

Is There a Political Dynasty in The Head Village Election with Family Ties Candidates?: A Case Study in Pliken Village Banyumas

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Abstract

This rise of political dynasties in Indonesia has become increasingly public attention since the nomination of President Joko Widodo's son and son-in-law in the regional election in Solo and Medan. The village that has been considered far from the hustle and bustle of national politics also shows a similar phenomenon, namely the emergence of candidates for village head (kepala desa/kades) who are still related to family (pilkades sedarah).¹ But is pilkades sedarah a reflection of the existence of the political dynasty? This paper examines the village head election in Pliken Village, Banyumas Regency, which presents a married couple as village head candidates, using a qualitative approach. The result of the study shows that the emergence of pilkades sedarah is not due to the existence of a political dynasty, but rather for pragmatic and rational reasons. Proposing a wife as a "competitor" is a pragmatic attitude just to get around the rules that prohibit a single candidate in village head election. The absence of other candidates who dared to oppose the incumbent was due to the rationality of the people who saw the high cost of candidacy which was not proportional to the official income of the village head. They also assessed that the prestige of the incumbent village head was high, both in terms of educational qualifications and achievements, so that the opponent's chances of winning the competition were small.

Keywords

blood relation; political dynasty; village head election

INTRODUCTION

Political dynasties are a common phenomenon. This phenomenon occurs all over the world, both in democratic countries and in authoritarian countries. The world knows the Kennedy and Bush clans in America, Trudeau in Canada, and Le Pen in France. In Asia, one knows the Nehru-Gandhi family in India, Aquino in the Philippines, Kim in North Korea, and Lee in Singapore. The phenomenon of political dynasties also oc-

curs in Indonesia. The Soekarno, Suharto, and SBY breeds are a few examples of them. The results of a study by the Nagara Institute stated that as many as 17.22 percent of the 2019-2024 DPR RI members were part of political dynasties. The three largest parties that implement dynastic politics in the national legislature are the Nasdem Party (33.90%), PPP (31.58%), and the Golkar Par-

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¹ Pilkades sedarah is a term to describe that village head candidates still have family or blood relations.

ty (21.18%) (tirto.id, 20 February 2020).² The phenomenon of political dynasties has increasingly become a public concern especially since the nomination of President Joko Widodo's son and son-in-law as mayoral candidates in Solo and Medan. This is quite surprising because President Jokowi has always been perceived as a modest man and his family is far from power. The results of Fatumatuzzahra and Dewi's research (2021) indicate Jokowi's involvement in using his capacity as president in his family's nomination in the 2020 regional election.

Political dynasties do not only exist in the palace circle and at the national level but also occur in the regions, both provinces and districts/cities. The results of the Nagara Institute study show that political dynasties emerged in three simultaneous regional elections (2009, 2014, and 2019) in 541 regions (33 provinces, 419 districts, 89 cities), 80 regions (14.78%). Most are in East Java (14), Central Java (6), and South Sulawesi (6) (tirto.id, February 20, 2020). According to a study by the Nagara Institute, in the 2020 Simultaneous *Pilkada*, the number of regional head candidates from political dynasties jumped to 124 candidates, consisting of 57 regent candidates, 20 mayoral candidates, 5 governor candidates. The most political dynasties can be found in South Sulawesi (12) North Sulawesi (11), Central Java (10), and East Java (9) (Wardah, 2020). The results of Susanti's research (2017) show that in the 2017 Simultaneous *Pilkada*, there are at least 12 candidates who are known to come from political dynasties in their respective regions. However, the existence of two married couples who for almost 20 consecutive years have been the rulers of Klaten Regency is the most interesting case finding.³

2 Tirto.id. 2020. Dinasti Politik Era Jokowi Menguat. Apa Bahayanya bagi Era Demokrasi? <https://tirto.id/dinasti-politik-era-jokowi-menguat-apa-bahayanya-bagi-demokrasi-ezZ4>. Diakses 1 Desember 2020

3 The chain of power in Klaten Regency is very unique. Regent Haryanto. (2000-2005) was replaced by Sunarna (2005-2010) and his deputy Haryanto, the previous regent. The next period (2010-2015) Sunarna was re-elected and his deputy was Sri Hartini, wife of Haryanto. For the 2015-2020 period Sri Hartini was elected Regent of Klaten and

Villages that have been considered far from the hustle and bustle of national politics also show a similar phenomenon, namely the emergence of candidates in the village head election (*pilkades*) who are still bound by family ties, both husband and wife, father-son pairs, and brother-sister pairs (*pilkades sedarah*). Tugu.Malang (2019)⁴ reports that in the simultaneous village head election in Malang Regency, there were 21 husband and wife pairs and 10 brothers and sisters who fought in the village election. This is in line with the findings of Astuti, Sulistyowati, and Astrika (2019) which showed that in the simultaneous 2017 *Pilkades* in Demak Regency there were 17 husband-wife pairs who ran together in the *Pilkades*. The findings in Banyumas Regency show a similar phenomenon. In the simultaneous village head election in 2019, of the 257 villages that held the head election, five of the candidate pairs still had close kin relations, either as husband-wife or father-son pairs. Four villages, namely Pliken Village and Purwodadi Village, Kembaran District, Kalisube Village, Banyumas District, and Karangkedawung Village, Sokaraja District, involved husbands and wives. Meanwhile, father and son involved in Pandak Village, Baturraden District.⁵ All candidates who competed with relatives are incumbents who have no competitors so they are forced to install their wives or children as "opponents" in order to get around the regulations that prohibit single candidates.⁶ But does this phenomenon in-

her deputy was Sri Mulyati, wife of Sunarna. In 2017, Sri Hartini was arrested by the KPK and Sri Mulyati was appointed regent. Source: <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/832220/ajaib-nyaris-20-tahun-2-pasang-suami-istri-kuasai-klaten>, accessed 1 February 2022).

4 Tugu Malang, 29 Juni 2019. <https://kumparan.com/tugumalang/21-pasangan-suami-istri-dan-10-kakak-adik-jadi-calon-kades-di-malang-1rN-5rUuQLoN/full> diakses 20 November 2020.

5 Tribun Jateng.com. 2019.Senin, 22 Juli 2019 16:46. <https://jateng.tribunnews.com/2019/07/22/pasutri-ini-bakal-bertarung-rebutkan-kursi-tingkat-desa-pilkades-serentak-banyumas-digelar-besok> diakses 28 November 2020.

6 Peraturan Menteri Dalam Negeri Number 112 of 2014 stipulates that the candidates in village head election are at least 2 candidates and maximum 5 candidates (article 23).

dicate the strength of the political dynasty so that no competitors dare to fight the incumbent?

This paper examines whether the existence of political dynasties at the village level is the trigger for the phenomenon of *pilkades sedarah*. To see whether or not there are political dynasties at the village level, researchers use the theories used as an analytical tool in viewing the phenomenon of political dynasties at the national and local (provincial or district/city) levels. In this study, researchers approach the phenomenon of political dynasties from a sociological perspective. This study is increasingly finding its urgency because at this time the village gets the allocated village funds (*Alokasi Dana Desa* and *Dana Desa*)⁷ in hundreds of millions rupiah. Understanding political dynasties at the village level – if any – is expected to reduce the potential for corruption of village elites that can harm the community. Different from existing studies that examine political dynasties at the national and regional levels from political and judicial perspectives (Barenschot, W., Wigke C., and Devy D., 2021; Suhartono, et.al., 2020; Halimang, St., 2020), this paper examines dynastic politics at the village level using a sociological perspective. We argue that the emergence of *pilkades sedarah* is not due to the existence of a political dynasty, but rather for pragmatic and rational reasons. Proposing a wife as a “competitor” is a pragmatic attitude just to get around the rules that prohibit a single candidate in village head election.

METHODS

The study used a qualitative approach and took a case study of the village head election in Pliken Village, Kembaran District, Banyumas Regency. The reason for choosing Pliken Village is because in the 2019 Banyumas Regency Simultaneous Head Village Election (*Pilkades Serentak*), the election featured a husband-and-wife couple as

competitors. The husband as the incumbent village head is also the brother-in-law of the previous leader. *Pilkades* in Pliken Village is increasingly interesting to study because in the 2013 *Pilkades* the cost of nominating one candidate for village head reached more than one billion rupiah, which was the highest in Banyumas Regency at that time. This study is descriptive-analytical. The goal is to provide a more detailed description of a symptom or phenomenon. This is in line with the thoughts of Denzin (2009) that qualitative methods emphasize more on processes and meanings that are not studied rigorously. This method also emphasizes the socially constructed reality, there is a close relationship between the researcher and the research subject.

Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, focused group discussions (FGD), and document studies, involving community leaders, BPD, village election committee, PKK, elected village head, and his wife. Researchers also made observations, especially observing the interaction of the village head with the people to see his leadership style. Analysis of the data using an interactive analysis model from Miles and Huberman (2007). This study is a post-factum study, conducted two years after the *Pilkades*. The weakness of this kind of study is that informants have the potential to cover up or exaggerate information (Hidayat, Prasetyo, and Yuwana, 2018). Another weakness is that due to the relatively long distance between the *Pilkades* and the research, there may be inaccurate information due to forgetting.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Political Dynasties in Elections in Indonesia

Every power-holding elite always directs its energy to the same interests, namely to maintain its power and policies (Mills in Maliki, 2010). One way to do that is by establishing a political dynasty. Political dynasty is literally an effort so that power can be inherited to other people who still have family

⁷ In 2020 the average per village received Rp 960 million (source: Kompas.com 12/02/2020 retrieved 03/12/2020)

relations so that power does not fall into the hands of other parties (Jati, 2013).

Referring to the typology of political dynasties according to Jati (2013), there are three variants of familism in discussing political dynasties. The first is familism, which is a political dynasty based purely on direct blood relations in the family (consanguinity) and the second is marriage of convenience relations with other clans (affinal). In the marital relationship, the weaker family has an advantage because its existence is more secure. On the other hand, for families whose position is stronger, marriage means expanding networks. The formation of political dynasties in the form of familism is usually based on clans. The goal is to maintain the political privileges that have been obtained. Loyalty, obedience, and family solidarity are important points of familism influencing the pattern of political dynasties, and these patterns are linked through the command of elders to younger brothers in government. The influence of kinship does not only take place at the legislative and executive levels; but also extends to the judicial arena. This first variant refers to Garzon's thinking.

The second is quasi-familism. The model that refers to Park's thinking is based on the affection and solidarity of family members in the power structure. Affection is intended as a form of family political orientation based on regionalism, environment, and tribalism similar to that of the family. That is, the dimension of this political dynasty is no longer in the realm of the nuclear family but has branched out with other families who are not of the same bloodline, an artificially based kinship system. In the quasi-familism model, all family members try to identify themselves through certain symbols in order to gain legitimacy from other families. The identification process is carried out through the use of family names, marriage pathways, and other family rites. In this model, what is mobilized is a process of solidarity for its members, both in the formal and informal spheres. This makes quasi-familism develop like an oligarchic political force capable of exerting influence

in all walks of life.

The third is familial egoism. This political dynasty model which refers to Park's thinking is based on fulfilling aspects of functionalism rather than just following lineage or blood ties. The context of egoism is understood from two sides, namely from the side of the regional head and from the people's side. The egoism of regional heads is basically the same as the previous theoretical conception, namely the tendency to prioritize the family over the public in filling public office positions and government succession. The departed regional head still has influence over his successor, either directly or indirectly, giving rise to the interpretation that there is a shadow government carried out by the predecessor regional head over his successor. The goal is to secure the policy programs and budgeting processes that have been carried out.

On the societal side, egoism is shown to have a tendency to keep certain families in power. This is because the authorities have succeeded in fostering and strengthening social cohesion with the community through a series of 'pork barrel politics'⁸ policy programs, even though they are full of acts of corruption. With the populist program, the rulers can instill nostalgic and political networks effectively and efficiently in the community so that people think that the rulers have succeeded in their welfare. In summary, the conception of familism political culture can be explained in the following Table 1.

There have been many studies related to political dynasties. Susanti (2017) in her research on political dynasties in local elections in Indonesia found that the old face which is the continuation of political dynasties still characterized the 2017 elections. This political practice weakens the function of checks and balances so that it is prone to corruption. The findings of Suharto, et al. (2017) yielded a similar conclusion,

8 They (politicians) are spending a lot of government money on a local project in order to win the votes of the people who live in that area. <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/pork-barrel> retrieved 5 December 2020

Table 1. Typology of Familism Political Culture Perspectives

No.	Indicator	Familism	Quasi-familism	Ego-familism
1	The basis for the formation of a political dynasty	The direct blood relationship (consanguinity)	Affective relationship, solidarity within the political extended family and their cronies	Public impetus and emotional factors, as well as functional political considerations
2	Cadre	Nuclear family members and cronies	Relatives and other families through marriage (hereditary)	Nuclear family
3	The nature of political dynasty	Closed	Semi-closed	Closed

Source: Jati (2013) mapping result on the thoughts of Asako, Park, and Garzon.

that political dynasties in regional elections have the potential to produce democratic injustice and tend to be corrupt because public policies made can be directed to provide personal or group benefits. Effendi (2018) in her research in the City of Banten found that political dynasties were so engrossing in controlling all sectors ranging from economic, socio-cultural, religious, to political. Many relatives of this dynasty controlled various public sectors, both in the executive and in the legislature. The patron of this dynasty was Chasan Sochib who was one of the main actors in the formation of Banten Province (Hamid, 2010). Riewanto's research (2020) show that there is a correlation between political dynasties in Simultaneous Pilkada and corrupt practices. Various studies (Mukti and Rodiyah, 2020; Arianto, 2021; Rahmatunissa, 2021; Dedi, 2022) found that the politics of kinship in *Pilkada* has damaged the quality of democracy at the local level. The research of Setyaningrum and Saragih (2019) show that political dynasties negatively affect local government performance. The greedy attitude of the officials, supported by access to political and adequate capital resources, became a trigger for dynastic politics; but dynastic politics is inevitable because prohibiting this practice is considered a violation of human rights (Prayitno, Ekawati, and Susanto, 2021). Faisal and Tanjung (2021) see that kinship politics is constitutional because it is allowed by law. Deviations can be controlled through supervision and law enforcement.

The general assumption is that the

emergence of the *pilkades sedarah* is an indicator of the strength of the political dynasty at the village level; so that no other candidate dares to compete. Various studies (Latief, 2000; Maurer, 1994; Nordholt, 1982) show that in Java in the late 1960s to early 1990s, many *pilkades* were won by candidates with strong family backgrounds, both socially and economically. This is in line with the research of Aspinnall and Rohman (2017) which revealed that only rich families were motivated to run in the village head election because of the high cost of the election. The material rewards of winning the village head election encourage rich families, religious leaders, successful teams, and even gamblers to get involved (Bahar, 2017). According to Iberamsjah (in Hidayat, Prasetyo, and Yuwana, 2018), there are five power resources of the rural elite. First, the religious elite who have sources of knowledge of the Islamic religion. Second, the bureaucratic elite who has a source of power in government positions. Third, the intellectual elite who has a source of power in education and science. Fourth, the economic elite who has a source of wealth asset power. Fifth, champions elite (*jawara*) who have a source of power in martial arts and mysticism. Various studies (Effendi, 2018; Jati, 2013; Suharto, et al., 2017; Susanti, 2017) also show that political dynasties are prone to corrupt behavior due to the absence of checks and balances. Community participation and control are weak because everything is controlled by the elite. Vulnerability to corruption arises because all relatives will guard these corrupt

practices.

Meanwhile, research by Berenschot, Capri, and Dhian (2021) in the Special Region of Yogyakarta shows a change in leadership trends in the village. If ten years ago many villages were still ruled by village heads who came from well-established families with semi-hereditary power, in recent years village heads have emerged who were born from ordinary family backgrounds and governed with a different leadership style than before. This is related to a shift in leadership style. If in the past a village head was required to prioritize cultural aspects in his leadership (cultural leadership), now they are also required to have administrative skills (administrative leadership) (Astuti, et al., 2019). The community does not only want candidates for village heads who are rich and influential; but also educated (Wasistiono in Yuningsih and Subekti, 2016). Regarding *pilkades sedarah*, Astuti, et al. (2019) and Nashrudin & Jumhana (2022) conclude that the emergence of a husband and wife pair as a candidate for village head can damage the foundations of democracy and it is also feared that it will perpetuate dynastic politics.

***Pilkades Sedarah*: Mirror of Political Dynasty?**

The village as a social unit has a tradition of choosing its leader. *Pilkades* for village communities may be more important than legislative elections (*pileg*) or presidential elections (*pilpres*) because the *pilkades* directly affect their daily lives. Communities can also directly influence and engage in local politics. Quoting the opinion of Christensen (1995), that “...local politics might look just ordinary even insignificant, but as an individual or as a small group of people, we can influence and be involved in local politics more than the larger national politics...”

The tradition of electing village heads has changed along with the times. This tradition has existed long before Indonesia's independence. History records that during the VOC period in Java there was a direct election of village heads by the people, even though what is meant by “voters” is a limited

group of people, such as village elites or descendants of previous village heads. During the Japanese colonial era, village head elections were also carried out directly by means of each family being represented by a family head (Maschab, 2013). This means that village autonomy has existed for a long time, even according to Kartohadikoesoemo (1984), the village is the oldest autonomous region.

The village people choose a leader who is in accordance with the values that live in the community (cultural leadership). However, since Indonesia's independence, the village has undergone many changes, especially since the birth of Law No. 5 of 1979. This law made villages that were originally very diverse to be replaced into a uniform government system that is centralized and prioritizes administrative aspects. The purpose of the village head election is to choose a leader who is an extension of the central government (Astuti, et al., 2019).

The Post-Reformation, Law no. 6, 2014 on Village Administration which is expected to provide greater autonomy to villages. The law, among other things, stipulates that the term of office of the village head can be held for three consecutive terms. This has implications for the dynamics of the *pilkades*, especially in villages that have great economic potential. This Village Administration Law was followed by the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation (Permendagri) No. 112 of 2014 which prohibits a single candidate. To get around the prohibition of *pilkades* with a single candidate, the incumbent candidates chose to ask their own family to compete against them (*pilkades sedarah*). In addition to circumventing the rules, asking relatives to be competitor was also intended to minimize the cost of nominating a village head and reducing the risk of asking someone else as a competitor to replace the empty box.⁹ In the case of the single candidate choosing his wife as a “competitor,” this is due to the reasons for the superiority and supremacy of men who do not see the im-

⁹ If in an election there is only a single candidate, the opponent's position is stated in the form of empty box.

portance of women's position (Astuti, et al., 2019).

Pilkades sedarah negates the contestation which is the spirit of democracy because people who act as competitors are actually allies. This is in line with the thoughts of Philip (2011), that "democracy must contain the principle of individual freedom; human rights; non-discriminatory on the basis of religion, ethnicity, or gender; as well as the opportunity to participate and compete." According to him, the absence of one of these components has the opportunity to give birth to bad government.

The phenomenon of *pilkades sedarah* indicates that the incumbent candidates have all the political resources so that no other competitors dare to challenge them, a rational choice considering the cost of the *pilkades*. Several research (Fitriyah, 2015; Halili, 2019; Rozy et al, 2020; Putri, et al, 2020) show that there is still money politics in the *pilkades*. Hidayat's research (2018) in Sitimerto Village, Kediri Regency also proves that material resources are still dominant in the dynamics of village politics (*pilkades*). Money is still a political resource that influences voters in the village. This finding is different from the results of Hidayat et al. (2018) in Tanjung Village, Kediri Regency, which shows that the use of money is in fact less effective in gaining votes in the *pilkades*. On the other hand, the more non-material resources a candidate for village head uses, the more likely it is to be elected. In essence, all village head candidates are competing to win the contest by mobilizing all the resources they have, both material and non-material resources because the village head election is not only about power struggles in the village. More than that, the *pilkades* also involves prestige, self-respect, and honor (social prestige) (Yuningsih and Subekti, 2016; Astuti, et al., 2019; Zakaria, Adela, and Nurlela, 2019) so that it often ends in conflict and dispute in the community (Kartika, 2016; Wance and Ibrahim, 2019; Kasim and Upe, 2019; Halimang, 2020; Suhartono et al, 2020; Rosidi and Nurcahyo, 2021).

Pilkades Sedarah in Pliken Village Banyumas

Pliken Village was established long before Indonesia's independence. According to legend, this village is a merger of three villages, namely Pliken Lor Village, Pliken Kidul Village, and Beber Village. According to the story, the residents of these three villages were often involved in conflicts. They often compete for physical strength using whips and rattan. Overcoming the conflict, finally, in 1914 the three villages were merged into one with the name Pliken Village. This village is the largest in Kembaran District, which is 346,765 hectares. The village, which is located approximately nine kilometers from the district capital, has a population of 9,007 people and a total of 2,750 families. Almost the entire population of Pliken Village adheres to Islam, only five people are Christians.

Apart from relying on the agricultural sector, the people of Pliken Village mostly work in the home industry and fish farming sectors. This village is known as a temple production center in Banyumas Regency. It is recorded that there are 586 temple craftsmen with a production of between 40 – 125 kg per day. Pliken Village is also the center of gourami in Central Java. There are 113 fish farmers who are members of the Mulyasari Cooperative, managing a 14-hectare fish pond. In addition, this village is also known as a producer of high-quality bricks (source: Pliken Village Profile 2018 video). Therefore, it is not surprising that the people of Pliken Village have more of a merchant culture than a farmer culture. They tend to see things from a profit-and-loss point of view (an interview with Gunarto, Head of BPD Pliken).

Like most villages in Java, the people of Pliken Village choose their own leaders. From 1914 to the present, there are thirteen people who have been village heads and all of them are local residents. The researcher wanted to see if political dynasties played a role in the *pilkades sedarah* in Pliken Village in 2019 which gave rise to husband-wife candidate pairs, especially since the previous village head was the brother-in-law of the

incumbent village head. The researcher uses the typology of kinship politics from Jati (2013) which refers to the thoughts of Asako, Park, and Garzon.

First, the type of familism, namely a political dynasty based purely on direct blood relations in the family (consanguinity) and marital relations with other clans. The formation of familial political dynasties is usually based on clans (big families, breeds). The goal is to maintain the political privileges that have been obtained. Loyalty, obedience, and family solidarity are important points. This first variant refers to Garzon's thinking. Findings in the field indicate that both Har (the incumbent/elected village head) and his wife, Wid, are natives of Pliken. Both of Har's parents are from Pliken Village, as well as his mother-in-law. His father-in-law is originally from Magelang, but has lived in Pliken for a long time. Their extended family also lives in this village. However, none of their ancestors were village heads. Half-jokingly, Har said, "I don't have a *'trah lurah'*. But the psychic said that my great-grandmother was still a descendant of the Solo Palace."

Since he was in elementary school (SD), Har has been an orphan. He and his brothers and sisters only rely on his father's meager pension. Continuing life, since SD Har admitted that he had learned to trade, sell anything. His sociable demeanor allowed him to get along with all walks of life, one of the social capitals that made him elected as village head. When Har ran for the village head in the first term, he was "forced" to compete with Sup., his own brother-in-law, who was the incumbent village head at that time. According to his narrative, at first, his brother said he would not run again. However, when Har declared his candidacy, his brother suddenly changed his mind and decided to run again.

"At that time, my brother-in-law did not plan to run again, so at the beginning, there were only two candidates. But because of outside influences for political purposes – for legislative and presidential elections – my brother was pushed to run again (he implicitly said he was forced to

play money politics because of circumstances that forced him to do so. It is said that the cost of the village head election in Pliken held the highest record in its time). I don't like that, moreover, I'm a bachelor of law and know the rules, but how can I..."

Finally, the "civil war" had to happen. The findings of this study indicate that family loyalty, obedience, and solidarity that are linked through the command of elder to younger siblings in the Pliken Village government do not appear. On the other hand, there is competition between older brothers-in-law and the younger even though loyalty, obedience, and family solidarity are important points of familism. According to several informants, the Pilkades in that period (2013) was the most expensive Pilkades in the history of Pliken Village, even Banyumas. According to several informants, at that time Har spent up to 700 million rupiah, while his brother-in-law spent more than one billion rupiah.

Tracking strategic posts in the village, not a single member of Har's extended family occupied these positions. Development projects in the village are also not monopolized by the family. Referring to the findings above, it seems that the typology of familism political dynasties is not suitable for photographing *pilkades sedarah* in Pliken Village. First, Har does not have a "breed of lurah." That is, he did not "inherit" power from his predecessor. Second, there is no strategic position or privilege given to his family.

The second is quasi-familism. The model that refers to Park's thinking is based on the affection and solidarity of family members in the power structure. The dimension of the political dynasty is no longer in the realm of the nuclear family but has branched out with other families who are not of the same bloodline. All family members try to identify themselves through certain symbols in order to get legitimacy from other families. In this model, what is mobilized is a process of solidarity for its members, both in the formal and informal spheres so that it develops like an oligarchic political force that is able to exert influence in all lines of

life. The results of the FGD and interviews with informants did not reveal any oligarchic forces that supported Har's election in the village head election, both in the first period and in the second period of his leadership.

Different from his predecessors who relied more on physical development programs, Har formulated his programs into four areas, including the field of village government administration; the field of implementation of village development; the field of community development; and the field of community empowerment. He has made many breakthroughs, including collaborating with several universities to be involved in village development. One of them is collaborating with Gadjah Mada University in an integrated pest control project through planting refugia flowers, such as sunflowers and *kenikir* flowers. In addition to being pest control, flower plants along the rice fields are also an attractive tourist attraction. Har also built a selfie deck to facilitate his residents and the public to take pictures with a rice field background. Like people today, Har is also active on social media. His leadership style also seems informal and populist, even at first, the researchers did not recognize Har as the village head because of his casual and contemporary appearance. This is in line with the research of Berenschot et al (2021), that there is a change in leadership trends in the village, where in recent years there have been village heads born from ordinary family backgrounds and govern with different leadership styles than before.

The third is familial egoism. Referring to Park's thinking, this model is based on fulfilling aspects of functionalism rather than just following lineage or blood ties. The context of egoism is understood from two sides, namely regional head and community. The nepotism of regional heads refers to the tendency to prioritize family over the public in filling public office positions and government succession. The regional head who is replaced still has influence over his successor. The goal is to secure the policy programs and budgeting processes that have been carried out. On the community

side, egoism is shown by the tendency to keep certain families in power because the authorities have succeeded in fostering and strengthening social cohesion with the community through a series of 'pork barrel politics' policy programs, although loaded with corrupt behavior. The existence of this populist program makes people think that the authorities have succeeded in their welfare.

Findings on the field show that Har did not gain power from his predecessor. Although the previous village head was his own family (brother-in-law), Har had to compete with him. He also has no desire to pass his power to his wife. Regarding the nomination of his own wife as a competitor in the 2019 *pilkades*, Har said that it was just to get around the rules that prohibit a single candidate because until the last day of registration no other candidate came forward.

"...why do there have to be at least two candidates? If there is only one candidate, why is it forced to have two when the public also knows that one is just a puppet? I think this rule should be corrected. If there is only one candidate, so be it. If the one who chooses 50%+1 will be done..."

H.K. as the organizing committee for the *pilkades* of Pliken Village confirmed that until the last day of registration no other candidates had registered, so it was decided that the wife of the incumbent village head candidate would be the rival. According to the rules, if until the closing of registration there is only one candidate then the *pilkades* must be cancelled.

The results of interviews and FGDs also showed that the various policy programs carried out by Har did not reflect pork barrel politics, which is an indicator of the typology of a political dynasty of egoism-familialism. The informants acknowledged Har's leadership qualities. They also hope that Har can continue the programs that have been planned. The views of the informants seemed to be in line with the community's assessment, it was proven that the enthusiasm of the residents in the *Pilkades* was very high. Of the 6,716 people who had the right to vote, 89.9 percent came to the polling station.

Based on these facts, it can be conclu-

ded that the phenomenon of *pilkades se-darah* in Pliken Village does not reflect the existence of a political dynasty. The emergence of village head candidates who still have family relations (husband and wife) is more driven by pragmatic and rational reasons. The pragmatic reason is that proposing one's own wife as a challenger is the easiest way to get around the rules that prohibit a single candidate. If there is only one candidate, the *pilkades* cannot be held.

Choosing one's own wife as a "competitor" in the *Pilkades* is a rational choice because the risk of losing is small. Regarding the *pilkades* with a single candidate who chooses his wife as a "rival," Astuti, et al. (2019) explains that this is due to the reasons for the superiority and supremacy of men who do not see the importance of women's position. The findings above are in line with the results of research by Malihah, Nurba-yani, and Anggraeni (2020) that in a patriarchal culture people prefer male leaders over women. In the case in Pliken Village, even the wife positioned herself as a subordinate, in every campaign she always advised the residents to vote for her husband. As a result, the husband won unanimously with more than 5,000 votes compared to herself who only got 500 votes. Choosing one's own wife as a "competitor" also reduces the risk of betrayal. If you choose someone else, it could be that the chosen one is the fake competitor. This choice at the same time reduces the cost of candidacy: because the "competitor" is his wife, there is no need to compete in attracting prospective voters.

The absence of other candidates who dared to oppose the incumbent also shows the rational attitude of the people of Pliken Village. According to the informant, mathematically being a village head is a loss because the nomination fee is much higher than the official income. In addition, the socio-economic costs of a village head are also very high because he has to be present when a resident has a wedding and circumcision celebration or dies. While the majority of the Pliken people are traders who tend to calculate material gains and losses, they are reluctant to run for village head, especially if

the chances of winning against the incumbent are very small. The following is the explanation of Gunarto, Chairman of the Pliken BPD regarding the high cost of nominating village heads in Pliken.

"The cost of running for village head in Pliken is very high. If you only have 200 million, it won't happen. Running for village head is like hosting a wedding celebration for three months. A month before the *Pilkades*, many guests visited and had to be entertained so that the public's interest in running for village head was reduced. Moreover, most of the people here are traders, so the calculation is profit and loss."

Har realized that the high cost of the village head election weighed heavily on the candidates for the village head, thus closing the opportunities for potential people who had limited money. As a law scholar, he also knows that giving money or goods to prospective voters is against the law. He has tried to change the mindset of his people, but to no avail. Here's his narrative.

"Actually, in last *Pilkades* (second period) I wanted to start a new tradition so that to become village head, people don't have to spend a lot of money. But if there is no 'something' they received, people are reluctant to choose. There is anxiety from the committee too, if people don't get 'something', it is feared that they will not come to vote. In fact, if less than 50% + 1 came, the village head election would be considered invalid... I gave it (money) after they voted as a form of thanksgiving, that was outside the polling place. Changing people's mindsets is very difficult..."

The high cost of nomination and the many socio-economic costs that must be borne often make a village head take shortcuts by committing corruption. Har fully realized this temptation. Avoiding this bad possibility, he chose to find other sources of livelihood outside his role as village head.

"Honestly, I don't live off the village head's salary. I'm looking for money outside the village head. The first reason being a village head is a public servant. The cost of living in society is very high. Second, if I

only rely on a salary as the village head, I'm afraid that if there is a need that is beyond my capacity, I will be tempted to corrupt and violate the norms..."

Borrowing Hidayat's (2018) thoughts, which divides village head figures into two categories, namely genuine and multi-position village head, Har is a village head who has multiple positions. Apart from serving as village head which he interpreted as a community service, to meet his daily needs, Har worked in the field of buying and selling land and houses. Meanwhile, his wife provides catering services and takes orders for cakes and bread.

Another reason why no other candidate dares to challenge in the Pilkades is that the incumbent village head has high quality, both in terms of education, leadership, and achievement. For the community, choosing a candidate who has proven quality is a rational choice. According to Gunarto, Har's choice as village head was more due to his personal qualities and leadership qualities.

"The prestige of the village head is now so high that other candidates lose before competing, no one dares to run. The candidate quality is also good. He has a bachelor's degree in law. The current village head's achievements include achievements in physical development, national champion in cooking competition for women, representing the Province of Central Java in the *Siaga Candi* competition held by the Indonesian National Police, handling stunting, vaccinating the elderly with comorbid..."

This is in line with Wasistiono's findings (in Yuningsih and Subekti, 2016) that the community does not only want a candidate for a village head who is rich and influential; but also educated and accomplished.

CONCLUSION

In contrast to the phenomenon at the national and local levels (provincial, district/city) where many leaders are elected because of kinship factors, the findings in the case of *pilkades sedarah* in Pliken Village do not find dynastic politics as described

by Jati (2013). Har does not have the lineage of the village head (*trah lurah*). Although his predecessor was his own brother-in-law, Har did not inherit the position. Instead, Har had to compete with him. The choice of the wife as a competitor was driven more by pragmatic reasons, just to get around the rules that forbid the existence of a single candidate. Asking wife to be competitor is a rational choice to eliminate the risk of betrayal that may arise if choosing someone else as a "competitor." The absence of other candidates who dared to oppose the incumbent was also due to the rational attitude of the community considering that the cost of nominating a village head was very high, not proportional to the official income of the village head. Another reason that the village head has high quality, both in terms of education, leadership, and achievement.

The *pilkades sedarah* does have a positive side, including minimizing the potential for conflicts that usually accompany the Pilkades. For pairs of candidates, this method can also reduce political costs because the competitors are their own families, so there is no need to compete in attracting prospective voters. However, the *pilkades sedarah* negates true competition which is actually the spirit of democracy. Therefore, the policy that requires at least two candidates in the village head election needs to be reviewed. It is better if the rules regarding the number of candidates are equated with the *pilkada* regulations which allow for a single candidate. Fighting an empty box is much more democratic than fighting a puppet competitor, although it carries the risk that the village head election must be repeated if the empty box wins.

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