, East Cikarang, North Cikarang, Pebayuran, Setu, Tambelang, and Tarumajaya. In North Tambun District, which was Sa'duddin's base, one of eight polling stations was won by Neneng.

During her administration, Neneng did not have a good report card. Data from Statistics Indonesia (BPS) shows that the unemployment rate increased in Bekasi Regency. In 2012 only 93,375 people were unemployed. Some years later, in 2015 the number increased by 60 percent to 149.859 people. The number of people in poverty was not low. In 2014 there were 136,670 families in poverty (4.37%). It was surely a high number considering that Bekasi Regency had a population of 3.122 million (2014).

However, in fact the incumbent candidate was still able to gain significant support in the 2017 Election for Bekasi Leaders. Neneng and her running mate Eka, who both represented the executive

and legislative incumbents in Bekasi Regency managed to obtain the most votes and they were elected as Regent and Deputy Regent of Bekasi Regency for the next five years. The General Election Commission (KPU) of Bekasi Regency, West Java, has officially named Neneng Hasanah Yasin-Eka Supriatmaja as the winner in the 2017 Simultaneous Election for Local Leaders. Based on the recapitulation result of votes of the Election for Bekasi Leaders, Neneng-Eka obtained the most votes in the 2017 Election for Local Leaders. Neneng-Eka managed to obtain 471,483 votes or 39.83%. Sa'dudin-Dhani were the runner up with 309,205 votes (26.12%). The next were Obon Tabroni-Bambang Sumaryono with 207,940 votes (17.57%), Meilina Kartika Kadir-Abdul Kholik with 113,664 votes (9.60%) and lin Farihin-Mahmud with 81,496 votes (6.88%).

The result proved that the incumbent pair of candidates still had a big political support, although their performance achievement in the government had not showed an optimal result in the previous period. The map of political power in Bekasi Regency was dominated by Golkar Party which in the 2014 Legislative Election managed to placed 10 cadres as

members of the Bekasi Legislative Council. The next position was occupied by PDIP (8 people), Gerindra (7 people), PKS (5 people), Democratic Party (5 people), PAN (5 people), PPP (3 people), Nasdem Party (3 people), Hanura Party (2 people), PBB (1 person), and PKB (1 person). Based on this configuration, candidates who had a bigger chance to be elected as local leaders were those who were supported by Golkar and/or PDIP. Golkar with 10 seats in the Bekasi Legislative Council actually could nominate their own candidates without making a coalition with other parties.

Post-Clientelist Initiatives in Candidate Selection

Although Golkar Party had a right to nominate a pair of candidates from its own party, Golkar Party still attempted to obtain supports from other parties which had seats in the Bekasi Legislative Council, hence eventually Neneng Yasin and Eka Suria Atmaja were nominated by a coalition of political parties consisting of Golkar, PAN, Hanura, and Nasdem with total seats of 20 in the Bekasi Legislative Council. The support almost reached 50% of total seats in the local parliament; hence it might become strong capital to establish legitimation in the relationship

between the executive and the local legislative council.

On the other side, the stipulation about the nomination of pairs of candidates which enables political parties to make temporary coalitions becomes a challenge of its own to the majority party. Compared to the number of coalitions of political parties which nominated candidates other than the incumbent, in fact the majority of seats in the local legislative council were occupied by the opposing side. Based on data in the following table, 30 seats in the Bekasi Legislative Council were shared among the sides of Meiliana Kartika Kadir/Abdul Kholik and Sa'duddin/Ahmad Dhani, 13 seats for the side of Meilina and 17 seats for the side of Sa'duddin respectively. Besides that, there were two pairs of independent candidates who competed based on direct support from the public. It indicated that political power in Bekasi Regency was not wholly dominated by Golkar although it was the party which held the most seats in the local legislative council.

The map of distribution of political power (Table 1) also indicates the incumbent's position in the dynamics of local politics. Conceptually, the incumbent has advantages formed by a number of factors, namely direct office-holder, campaign discount, and district partisan bias (Gordon, S. C. & Landa, 2009), or because the leadership quality such as personal characters and performance and skill demonstrated by the incumbent (Stone, 2011). Although those factors were also owned by the incumbent pair, winning the Election for Bekasi Leaders needed other preparation for Bekasi Leaders needed other preparation to establish more consolidated support from various political powers. It encouraged Golkar Party to make a coalition with other parties to strengthen the support for the incumbent in competing with the opposing candidates, particularly to guarantee the achievement of maximum votes to win the nominated pair of candidates.

Table 1. Map of Political Power Based on the Number of Seats in the Bekasi Legislative Council

No.	Pairs of Candidates	Supporting Parties	Number of Seats in the Bekasi Legislative Council
1	Obon Tabroni and Bambang Sumaryono	Independent	
2	Meiliana Kartika Kadir and Abdul Kholik	PDIP	8
		PKB	1
		PBB	1
		PPP	3
		Total	13
3	Neneng Hasanah Yasin and Eka Supria Atmaja	Golkar	10
		PAN	5
		Hanura	2
		Nasdem	3
		Total	20
4	Sa'duddin and Ahmad Dhani	PKS	5
		Gerindra	7
		PD	5
		Total	17
5	Iin Farihin and K.H. Mahmud	Independent	

Source: *Processed Data, 2017.*

In an interview with Deputy Secretary of Legal Affairs of the West Java Regional Executive Council of Golkar Party conveyed that the candidacy process is conducted democratically, referring to the norm of the party, in which candidacy is prioritized for the party cadres. It was the base for the decision making to nominate Neneng Yasin and Eka Suria Atmaja, who both were cadres of Golkar Party. Then, Deputy Secretary of Legal Affairs of the West Java Regional Executive Council of Golkar Party explained that the coalition is made with any party, depending on the

interest, for example because of the lack of seats in the local legislative council and the interest to gain significant public's votes for the candidate's victory. The decision making to determine strategies for winning the election for local leaders, including determination of candidates and coalitions, is the authority of the structural board of the party, such as secretary general and other board members. There is no public's involvement or convention mechanism in this process.

The main consideration in determining candidates that will be

nominated is popularity. It is expected to be legitimation that the public's aspiration is also taken into consideration in the candidacy process by the party. Therefore, although actually the party elites determine the final decision in candidacy, there is still the willingness to listen to the public's aspiration which is reflected in candidates' degree of popularity. The popularity remains important because it relates to potential votes that can be gained in the election for local leaders. Formally, parties have a mechanism to accommodate the assessment of popularity through bottom-up selection which involves the party's organization at the branch level.

Each branch suggests 10 candidates at most from various backgrounds, both party cadres and non-party cadres. Based on this suggestion, at the regency level 3 to 5 candidates will be determined and subsequently they will undergo an advanced selection process, nominated at the province level. Then, the party's organization at the province level determines 3 candidates that will be proposed to the central executive council in Jakarta, which will determine the last 1 person who will become a candidate of local leader or a candidate of deputy local leader.

To strengthen the validity of popularity, the regional executive council and the central executive council can conduct a survey of the proposed candidates' popularity, involving a survey institution which is specifically assigned to conduct a survey for the party's interest. This survey is conducted internally and the result will not be published, but it will become a consideration in the decision making for the selection committee (members of the structural board of the party). This survey becomes an instrument that is expected will make the decision more objective, not only based on the consideration of the party elites. Inclusiveness, which means the extent to which the public have access and chance to participation in the candidacy process (Rahat & Hazan, 2001), is relatively limited because the involvement is indirect. The public's involvement is assumed to have been represented in the suggestion hierarchically proposed by the party's organization.

In another phase of candidacy process, the nomination phase, the degree of inclusiveness in fact is so open that all citizens, both party cadres and non-party cadres, are allowed to nominate themselves to participate in the candidacy

internally in the political party. It was affirmed by informants from Golkar Party and other parties. Head of Selection Committee of the Bekasi Local Executive Council of Hanura Party, for instance, said that the selection of local leaders had been conducted by Hanura Party for about 3 weeks to offer the broadest opportunity to the citizens who have an interest in competing as candidates of local leaders in the 2017 Election for Local Leaders of Bekasi Regency. The selection of local leaders was conducted in accordance with the command of the Central Executive Council of Hanura Party and it showed the seriousness of Hanura Party in facing the Election for Local Leaders of Bekasi Regency. The selection was conducted openly, not only for the internal cadres. Related to the mechanism of selection, Agus Nur Hermawan as Secretary of Selection of Local Leaders of the Bekasi Local Executive Council, said that registrants must personally pick up the registration form of Candidates of Regent and Deputy Regent at the secretariat office of the Bekasi Local Executive Council of Hanura Party. The informant also explained that the selection of candidates conducted by Hanura Party of Bekasi Regency was not only for the internal part of the party but also for the

public, including cadres of other parties. The selected names would be verified and submitted to the West Java Regional Executive Council of Hanura Party to be selected again and submitted to the central board of the party.

Deputy Secretary of Legal Affairs of the West Java Regional Executive Council of Golkar Party conveyed the same information: "Chairman of the West Java Regional Executive Council of Golkar Party wants input from the grass root relating to candidates that deserve to be nominated as local leaders. Therefore, the party openly announces the registration of candidate nominees through the existing media. For those who intend to run in the election, please go ahead." Then, the listed names were selected hierarchically and they were decided in a plenary session of the Central Executive Council of Golkar Party as the final determiner of the pair of candidates of regent and deputy regent that would be nominated.

In determining the pair that would be nominated, both for the position of regent and deputy regent, Deputy Secretary of Legal Affairs of the West Java Regional Executive Council of Golkar Party explained that the main consideration was the figure's popularity which was tested through a survey. In the survey, the

popularity of names that had been determined as pairs was compared. For example, if A was positioned as the regent and B was positioned as the deputy regent, would they be more popular than if B was positioned as the regent and A was positioned as the deputy regent. The final decision on the position of the candidates was determined based on the result of the survey. The informant gave an interesting illustration of the case of the 2004 Presidential Election, in which the figure's popularity was not always synchronous with the pair's popularity.

The degree of popularity in fact does not only determine who the candidates that will be nominated by political parties are. The making of coalitions with other parties actually is also determined by the popularity of the figures that will be nominated. In an interview, a member of campaign team of the candidates Neneng Yasin and Eka Suria Atmaja, Sonhaji from Golkar Party, informed that other parties joined with Golkar to nominate the pair of candidates because of the survey result that showed the high popularity of the candidate figures among the public. The informant said that each political party conducted a survey of popularity which included the names of the potential figures. If the survey result showed that

certain names had consistent popularity in several surveys, the political party would approach the party where the figures became the cadres or the party that had made a statement to support the figures.

Negotiation among parties joining in a coalition occurs in the phase of determination of the deputy candidate. Although Golkar Party had sufficient seats to nominate a pair of candidates from its own party, a coalition had been made therefore the determination of the deputy candidate was discussed with other parties in the coalition. The informant from the campaign team of Golkar Party said that before determining Eka Suria Atmaja as the deputy candidate, some other names, the incumbent Deputy Regent and Regional Secretary of Bekasi Regency, happened to be strong candidates to be paired with the incumbent regent. However, because the survey result showed again that the name of Eka Suria Atmaja was more popular than other candidates, they nominated him as the deputy regent. The survey was conducted as an instrument to bridge between the aspiration and interest of each party. Not all names were approved by parties in the coalition therefore to

determine the decision making they considered the survey result.

Although popularity became an important factor, electability also affects candidacy. The informant from Golkar Party stated that if they merely relied on popularity, surely candidates from among celebrities would be known more by the public. In fact, not all celebrities were elected as local leaders or deputy local leaders. It means the public have their own consideration whether the candidates deserve to be elected as local leaders or deputy local leaders. This electability is generally viewed from their track records or performance in the government. In an interview an informant from the public informed how the public assessed the incumbent pair of candidates. According to the informant, the incumbent regent candidate was quite known by the public because she frequently met the public. Besides that, the public admitted that they knew the figure of Neneng not only from her position as the Bekasi Regent, but also from the background of her family, particularly her father, who was known as a rice businessman.

This information was also affirmed by secondary data accessed from the news of the mass media when the West Java Regional Executive Council of Golkar Party

officially gave recommendation to the Regent Neneng Hasanah Yasin to run again in the 2017 election for local leaders in Bekasi Regency, West Java (Okezone.com, 2016). In the inaugural ceremony of members of the Bekasi Local Executive Council of Golkar Party, West Java for the period of 2016-2021, the Chairman of the West Java Regional Executive Council of Golkar Party, Dedy Mulyadi, affirmed that the recommendation was given to the incumbent based on her performance, but if a problem was found in her leadership, the recommendation would be revoked. The reason was that a leader must be more attentive in serving people, not serving himself or herself. Therefore, collective consciousness was needed to evaluate the local leader's leadership. The granting of recommendation was accompanied by the notes and evaluation to be carried out if the candidates won the Election for Local Leaders of Bekasi Regency. Political contracts between Golkar Party and the cadres nominated as the candidate of Bekasi Regent concerned some matters, among other things, a more optimum usage of Local Revenues and Expenditures Budget (APBD) to improve the quality of human resources regarding their prosperity, particularly in

the health sector, by collecting data on the number of poor and rich people, so that the utilization was more guaranteed by giving priority to the low class people and improving the health service by making the requirement easier. Those contracts affirm the interest of political parties to retain their electability, not only the candidates' electability because candidates represent political parties. It shows that the dynamics of candidacy are not merely a matter of figure-based, but also lead to the effort of political parties to survive by taking the advantage of electability of the figures they nominate.

CONCLUSION

Candidacy process in Bekasi Regency showed that the selection model used there was the selectorae model, in which parties formed a special team assigned to select the candidates who registered themselves to the parties. Although there was a special institution formed to conduct the selection, the role of figures was more influential than the internal mechanism of political parties in determining candidates and/or pairs of candidates they would nominate. The strong role of figures, particularly the figure of the incumbent in the candidacy

process, made the internal selection mechanism tend to be closed and elitist.

The dominance of party elites in candidate selection process determines how financial resources and political support are optimized to win the incumbent. Decision to choose the vice-regent from the same party while still forming coalitions with other parties indicates that post-clientelistic strategy are operated both internally and externally. This practice confirms the tendency of the candidate selection model to be more inclusive because it involves other parties, but remains pragmatic.

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