

# Bureaucracy and Political Parties: Political Clientelism in Contestation of Power in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency

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## Abstract

Political relation with bureaucracy is an essential concern because the contestation of power in the regions has conflicted with democratization and the principle of bureaucratic neutrality. Recent studies point out the politicization of bureaucracy in placing positions and government decision-making processes, but the discussion about political party patron-client with bureaucracy is very limited. This paper discusses explicitly the clientelism of political parties with the civil servants in the election of public officials in the Tanjung Jabung Timur regency. This study applies a descriptive qualitative methodology to analyze the depth of phenomena that has been happening by using secondary and primary data from various informants. Various data are coded, analyzed interactively, and confirmed its validity, then presented systematically. The results show that the leaders in the regions only experience a shift in the party while the actor's character still owned the legacy of the New Order regime. The central locus of patronage is still concentrated in political parties; National Mandate Party has a clientelism networking through the dominance of a bureaucratic structure with a promotion-degradation system. The civil servants change the resources to maintain a position or even to get a higher one. This paper's implication showed that civil servants' performance is relatively based on loyalty to the ruling party rather than using a merit system. This paper underlines the main challenge of democracy in the region and bureaucratic reform, and it is the massive informal political practices that are considered reasonable.

## Keywords

Bureaucracy; Election; Political Clientelism; Patronage; Political Parties

## INTRODUCTION

The collapse of the New Order regime was the early phase of reform in political institutions in Indonesia. The government's centralistic system shifted to a more decentralized system

characterized by delegating various powers to the regions. One of the prominent implications occurred in the recruitment of regional heads, which was held more competitively than before because of direct elections and giving the community the right to participate (Choi, 2007). The argument came from the proof that democratization in the regions could improve the quality of government. Also, decentralization with good governance will increase accountability

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in government implementation because of the closer interaction between politicians and voters (Berenschot, 2018).

The implementation of decentralized government was expected to be implemented properly (good governance) and relevant with the rational Weberian bureaucracy's principles. It is so obvious that the winning political officials had a responsibility to run the administration of bureaucracy. It will not run well without a political process. Also, political officials cannot work optimally without a bureaucracy because they do not have policy actors to meet the pledge of political officials' campaigns (Kartini, 2019).

However, bureaucracy is often politicized by the winning political parties through intervention in the budgeting process, decision making, and choosing of apparatus members based on the relationship with the party (Demir, 2017). It also goes with bureaucratic reform that applies the old public administration (OPA) paradigm. The pattern still uses a top-down and elitist approach. The apparatus is controlled by the principles of hierarchical values, autonomy, integrity and separated from politicians and the public (Paskarina, 2017).

The tension of power contestation in various regions continues to increase and affects the stability of the government. Many cases were found to get in bureaucratic involvement because the position was very strategic in building clientelism relations to be used as a political system. An interesting

phenomenon in the post-reform division was Tanjung Jabung Timur (Tanjabt看) Regency, Jambi Province. The relationship between political parties and the bureaucracy has been formed and built a long time ago through relative networks. The regional apparatus was influenced and even intervened to gain support in general elections.

It should be noted that the regional election that has the elite strategy to get and maintain power has changed dramatically. Although the kind of violence in the election contestation in various regions happens until now (Tadjoeddin, 2012), they seem to gradually change; open violence and intimidations in the local election are relatively decreased. The local elite's implication is to ensure the non-violence elections occur, so it will hold the legitimacy of the political process that ensures their influential social position (Hadiz, 2007).

This argument shows a similar pattern in the object of this article where physical violence is relatively decreasing. However, a quite impressive fact in the bureaucratic neutrality comes from intervention and even intimidation as a new way towards bureaucracy. The ruling political party runs the bureaucracy as a political machine in gaining support for the election of public officials. The ruling actors play the patron-client network through the pattern of reward and punishment, promotion-degradation strategy in the momentum of power contestation of regional elections, and legislative candidates' election.

Recent research highlighted the relationship between politics and bureaucracy to show the reality of both normative interfaces that are not dichotomous with political neutrality, nor are they cohesive or responsive to political leadership (Rahman, 2014). Characteristics of the bureaucracy show a close relationship with the political process, the tendency to defend themselves, the dominance of the policy-making structure, and the tendency to maintain clientelism in society (Zafarullah, 2013).

Post-election, placing and promoting of public positions in the bureaucratic structure makes the capacity of regional bureaucracies face big challenges from their own internal, especially the superiority shown by political officials who tend to ignore the merit system (Edison, 2011). In the evolution of recruitment rules in the Weberian style, the bureaucracy promotion system and formal and informal strategies became a way for local actors to put their cronies in the system. They are inconsistent and even tend to create institutional violence for domestic political actors to gain de facto control over the recruitment process. (Tadić & Elbasani, 2018).

In general, the political-bureaucratic relationship model is collaborative, collusive, intrusive, and integrated (Dasandi & Esteve, 2017). Politicians who do not support bureaucrats and the public tend to allocate budgets to prevent bureaucrats from manipulating information and damaging their reputations. Conversely, if politicians have support, bureaucrats will provide

references regarding politicians' types (Yazaki, 2018).

Those writings pointed out the political relations with the bureaucracy in running of government after the contestation. Simultaneously, the assessment stage in the contestation phase of regional head elections and direct election of legislative members is very limited. Agustino (2014) promoted the theme of patronage in the elections and showed that the bureaucracy's politicization also occurred in regional elections. This momentum opens the bigger clientelism structures, regional heads elected as individual actors use their position in playing the role of the main authority. The use of public institutions as domains of power, also the distribution of public resources is commonly used to political transactional.

The practice of patronage has also been conducted but emphasizing the context of the election of legislative members. The relationship between patronage and clientelism seems to be integrated with the community's local culture (Fikri, 2017). Launching a democratic process and proposing to strengthen democratic institutions in the regions after the implementation of decentralization affects relations between the central and regional governments and between the elite and the general public. The lack of capacity for democratic governance in the region and entrenched patron-client networks makes the transition to substantial democratization difficult (Simandjuntak, 2012).

The majority of those writings are really least to explain the relationship between political parties and the bureaucracy in political succession. This paper found its relevance to explore the patron-client relations of the ruling political parties with the state civil apparatus and the bureaucracy in the democratic party at the regional level. This theme is important because bureaucratic politicization occurs from the electoral process and continues after public officials' election in the regions. As a result, bureaucracy in general is very difficult to position itself as a neutral institution.

This paper was started from the assumption that bureaucracy is an entity that can be mobilized for certain interest groups using various modes. Various pressures are very likely to occur in areas that have just established themselves in democracy. On the other hand, the bureaucracy has not found a neutrality pattern to escape from the shadow of political parties. Finally, it only raises the choice of affiliated or not involved at all with certain consequences. All choices will lead to a dilemma attitude because it is related to the bureaucrats' career path.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This paper chose Tanjabtjm Regency with an area of 5,445 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of around 218,413 people (BPS, 2019) as the object of study because there was an interesting phenomenon. After being formed as a new autonomous region in 1999, National Mandate Party (NMP) became the sole ruler and succeeded in

maintaining its power in the legislative and executive institutions as well as 3,804 people. In the reform era, NMP successively dominated seats in parliament and won every regional head election in the region.

To understand the contestation of power in the area, this descriptive qualitative study relied on a combination of secondary information from various sources and primary data from observations, in-depth interviews with informants from politicians and the state civil apparatus. Information collecting uses semi-structured open questionnaires to uncover facts about existing social phenomena (Joubish et al., 2011).

The informants' determination was based on an understanding of the required data taken from various levels of the bureaucracy (district, sub-district and village) from regional apparatus organizations, 11 sub-districts and 93 villages. These various levels of bureaucracy were only taken by a few representatives who were considered to have the ability to provide objective information. This method's use was considered appropriate because it could answer the power relations between the ruling political parties and the Apparatus.

Various primary and secondary data were used to understand the symptoms of the phenomenon that occurs. Data analysis was performed using interactive model analysis, wherein the initial stages a systematic coding process was conducted to find concepts, categories and prove the initial hypotheses (Miles, Huberman, &

[Saldana, 2014](#)). Then an analysis was done, comparing with previous research findings to confirm the existing theory. Also, repeated validation of the data was done through careful information validation.

The discussion will start from the elaboration of power in the regions after the centralistic transition to decentralization. This section is important to guide further in discussing the practice of patronage and clientelism. If this practice is viewed from political dichotomy with bureaucracy, it will show a contradictive situation. Simultaneously, there are not much field data available regarding the relationship between parties and the bureaucracy in the contention of power in the regions.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Democratization in regions after the New Order regime was over the emerging new phenomenon, where "Gifts and Promises" illustrated the practice of patron-client relations. The elites compete to sit in power by mobilizing various sentiments such as ethnoreligious and utilizing money politics. In return, voters behave as clients trying to get material benefits from their chosen candidates in return for political loyalty. Direct elections create newness in patron-client relations, voters become important and have a strategic position to determine new leaders ([Simandjuntak, 2012](#)).

Patronage of political parties is the specific use of public resources and direct exchanges between clients and party politicians or party officials.

Usually, party patronage is disguised for official purposes as the application of norms and indeed many acts of patronage do not violate legal norms. However, clients who receive public goods and services understand that their party connections are very important for that purpose ([Müller, 2006](#)).

Political clientelism describes the distribution of benefits or benefits selectively to certain individuals or groups identified in exchange for political support from recipients in return for political support. The exchange is personal and is usually characterized by some obligations and even an imbalanced power relationship between those involved. This relationship pattern is characterized by patron activities that provide for its client network in the form of access to basic means of subsistence and reciprocal relationship patterns with the client's network through activities that combine services and provision of economic goods ([Hopkin, 2006](#)).

The relationship between political clientelism is valued as a socio-cultural product that is always inherent when groups have certain features. Patrons provide material resources or benefits in return for loyal clients. Clientelism is considered not just a social relationship but also a "political subculture". Furthermore, in the socio-cultural context, political clientelism is considered a character and attitude to a particular part of a population in a society that varies greatly, both in intensity and content with a political

subculture that is different from other regions (Omobowale, 2008).

Political clientelism will occur when voters or other actors provide electoral support for political parties or politicians to exchange material assistance or benefits. The essence of clientelistic politics is something, or as often described as contingent exchange (Hicken, 2011; Stokes et al., 2013).

Political parties and politicians offer benefits to the public and previous voters will give in return with political support. This reciprocity element distinguishes clientelism from programmatic politics, where candidates or political parties offer policies that benefit people even the entire population regardless of the political support they provide. However, the granting of benefits in the form of material elements is only distributed to individuals who have helped get electoral votes in general elections.

Political clientelism is easy to do because of the balanced needs of each actor. The ruling political party wishes to win in the local contestation to concentrate on electoral figures and maintain its influence. Then, society's characteristics are still traditional, by seeing that closeness to the authorities has a positive impact on access to daily necessities. Bureaucrats need promotion, safe from a job transfer to dismissal. Simultaneously, the general public has easy access to resources for the community's primary needs, such as fishing gear for anglers and fertilizer in the agricultural sector. Thus, this pattern is interrelated so that political

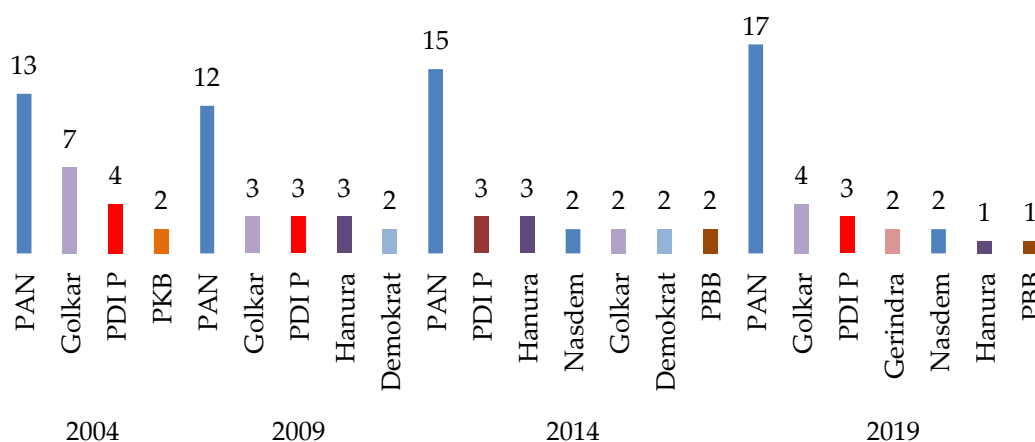
clientelism will continue to exist and be sustainable according to each party's needs.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Power in Post-transition Regions

Most of the implementation of decentralization has been identified as merely changing the authoritarian centralistic order to create a rational, accountable and responsive bureaucratic structure. Strengthening political democracy in the regions is not the center of attention. In various regions, the shift of power is only in context. It does not change the material basis. The old elite domination process in politics and economics is still ongoing. Some parties benefit from it, such as individual and group actors who previously acted as state operators and local apparatuses, small/medium entrepreneurs with big ambitions who have political connections and a group of former accomplices of the new order (Hadiz, 2010).

In line with this view, the old actors only changed the party. The election of legislative members is the momentum for the profit-takers' operation to gain power in their respective regions. Zulkifli Nurdin, the son of Nurdin Hamzah as a state operator and local businessman who became an accomplice of the new order in Jambi Province, succeeded in establishing his power in the regions. A very effective combination in combining local strongman figures with the work of the party machine in placing its cadres as members of the district legislature.

**Figure 1.** The statistic of political party seats in Tanjabtim

Source: processed from [KPU Tanjabtim \(2020\)](#).

Zulkifli Nurdin with his party, NMP, controlled the political structure at the Provincial level. While his son (Zumi Zola Zulkifli) served as Tanjabtim Regent replacing the previous regent Abdullah Hich, then following in his father's career as Governor of Jambi Province. The position of Regent was continued by Romi Haryanto, who won the election. Victory after victory is the result of the clientelism network with bureaucrats as political brokers.

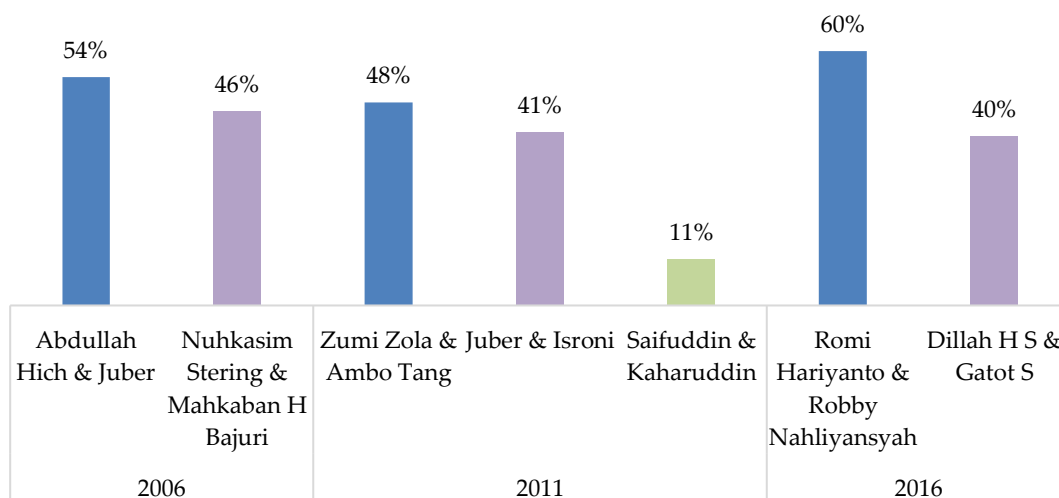
The majority wins at the regional representative council, and regional heads respectively show that the NMP political party works well as a ruling political party. The patron-client networking pattern between political parties and bureaucracy is deeply implemented through informal transactions outside government activities. Those two actors are building reciprocal relationships to achieve common goals. In other words, there are

contracts during the contestation of power between the two.

### **NMP Patronage Practice**

Generally, patronage practice was very diverse, starting from the use of money given to voters, providing education and health services, giving public goods targeting social groups such as farmers and youth organizations assuming that they were easily influenced at an emotional level. Transactional politics like this are common, usually through political brokers and personal power (public figure). These practices occur not only informal institutions, such as political parties but more and more external parties through informal agreements ([Fikri, 2017](#); [Hermawan & Kurniawan, 2019](#); [Negara, 2020](#)).

The elites also influence through the provision of work or other assistance in the bureaucracy in return for support at the time of election or alternative protection through socio-religious or

**Figure 2.** The number of votes in regional head elections

Source: processed from [KPU Tanjabtim \(2020\)](#).

ethnic organizations. These relationships are also embedded in local identity ([van-Klinken, 2009](#)). The practice of patronage runs in the form of giving obligations followed by threats. Material aspects are also sometimes given but are not prominent. Giving distribution is more dominant on promises of promotion or punishment in mutation and even dismissal (contract labor). Mutation to the region that is far from the center of government is an example of extreme patronage.

The patronage pattern of political parties in playing the political process is almost close to the political party oligarchy. NMP politicians' electability in legislative elections in 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019 (figure 1) was evidence that the political party strategy worked very effectively. It is conducted where party elites and local bureaucrats direct the community to vote based on the party's criteria. Simultaneously, regional elections in 2006, 2011 and 2016

also successfully dominated the regional election (figure 2).

[Aspinall & Berenschot \(2019\)](#) disputed this fact to argue that there is open space for politicians through the direct election system. In general, the electoral system gives the main focus and attention to politicians in the electoral process. Politicians act as new patrons and rely on personal networks to fulfill their needs in conducting campaigns and building alliances. Thus, in the political clientelism exchange scheme, parties are considered weak and marginalized. The main locus of patronage politics shifted more sharply from parties and voters to candidates and voters.

In line with the views above, the expansion of electoral politics at the local level has facilitated political parties' weakening and allowed local patrimonial elites to increase their power. Elites now use political parties as a transactional process to gain purposes.



It should be noted that the direct regional head elections have enabled the emergence of greater elite pluralism, with the arrival of new and less conventional candidates who challenge deeply entrenched elites (Fukuoka, 2013).

Democracy is vulnerable to populist threats, candidates cannot rely on party strategy to mobilize voters. Such conditions will damage long-term consolidation while weakening the party strategy (Warburton & Aspinall, 2019). The cases of patronage in a democracy that happened in Indonesia indicate the violence of our political system. The use of capital has an impact on voter decisions. The tendency of voters to behave as clients expects leaders to pay for their political loyalty with money, work and other prizes (Simandjuntak, 2012).

Regional phenomena in Tanjabtim showed that patronage politics were still in the structure of political parties. At that point, the main locus of patronage politics was almost the same as the new order era, which focused on political parties' structure. In that region, it was only shifted to political parties. NMP held full control in determining the expected pattern of patronage. The party was supported by old actors who had succeeded in establishing strong patronage patterns.

Stable and well-maintained relationships generally bound state actors and local authorities of the new order. They transformed as a local strong man who controlled NMP and bureaucratic structure. The clientelistic exchange was then

conducted through controlling access to the bureaucratic channel. At each power contestation, bureaucrats ran a political strategy to ensure candidates' electability nominated by the party.

### **The Exchanging of Clientelism Networking**

Patronage relations produce clientelistic policies where the patron distributes economic resources to political supporters and partisan groups. Protection policies by politicians, advocates in the bureaucracy and others are given to those close to their party. A single dimension of patronage when the ruling party changes, bureaucrats especially those who occupy higher positions lose their positions. When patronage replaces meritocracy in public administration, there is a possibility that the government will weaken and large-scale corruption will occur. It is almost impossible to build state traditions in a government dominated by patronage practices (Demir, 2017).

The political area of clientelism is in the contestation of power allowing the party to build contracts with bureaucrats. If the prediction of support for the party weakens, there is an opportunity to exchange access to power. According to Yazaki (2018), bureaucrats will provide voters' references, so politicians do not need to spend budgets (money politics) to maintain their reputation.

Exchange practices generally use clientelistic networks of party candidates such as successful teams at various levels, social networks such as

elites or figures, and political party machines (Fikri, 2017). The use of these networks is usually transactional, but some are only voluntary. Politicized society, the party that seizes power must protect the interests of the groups that support it. Therefore, populist policies followed during the election period are among the most important reasons for appointment based on patronage (Demir, 2017).

The exchange takes place through transactions in the contestation phase of power. The party provides compensation resources for various strategic positions in the area into the winning party's distribution arena. Then the penetration of the recruitment process for new employees is used as an access arena for rations. This phenomenon is understood as the commercialization of positions and filling formation in recruitment. Although viewed in terms of salary, the apparatus has a relatively small salary, but in the Tanjabtim area, the civil servant is a prestigious social status for the local community. Besides that, working in a government office is considered secure because it guarantees life security.

The politicization of the bureaucracy is very obvious in the recruitment process. The decision-making in the new apparatus's determination is based more on the aspect of closeness with the authorities. Dasandi & Esteve (2017) stated that the absence of meritocratic recruitment in the bureaucracy is related to increasing public administration demands, inefficient, corrupt, and less

autonomous from political leaders. A non-meritocratic recruitment system is the most prominent feature of the collusive model of political-administrative relations.

The apparatus is risking their career positions in the contestation phase of power. The choice not to be affiliated under pressure is difficult. While the determination of affiliation has fatal consequences because the defeat of the party or candidate for the regional head is brought to worsen the situation. Some post-election cases have been transferred to remote areas, given empty tables. Some choose to move to other work areas (outside the area).

In comparison, patrons in these conditions are unable to protect various pretexts. After the 2019 election, out of 11 existing sub-districts, two sub-districts leaders were demoted because they did not side with the ruling party, namely in Dendang and Nipah Districts. Then, the head of the local state government in the sub-district is also changed.

Clientelism exchanges facilities (facilities) of power between patrons and their clients. It is common to find elite bureaucrats who want to retain power or want to get a higher position also contribute to campaign funds. This context creates a new gap for apparatus, where various government project management are exchanged as income machines to fund succession.

The use of bureaucratic networks is not only for officials at the top structure of the regional bureaucracy offices but also at the district level at the Kelurahan level and honorary employees who

work at the government bureaucracy. This pattern is effective as extended access to the community because many bureaucratic apparatuses have geographical and cultural closeness with the local community. In this position, they play the role of political brokers to ensure a party politician's election.

The bureaucratic apparatus not only became the clients of the ruling patrons but also became political brokers. In this context, the bureaucratic apparatus plays a dual role, acts as a client, and plays a political broker's role. Under clientelism, the apparatus distributes benefits to relatives and the community who obtain services from the government. They must know the voters' needs so that the use of state facilities as a political tool is a common thing known as the name of service.

In a condition where the tension of contestation is rising, the brokers operate authority with threats to most people who work in the informal sector, namely oil palm farmers and local fishermen. Threats include restrictions on access to a new land, fertilizers, seeds, licensing, and fishing gear. Somebody who does not support the ruling party has not open access to the fisheries and agriculture sectors' needs, such as in Muara Sabak Timur District, Dendang District, Nipah District, Rantau Rasau District and Mendahara District. Clientelism ensures that other political parties cannot take advantage of this access. The ruling party with the community forms a deep-rooted and enduring relationship, limiting the access of other political parties in

developing and utilizing new networks for the community. A network of political clientelism runs where the main beneficiaries are bureaucrats and party loyalists.

As long as the clientelism network transaction produces victory or makes the party happy, a bureaucratic career will be guaranteed. In other words, the position will not be displaced, even it will get a strategic position. Promotions and security guarantees for office are generally based on clientelistic cycles in the pattern of patronage. So, what is reflected in that the bureaucrats are not so compelled to carry out their duties as ASN properly. The work evaluation of an ASN is finally based on loyalty to his superiors. Where it is considered more important than its performance for career advancement.

We see that the network exchange that is built up does not overlap with democratization. Political clientelism is nothing but the aim of perpetuating political parties' grip, while democracy enables a more open competition system in the regions. It is precisely in this situation that facilitates the flourishing of patronage. Finally creating a very deep chasm for the dark side of democracy and the fall of the bureaucracy.

### **Clientelism: The Challenge of Bureaucracy Neutrality**

The establishment of Tanjabtim as a new autonomous region as one of the manifestations of decentralization politics does not seem to work with bureaucratic reform. This is out of prediction the regional expansion that

aims to shorten the range of control of services. Even the bureaucracy is experiencing dis-orientation. [Turner, Prasojo, & Sumarwono \(2019\)](#) view bureaucratic reform as slower, allowing the practice of new order administration to remain intact. Meanwhile, bureaucratic reforms targeted to respond to service slowdown that hampers economic growth, patronage aspects are not a concern. In other words, bureaucratic culture is still inherited in the new order style.

Democratization combined with decentralization shows little systematic evidence that encourages local politicians to be more responsive and accountable. There has been a large and seemingly growing gap between formal democratic, decentralized institutions and actual practice and experience in the field ([Choi, 2007](#)).

Consequently, there are gaps for political parties to form a protection against bureaucracy oriented towards advancing career paths or strategic positions. Although various rules have been made to maintain neutrality, they do not explicitly separate politics from bureaucracy. The recruitment process to the promotion of positions allows penetration of the ruling party. Loyalty in the New Order period was aimed at the central government. After the transition to the reformation era, loyalty only experienced a shift in the material basis shown to regional heads and legislative members of the local ruling party.

This condition occurs because it is supported by a culture that is still traditional, education is still relatively

low, and the recruitment of apparatuses based on the name of a native son. Various evidence shows that the recruitment of apparatus and promotion of positions is based on the exchange of facilities by bureaucrats with the ruling party and regional heads. While the rational aspect does not appear to be a major concern, it is not surprising that public services show unsatisfactory performance.

The impact of informal politics has affected social inequality and responsible for many development challenges and problems, such as environmental degradation, poor spatial planning and inadequate public services ([Negara, 2020](#)). While bureaucratic reform should be realized in dialectical interaction between bureaucrats and politicians ([Krisnajaya et al., 2019](#)).

Clientelistic exchange shows that bureaucracy is faced with a neutrality dilemma even out of the basic principles of good governance. The career system should be based on a merit system, but instead it is stuck on the dynamics of political contracts in times of political succession. [Simandjuntak \(2012\)](#) calls it a "gift and promise", in this context, the patrons provide and promise careers while the client provides support and funds exchanged for positions in structural positions and career paths.

Coming from the perspective of the separation of bureaucracy and politics, this condition will always be a problem. The most obvious problem lies in the influence of the local government ruling party who appoints high-level bureaucrats. Ideally, public servants

should not have political connections because bureaucracy represents government permanence, while public officials can move from one party to another in a free electoral arena. However, bureaucrats are assigned with political appointments in many countries, which especially applies to high-ranking bureaucrats who are closest to public officials (Demir, 2017).

Changes to bureaucratic interaction patterns are built into the old public-patronage model of dominant and mutually reinforcing and interrelated administration, experiencing major obstacles. The challenge is changing requires a very large scale at all levels of staff. Meanwhile, they refuse to exchange the security and benefits inherent in current civil servants' work for an unknown future (Saputra, 2018).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the purpose of writing, an analysis of political clientelism shows that political parties have temporarily remained the main locus in patronage politics. After the reformation, the local political context of the Tanjabtim Regency still emphasized that the pattern of political clientelism was in the ruling of NMP as an incumbent. This party succeeded in utilizing access through the bureaucracy's penetration in securing the bassist victory of each power contestation. Political parties are not the only part of giving the political permit but also play a role in patronage patterns. NMP still holds control of the bureaucracy from the district government level down to the village level. Instead, the apparatus provides

support in votes, influence and even funds to ensure the party's victory. This is where protection transactions occur, where the ruling party will provide guarantees for the apparatus's careers and even move up to a more strategic position. The implication is that the neutrality of the bureaucracy will continue to undergo periodization that is not in accordance with its nature. In this position, political pressure on incumbents must be raised by various parties.

Based on this conclusion, this paper provides recommendations on clientelism practices that threaten democracy and bureaucratic neutrality. Looking at democracy going forward, strengthening democracy at various levels which emphasizes procedural aspects, should begin to consider the substance that freedom of speech is a right that is owned by everyone independently not because of pressure or transactional nature. Then, the neutrality of the bureaucracy which is patronized by it is returned to its main spirit as a rational bureaucracy that challenges informal politics. Strengthening democracy and bureaucratic neutrality requires strengthening community capacity in political participation and strengthening internal bureaucracy. The pattern of OPA-style bureaucratic reform may need to be reconsidered. Bureaucrats must be strong accompanied by a critical society and the party needs to find patterns of interaction.

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