

UDC 331

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING AND MOBILIZATION OF THE ELECTORS IN REGENT AND VICE REGENT ELECTION OF EAST FLORES YEAR 2018**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research aims to; (1) deeply understand how is the role of social networking in the effort to create participative electors in Regent and Vice Regent Election of East Flores in 2017; (2) to deeply understand the factor that that determines the choice of the electors in Regent and Vice Regent Election of East Flores in 2017. This research used qualitative approach. The focus of this research was on the role of non-party social network using politic mobilization instrument to support potential candidate number 4 Ir. Antonius Doni Dihen and Theodorus Marthen Wungubelen (Paket ANTERO) and number 6 Antonius Hubertus Gege Hadjon, ST and Agustinus Payong Boli, SH (Paket BEREUN). This research was located in East Flores Regency, Nusa Tenggara Timur Province. Data analysis used in this research was interactive model by Miles and Huberman. Based on the result of the research it can be concluded that networking relationship built by the party and the potential candidate toward social network contributes to the success of gaining support of the electors in in Regent and Vice Regent Election of East Flores in 2017. Furthermore, social networking can help to increase participation of the electors.

### **KEY WORDS**

Social networking, mobilization, general election, public service.

General election (pemilu) is a collective events marked by most of the citizens simultaneously take a part in a form of political participation. Participating in a general election is a form of various political involvements and just like another form of political behavior it can be practiced by a smaller and tight group of population so the practice of mobilization can be very specific. Theoretically, a direct election of a region principal is actually the most democratic choice. It is because the citizen is given a wide opportunity to choose their leader (Laurensius Sayrani in Bengkel APPeK, 2008). It implies that political participation is extended in almost every group of people with only several very specific exceptions (such as under 17 years old children) to contribute their vote. Therefore, social action and the entire process of decision making right before traditional balloting is described as a process which is so much influenced by the social network of the actor (Lazarsfeld et al., in Arzheimer et al, 2017).

The phenomena today show that the involvement of social network instrument cannot be underestimated. Action group, ad-hock group, social movement, and other structural organization have evolved into a main mover agent of elector mobilization. The role of social network actor such as accepting all kinds of information and clue from the party of the potential candidate, and then leading the member of the network to take part in the election process are very real. The result is the actor of social network will be more possible to do mobilization which is turned to a higher average participation. The present of social network in the event of regional head election can be negatively affect democracy. It is known that the action of social network actor often obstruct the rate of democracy. The obstruction becomes worse with the pre-condition of the people of East Flores that is not conducive for democratization. Extended poverty and limited access for information resource, for example, make the people susceptible to money politic temptation and easy to mobilize for various purposes which is not democratic such as opposing general election with violence and pushing the obtainment of discriminative policy.

This research is considered important because it has the urge to find out how the role of social network, work method and its character is the process of local election in this case is the process of elector mobilization in regional leader election of East Flores year 2017. Are the position and the role of non-party social network as the booster for democratization or as in contrary, they plow up the value of democracy. In this research, the writer critically explores the emergence of non-party social network in local politics and how far their role in boosting the process of democracy in local limit as an effort to create participative elector.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

*Theory of Social Network.* The theory of network was proposed by Fukuyama (2002) who stated that network is a work relationship among of someone with others bounded with the value of trust. Network makes it possible for people to reach the goal of network group and it bounds people together. It is because network is one of social dimension beside belief and norm. The concept of network in social capital focuses more on the bounding aspect between knots which can be human or group (organization). In this case, there is an understanding that there is a social relationship which is bounded by trust and the trust is maintained and guarded by norms. In this concept of network, there is a work element which through social relationship media is informing, reminding, and helping each other to imply or to handle something. The point is the concept of network in social capital refers to all kind of relationship with other people or group which is possible for the activity to run effectively and efficiently (Lawang, 2005).

The discussion about social network is so much related to the concept of bonding and bridging in social capital. These two concepts have different type of network that are internal and external (Woolcock and Narayan 2000). In Handbook of Social Capital (Castiglione et al. 2008:59-60), Putnam explained the difference between bonding social capital and bridging social capital which refers to the context of people social relation. Bonding is a natural exclusive social capital and is developed by looking inside (internal) and the similar exclusive group as it is found in church, reading group, or ethnic brotherhood organization. Meanwhile, social relation that functioned as a 'bridge' from social modal is bridging them who are 'outside the group' to find out and to embrace people of the entire social level. That social capital can be found in, for example, civil rights movement, ethnic group, youth group, and religion organization.

*The Theory of Modality.* Harker, et al. (in Politik Elite Muhammadiyah 1990) stated that is a general election system as implemented in Indonesia, it needs at least three capitals as pre-requirement for the candidate to be elected. Each of the three needs each other although it does not mean that if one of them is missing then it will cause total failure. Those three capitals are social capital, economic capital, and cultural capital. Access differences toward the three capitals will be very decisive to the success of somebody in gaining economic, social, and political opportunity.

This can be used to help explaining the struggle of the elite by using availability and unavailability spectacle of the three capitals a la Bourdieu (Richard Harker, dkk 1900). The first is the availability of social capital. According to Putnam, social capital refers to social organization framework such as network, norms, and trust which allow the emergence of profitable coordination and cooperation. The second is the availability of economic capital. Somebody probably has economic capital from his own business or inherits them from his forefather. Included in this group are conglomerate, entrepreneur, large-scale merchant and professional worker. In the context of general election, economic capital is not always their capital. A candidate can also use other people's economic capital. The third is the availability of cultural capital. Referring to David Effendi, the terminology of symbolic capital is used to replace cultural capital. Cultural capital according to Bourdieu, is related with the level and types of education, the ability to appreciate artwork, cultural experience, and religion. Included in this group are the intellectual, academician, cultural observer, artist, and religious figures (Efendi, 2014).

*The Theory of Mobilization.* Mobilization is defined as a development of a social

relationship (refers to the term used by Weber) agrees with the explanation in Karp and Banducci (2007) between two actor, individual and party. The concept of mobilization consisting three processes they are the process of interest (cognitive dimension, the process of community establishment (affective dimension), and the process of instrument utilization (instrumental dimension). Political mobilization is defined as an effort of an actor to influence authorization distribution. A directional variable is introduced in order to exactly depict the type of relationship that develops between a party and individual.

There are two mobilization models according to Brigitte Nedelman (1987). The first is vertical mobilization that is the mobilization which works in a vertical relationship. The second is horizontal mobilization that is including every possibility of the internal processes in the mobilization between a party and individual. Zuckerman in Arzheimer et al, (2017) stated that it needs to be considered that voting is not only individual action. Elector is also a part of social group and in that group they are mobilized to make choice and to make decision whether their vote is meaningful enough or not. That is why political behavior is only possible to be understood as a result of social process.

## **METHODS OF RESEARCH**

This research used qualitative approach. The focus of this research was on the role of non-party social network using politic mobilization instrument to support potential candidate number 4 Ir. Antonius Doni Dihen and Theodorus Marthen Wungubelen (Paket ANTERO) and number 6 Antonius Hubertus Gege Hadjon, ST and Agustinus Payong Boli, SH (Paket BEREUN). This research was located in East Flores Regency, Nusa Tenggara Timur Province. Data collection technique used in this research was interview, documentation, and observation. Data analysis used in this research was interactive model by Miles and Huberman (1992). Data validation process used in this research was triangulation technique.

## **RESULTS OF STUDY**

*Analysis of Social Network Pattern.* The competition between parties and potential candidate to be officially elected so much depends on the interaction built with the actor of social network in the arena of local politic competition. In the process of the competition, there is a good consolidation started with meeting, direct interaction, and building network with another actor of social network so regional head election in East Flores becomes an interaction arena between the network of local political actor in East Flores.

The relationship built by the potential candidate with the leader of social network is believed to help them mobilize the mass. Indigenous and social leaders in East Flores regency especially in Adonara and Solor islands have more power rather than those in Larantuka land. The candidate's approach for Larantuka land tends to target the youth network. In Adonara island for example, Paket BEREUN came into Rumah Adat Kampung Gelong/Indigenous House of Gelong Village (Lango Belen Lewo Gelong) in January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and the meeting was directly witnessed by the people of the village. This condition will later positively affects the choice of the people. The meeting makes the people of the village assume that their indigenous leader and social leader have symbolically put their vote on the potential candidate.

It is interesting that in several villages the indigenous leader and social leader are being involved in succeeding team so the people of the village become a political reference in choice decision. The researcher found on the site which shows a relationship which was specially built by a political actor with local non-political actor who is trusted to be able to mobilize the electors. Here is the network pattern of political party and potential candidate in Regent and Vice Regent Election year 2017 depicted in a relationship pattern built by political party and potential candidate toward indigenous leader, religious leader, youth leader, and social self-supported organization (Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat/LSM).

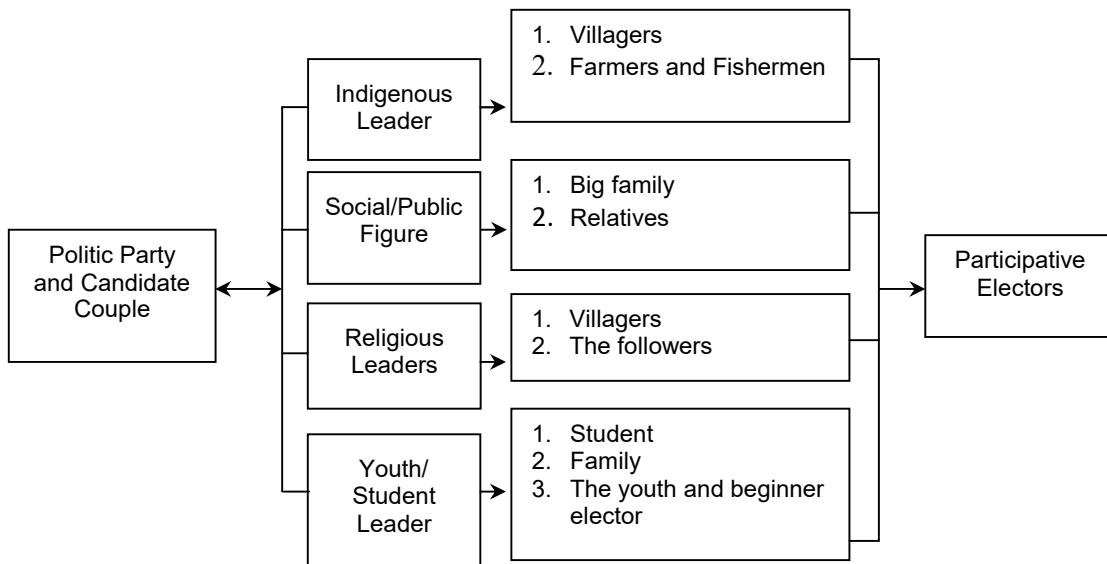


Figure 1 – Network Pattern of Political Party and Potential Candidate In Regional Head Election of East Flores year 2017

The previous network pattern of political party and social network in Regional Head Election of East Flores year 2017, as stated by Allan in Iiliweri (2014) about social interaction depicts a complex process that is conducted when the person (social network actor) organizes/interprets his perception about someone else (party and the candidate) in a togetherness situation so then appears an impression about who the person is, what they are doing, and why they are doing so. Besides social interaction, modality factor also influences the success of someone to reach economic, social, and political opportunity. Richard Harker, et al. (1990) used three capitals availability and unavailability point of view proposed by Bourdieu that is: the first is the availability of social capital, the second is the availability of economic capital, and the third is the availability of cultural capital. From the interaction in the network pattern of the party and potential candidate mentioned before it is known that the power capital of candidate Antonius Doni Dihen and Theodorus Marthen Wungubelen is not only social capital supported with trust which allows a coordination and cooperation with the network of youth who are master of using modern technology such as social media (Facebook) to facilitate the campaign. But also with cultural capital which is by building relationship with public figures. This is proven by the involvement of public figures in every Paket ANTERO's visitation to several villages.

Paying close attention to the opinion from the informant of ANTERO and BEREUN above it is known that social network is a political strategy platform built by both candidates of regional head election of East Flores. Political party even plays more limited role in organizing campaign and mobilization to support the candidate. However, it does not mean that political party is not involved at all in the vote mobilization process. The candidate who is also a main committee of the party is exactly able to dominate the party and effectively actuate the management in branch level of the party to become their personal succeeding team.

*The Analysis of Social Context Role In The Process of Elector Mobilization based on the Elector's Choice Determinant.* The researcher observes the role of social context in the process of elector mobilization as stated by Marc Hooghe (in Arzheimer et. al., 2017) by introducing the difference between three choice determinants of a potential elector that is formal network, informal network, and geographical context. The research about network shows that each factor has a specific effect toward voting behaviour. It shows that the interaction has similarity because the actor inside will tend to consider the opinion expressed by the member of the network when they decide their own position and preference.

Formal network: The presence of political party as a part of democracy development as it is depicted in law regulation that only political party has right to propose a candidate in

general election. It is aimed to keep the existence political party during the process of general election. Although there is any negative assessment toward political party it does not mean that the existence of the party will disappear. The role and function owned by political party should run routinely and also take a real role in people's daily life. The existence of political party cannot be really felt in people's daily life. It even only appears when there is a political event. Political party uses the stage of democracy only for the party's personal interest. The role of political party which tends to only expressed immediately before a political event actually is not easy. The thought that political party only needs to turn on the "party's machine" when it is needed is totally wrong. Actually, every related element of the party needs proper preparation so it will show an optimum effort to reach the expected result.

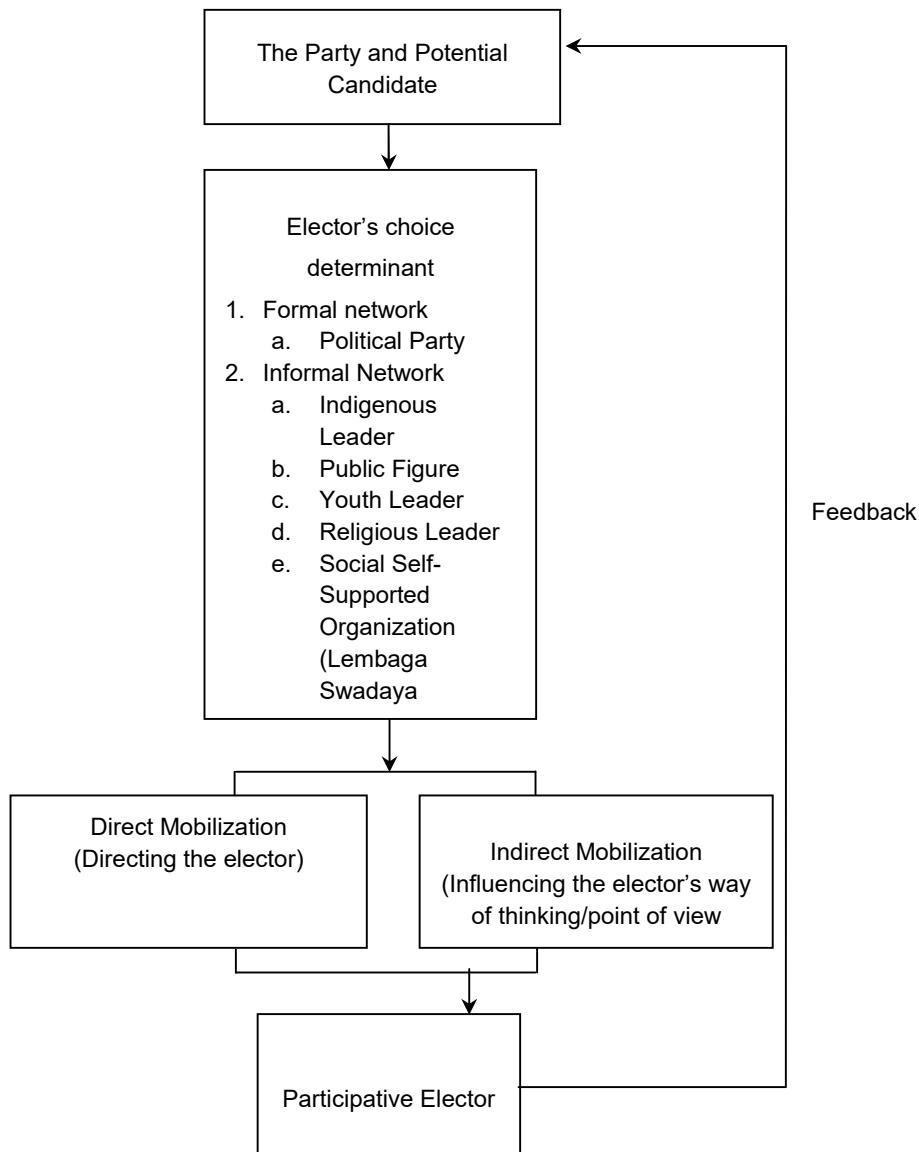


Figure 2 – Conceptual Framework of the Research Result

Informal network: Hooghe (in Arzheimer et al, 2017), explained that elector mobilization is not only influenced by political party and affiliated organization but also informal network which has the same important role. Another research has repeatedly shown that family becomes so much relevant as an informal network to influence political attitude and behavior. Interaction partner in someone's network is highly possible to share the same socio economic status, education level, religious tradition, and cultural habit. Because of these similarities they are also relevant as potential political role model who mostly has the same

interest and ideological preference. The continuing presence and interaction tends to strengthen certain political choice and preference. Regional head election in East Flores with strict competition to gain at the head of the poll triggers the potential candidate to look for another way rather than party's machine. Utilizing social network is one of the efforts from outside the party to mobilize the elector.

**Geographical context:** In geographical context, the candidate has to comprehend the local culture. Cultural capital becomes important for anyone who intends to be active in politics because politic needs the actors with wide knowledge and appropriate level of intellectuality especially to comprehend, to analyze, and to find solution for various problems. Without those qualities, someone will not be able to propose public good policies when he becomes decision maker. The opinion of the informants as mentioned above shows that geographical context where the candidate lives impacts the elector mobilization and affects the vote to increase, although in this research, the researcher also finds out that the role of social media is proven to have strong mobilization effect. The researcher's finding in the geographical context is the utilization of recent technology and social media as a new form of network consolidation. As it is explained by the secretary of Demokrat Samson Padak that party's network using social media gives new effect toward the elector mobilization. The consolidation which was conventionally conducted face-to-face has returned becomes easier by utilizing android technology and social network application such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram. Based on the description of the analysis result and discussion of this research, the researcher is able to show a conceptual framework of research result as presented in the figure 2.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the result of the research, it can be concluded that network relation built by the party and potential candidate toward social network contributes the success in gaining supports from the elector in Regent and Vice Regent Election of East Flores year 2017. Moreover, social network is able to increase the participation of the elector. The presence of social network actor in local level gives a certain colour in political dynamics of regional head election in East Flores year 2017. Social position of the social network actor will affect the people in which with the structure, the people will feel safe in their social neighbourhood and traditional actor will protect the custom and value. In case of supporting the party and potential candidate, social network actor does not only rely on their social position but they also have intellectual ability, intelligence, and hospitality while interact with the people. With those abilities they contributes as connector or volunteer for the elector. First, the party has to realize its role and position in general election. Second, the researcher recommends that socialization for the electors is not only by distributing billboards, banner, pamphlet, sticker, or leaflet as is always done for years, but later it needs to directly be based on social network knots. Third, it needs an observation about the effectiveness of electronic communication during campaign time. There should be further observation to find out whether the role of electronic media positively correlates with the mobilization of the elector.

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