

Strengthening Local Democracy (Orientation Study of Political Culture of Coastal Communities in Dulupi District, Boalemo Regency) *by Ramli Mahmud*

Submission date: 30-Jun-2023 11:51AM (UTC+0800)

Submission ID: 2124604027

File name: 1830-9651-1-PB_1.pdf (521.04K)

Word count: 4554

Character count: 25664



Strengthening Local Democracy (Orientation Study of Political Culture of Coastal Communities in Dulupi District, Boalemo Regency)

Ramli Mahmud; Asmun Wantu; Ruslin Limalo

Faculty of Social Science, Gorontalo State University, ¹Indonesia

<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v7i7.1830>

Abstract

The political culture of the local community, especially the coastal communities in Dulupi District, Boalemo Regency, is the main instrument in strengthening democracy at the local level of Gorontalo. The composition of voters according to 2019 election data shows 38.4% or 4,418 voters in Dulupi District are in coastal areas including 2,926 people in Dulupi village and 1,492 people in Tabongo village. The figure of 38.4% shows that political participation for coastal communities will determine the direction of development and strengthening democracy at the local level, especially in Boalemo Regency. In fact, the strengthening of local democracy is strengthened through the participant's political culture, but the paternalistic coastal social system tends to direct the political culture of the local community to the parochial aspects and subjects or what is known as kaula politics. Therefore, the tendency of coastal communities to determine their political rights is more on the consideration of parochials and subjects than the participant's cultural aspects. This writing would like to analyze and map the orientation of the political culture of coastal communities in Dulupi District as an agenda for strengthening local democracy in Boalemo District which encompasses: 1) How is the cultural orientation of coastal communities in Dulupi District in strengthening Boalemo local democracy and 2) What factors affect the political cultural orientation of coastal communities in Dulupi District in strengthening Boalemo local democracy.

Keywords: *Local Democracy; Political Cultural Orientation; Coastal Communities*

Introduction

Gorontalo is a locality that is recognized through an autonomous region having 6 (six) administrative regions, namely Kota Gorontalo, Kabupaten Gorontalo, Boalemo, Bone Bolango, Pohuwato and Gorontalo Utara. Of course, it should be recognized that Gorontalo is an unfinished work. There are still some decent arrangements for finding solutions for the advancement of Gorontalo locality itself and more specifically in the coastal areas of Boalemo district which are related to political institutionalization, economic development / development and political participation of the community in every aspect of development. In the aspect of political institutionalization, Boalemo district has social capital which reaches the informal structure of the State such as community leaders who strongly support

the administration of governance in the regions. On the other hand, economic development has an imbalance between east and west¹.

On the other hand, this inequality when compared to coastal communities is far from what is thought. Theoretically, coastal communities are inspired as people who live in various aspects including socio-cultural and economic. Limited access to resources makes coastal communities always practical in inspiring their political rights. Of course, inequality that occurs is not natural that overrides the cultural political aspect² that triggers coastal communities and other communities. However, strengthening local democracy for coastal communities, especially in Dulupi Subdistrict is an inseparable part of the agenda for the transformation of contemporary Gorontalo local democracy.

Voters' data in 2019 shows the number of coastal community voters in Dulupi sub-district is 4,418 votes consisting of 2,926 inhabitants of Dulupi Village and 1,492 inhabitants of Tabongo Village. This means that around 38.4% of the people chose the coastal community in the 2019 election from the totality of the community voters in Dulupi Subdistrict 11,504 or 62.6%. The figure of 38.4% shows that political participation for coastal communities will determine the direction of development and strengthening democracy at the local level, especially in Boalemo Regency. In this context, it needs to be seen that each component of society characterizes the political performance which is seen in the aspects of the needs and environment in which they are located and depends on the political cultural values that characterize the community.

One element of strengthening for local democracy in Boalemo district especially coastal communities in Dulupi sub-district is strengthening the orientation of political culture. Political culture is the most important part in creating the substance of local democracy. All reviews of political events that occur at the local level and coastal communities are part of the dynamics of local politics that are feasible for finding solutions through a political culture approach in order to manifest all elements of interest in carrying out the local democracy agenda in Boalemo District.

Local Democracy and Political Cultural Orientation of Coastal Communities

Improving the quality of local democracy can be influenced by a number of factors that are commonly called preconditions of local democracy. These democratic preconditions include: 1) good DPRD quality, 2) selective, and accountable DPRD recruitment systems, 3) functioning parties, 4) critical and rational voters, 5) freedom and press consistency, 6) solid NGOs and consistent, and 7) civil society empowerment (civil society)³. The argument shows, one of the aspects of the quality of strengthening local democracy is the existence of critical voters and behave rationally in every local democracy event. The power of criticism and rational behavior is one element in balancing between freedom and equality to realize local democracy as a manifestation of civil society.

Local democracy has become a geopolitical area of regional leaders who want to be the future leaders of their native land. Concrete space which is the mentality of local leaders or actors to be realized in the waiting and high expectations for the surrounding community⁴. The actor's approach to coastal communities, Bryant and Beily⁵ emphasized that there are several assumptions underlying the actor's

¹Laporan Riset Stabilitas Politik Kabupaten Boalemo Menjelang Pemilu 2019 Kerja Sama KESBANGPOL Kabupaten Boalemo dan Jurusan IHK/PPKn FIS UNG 2018.

² Almond A Gabriel., Verba. 1990. *Budaya Politik Tingkah laku Politik dan Demokrasi di Lima Negara*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara. To identify the typology of political culture, the main thing that must be seen as a reference is their orientation in determining political choices, both cognitive, affective and evaluative.

³ Mustafa Lutfi. 2010. *Hukum Sengketa Pemilu di Indonesia*, Yogyakarta: UII Press, page 128.

⁴ Muliansyah Abdurrahman Ways. 2012. *Demokrasi Lokal Opini dan Wacana Dinamika Politik*, Yogyakarta: Litera Buku, page 16.

⁵ Arif Satria, 2009. *Ekologi Politik Nelayan*. Yogyakarta: LKIS. page 42

approach, including 1) The culture and benefits associated with environmental change were unequally enjoyed by the actors; 2) The unequal distribution of costs and benefits encourages the creation of socio-economic oversight and 3) The different socio-economic impacts of environmental changes also have political implications in the sense that changes in power in an actor's relationship with others.

⁵ Dewi Fatmasari (2019) Coastal communities, including communities that are still underdeveloped and in a marginal position, many dimensions of life that are not known by outsiders about the characteristics of coastal communities. They have different ways in terms of knowledge, beliefs, social roles, and social structure. Meanwhile behind the margins of coastal communities do not have many ways to overcome the problems that are present. Among the problems in question are the low level of education, not yet settled residential environment and low socioeconomic conditions in the work aspect.

Explicitly in a political review by not relaxing the political ecology of coastal communities, conditions that occur in coastal communities will greatly affect the political culture and political preferences. Theoretically, the tendency of people who live economically weak with a low level of education will greatly affect the aspects of people's behavior and political preferences. The tendency of such a society will be confronted with a pragmatic level without prioritizing consideration on aspects of strengthening democracy which, according to Almond and Verba's perspectives, refer to the participatory political culture. Another tendency that can be seen is the involvement of actors who in other terms are called the elite will greatly influence their political preferences. Paternalistic which refers to aspects of parochial political culture and subjects or subjects will be the main characteristics of coastal communities in determining their political rights.

The dominance of the role of state and private actors to coastal communities has had side effects on life for coastal communities. What Bryant and Beily put forward can be seen in terms of formal state actors such as the elite occupying important positions in the state structure and non-formal actors outside the power of the state which are dominated by private groups and community actors who are directly related to power at both the state level and private. Concerning Bourdieu's ⁶power and local politics divided into several values of capital, including economic capital which includes material wealth in the form of property, money and so forth. Social capital, including social resources in the form of ⁴networks and contacts based on mutual recognition. Cultural capital which is sourced from information in the form of knowledge ⁴and skills gained through socialization and education and symbolic capital is based on the legitimacy of authority in the form of prestige, honor and reputation⁷.

Based on the orientations of citizens towards their political life or political culture, Almond and Verba divide them into three types of political culture, namely 1) parochial political culture: specialization of political roles or very low levels of political participation, due to cognitive factors (eg educational levels relatively low). The parochial political culture is also marked by the lack of hope for the change that will come from the political system. 2) the political culture of subjects or subjects, in general they accept all decisions and policies taken by the authorized officials in the community, 3) participant's political culture a political culture in which citizens already have a political orientation that is explicitly addressed to the system as a whole, even to the structure, political process, and administration⁸.

Strengthening local democracy can never be realized if it does not reflect the participant's political culture. Strengthening the cultural aspects of the participant becomes stronger if the

⁶ Ibid 2005 page 25

⁷ Ibid 2005 page 27., The field of local politics is classified based on the competition of legitimacy rights over the legitimacy of others. The balance of local political power will influence and be influenced by resources, institutions and political players and ³relationships between them.

⁸ Lihat Almond, A Gabriel dan Verba. 1990. *Budaya Politik Tingkah laku Politik dan Demokrasi di Lima Negara*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara., page 18-22

independence of the community is based on collective awareness as a local community to be able to represent and aggregate their interests at each level of power. Thus, as long as the parochial political culture and subjects or subjectivity are the main considerations especially for coastal communities, the democratic agenda is not well enshrined in the sub-national scale that characterizes the substance and existence of democracy at the local level.

1 **Orientation of Political Culture of Coastal Communities in Dulupi District in Strengthening Local Democracy in Boalemo**

Political culture⁹ society as the most important aspect in strengthening local democracy. As a means of local democracy, elections are expected to be able to manifest the hopes and demands of society in all aspects of life. As a procedural agenda, we can be sure that elections will be held in accordance with what is expected. However, in the aspect of the substance of electoral democracy it still tells the problem of including coastal communities, because until now the life of coastal communities is a communal group that lives below the poverty line and is far different from other communities. Set aside on economic aspects, public space (resources), education and social culture.

Among the crucial problems faced by coastal communities in Dulupi District, Boalemo Regency, are the economic aspects. Most people play a dual role in livelihoods as a result of regulations and the political interests of the people that are not denied through elections. This is why, in essence, democracy has not been able to answer the demands and needs of society. The majority of coastal communities have an income below Rp. 500,000 per month as a serious concern by stakeholders. Besides that, the dual role of the people who are prosecuting as fishermen, farmers, tenants and odd workers because of natural factors and regulations becomes an obstacle in terms of spatial planning for the economic stability of coastal communities. Another finding that can be seen is the absence of data synchronization in Dulupi District regarding community livelihoods both at the level of the coastal villages, the District and BPS Boalemo District.

Election as a sovereign process should be able to synchronize the interests of the elite or party or candidate with the demands and needs of the community. However, for many years coastal communities in Dulupi sub-district still experience the same problem. Of course, this will greatly affect the orientation of the political culture of the people ahead of the election. Like the sovereign process is given at the time the General Election is oriented to aspects of the participant's political culture, it requires collective awareness as citizens who have the purpose of life and the ideals of the nation and state. The hope is that the sovereign process through the people's suffrage is in accordance with the issue of the needs and offers of work programs for both parties and prospective candidates to answer all the demands of the community.

People who are smart in granting voting rights are people who have rational political preferences with a calculation of profit and loss at the time of election, not based on short-term preferences that lead to transactional politics. This is where the political culture aspects of the participants become a benchmark in strengthening local democracy in Gorontalo, especially the coastal communities in Dulupi District, Gorontalo Regency.

Data sources from the research show that the political culture orientation of coastal communities in the 2019 Elections in Dulupi District is co-opted into various considerations, but the

⁹ Lihat Almond, Verba, 1990, hal. 14. Political culture refers to the political orientation of attitudes towards the political system and other parts as well as attitudes towards the role of citizens of the political system.

orientation of the community is more on the politics of public subjectivity or we are familiar with the political culture of the kaula. The phenomenon that originated from several figures as a key instrument argues that coastal communities in Dulupi sub-district still prioritize aspects or influence of families and political figures on their political preferences in determining political choices. In addition, kaula's political culture is also reflected in the client's patron, which is characterized by the mastery of access to agricultural land for local entrepreneurs in the District of Dulupi who are engaged in agriculture especially in corn. The data is reflected in a number of factors which factually occurred during the Election is the distribution of votes in the family to support or elect certain candidates.

In addition to the symptom of the distribution of votes, the influence of political figures who incidentally also as corn entrepreneurs in the district of Dulupi is considered by the community. This phenomenon occurs because voters or the public are confronted with psychological factors between. Family considerations are based on blood ties that are emotionally binding between the community and the candidate, while consideration of meeting daily needs is based on the consideration of candidates who have helped them a lot in meeting economic needs.

The above phenomenon shows, the political preference in terms of oerientasi political culture of coastal communities in the District of Dulupi is more oriented to the political culture of kaula. The consideration of family and actors who are elder in the family becomes the political preference of the community in determining their political choices at the time of the election. In addition to the family, corn entrepreneur actors as well as figures and candidates who fight are the main considerations in the election. The patrimonial culture for the coastal community which is depicted through the corn businessman patron becomes the political culture orientation of the coastal community in Dulupi District. Thus, the orientation of the political culture of coastal communities in Dulupi Subdistrict in the 2019 Election is based on two main preferences, namely family considerations and influential actors in the family as well as consideration of meeting the economic needs of the candidates or figures of corn entrepreneurs who control agricultural land resources in Dulupi District.

Factors Affecting the Political Cultural Orientation of Peisir People in Dulupi District

One important aspect for strengthening local democracy is the increasing political participation of the people. On the other hand, people's political participation is influenced by the orientation of the political culture of the community. Cognitive aspects which include the recognition of the electoral deadline, the affinity that surrounds the attitudes and emotional values of the voters towards the party or candidate as well as the evaluative focus on the level of community electability are strongly determined by the political culture of the voting community or the local community. What was said by Bourdieu¹⁰ about the value of capital in the narrative of local political power becomes its own characteristic for factors that influence the orientation of the political culture of coastal communities in Dulupi District, Boalemo Regency, including:

a. Client Patron

Patron client is a part or characteristic of patrimonial society or patronais, where the control of the source of community life is restricted to a figure or elite. In the aspect of power is known as the central actor. Community in certain positions are co-opted to the central interests of actors. In the context of the orientation of the political culture of coastal communities in the dulupi sub-district is inseparable from the influence of client patrons. This can be read through the existence of elite or central figures in Dulupi District who dominate all aspects of community life, both economic and political. As a businessman

¹⁰ Ibid 2005 page 25.

engaged in corn farming, Harijanto Mamangkey can dominate the votes in Dulupi and Wonosari District II.

Research data shows, client patron is a determining factor in the political culture orientation of the voting community. The condition is like what was described by Bourdieu¹¹ about the value of economic capital and social capital. The ownership of economic capital and social capital is the main characteristic of the orientation of political culture for coastal communities in the District of Dulupi. Economic capital and social capital make Harijanto Mamengkey accepted in every layer of coastal society. Strengthening these prospects is strengthened through the level of election of the majority of the coastal communities of Dulupi District, which are predominantly Muslim, but Harijanto Mamengkey, who as a Hindu personal, lives in the midst of a majority of Muslims who are able to compete with other candidates, such as Rensi Mauka wives of Boalemo Regents and Riko Djani from the Perindo party who have family emotional ties with the majority of the voting community in Dulupi sub-district. The patron's capacity for Harijanto Mamangkey who controls the source of corn farms in Dulupi Subdistrict makes the coastal community depend their daily life on the candidate. Empirical data shows that as a coastal community whose livelihoods are fishermen but prioritize their basic needs on economic capital and social capital from the actor Harijanto Mamengkey as a member of the Boalemo Regency DPRD as well as a corn entrepreneur in the Dulupi district.

b. Kinship

Parochial political culture and kaula or political subjects are characteristic of the patrimonial culture of society such as Indonesian society. Various efforts have been made to educate politics for the citizens of the nation. The futility of these efforts is because they are confronted with cultural aspects as a characteristic of a society that is fundamentally trapped in patrimonial culture. Field data shows that the political preferences of coastal communities in Dulupi sub-district aside from client patrons, family factors determine the level of community electability during the 2019 elections. It cannot be ignored, for people who are fragmented in family ties will make it difficult for voters to think rationally.

In these conditions, voters will be fragmented in cultural values that bring voters closer to certain parties or candidates. Voters at this level do not consider aspects of party rationality and identification, but rather the perspective of a sociological approach. That is, some of the coastal communities in the Dulupi sub-district in determining their political choices are based on the preference of the sociological school which is seen from the aspect of family closeness and blood ties between voters and candidates.

Departing from these arguments and supported by empirical field data, in addition to the patron kilen of economic and social capital ownership, the political preferences of the Dulupi sub-district coastal communities are influenced by the preference of familial ties between the voting community and prospective candidates. These findings intersect with what was stated by Bourdieu¹² share about cultural capital with symbolic capital values based on the legitimacy of **authority in the form of prestige, honor and reputation**. For coastal communities in Dulupi sub-district, the value of capital cultural and symbolic in the aspect of consideration of political preferences based on the family aspect becomes its own characteristic for coastal communities. This can be seen in the vote acquisition in the 2019 election between Harijanto Mamengkey, Riko Djaini and Rensi Makuta as Boalemo's Regent's Wife.

Both candidates were effective in obtaining votes in Dulupi sub-district, but in terms of capital capital between the two, the aspect of capital capital owned by Harijanto Mamengkey was not qualified. Supposedly, cultural and symbolic capital is the main consideration of the voting community in determining political choices in the patrimonial conditions of the political culture of the community. However, patrimonial culture is the second part of the factors that influence the political preferences of

¹¹ *Ibid* 2005 page 25

¹² *Ibid* 2005 page 25

voters for coastal communities. This means that the data shows, family considerations that characterize the Dulupi coastal community, but economic and social capital capital is a determining factor in the victory of Harijanto Mamengkey as an actor who differs politically from the identity described above.

c. Economic Conditions

Coastal communities are always known as marginalized people who live below the poverty line. They have identity characteristics that are different from the identity of the general public. Their dependence on natural conditions is their own characteristic for coastal communities. One of the causes of poverty for coastal communities is livelihood dependence with natural conditions, almost all coastal communities whose livelihood as fishermen face the third dry season, a change in the west to the east season. In the east season fishermen cannot go to sea due to weather that is not possible. As a result, they will lose their livelihoods, there are those who choose to stay at home, there are some who choose to find a side job to meet their needs.

Not all coastal communities work as fishermen, some work as farmers, entrepreneurs and others. Like the coastal communities in Dulupi District, Boalemo Regency, there are two villages that are geographically located in the coastal region including Dulupi Village and Tabongo Village. In the context of livelihoods, the majority of coastal communities have a double profession, namely as fishermen and farmers and the majority are tenants. This profession is undertaken because livelihood is highly dependent on climate factors.

In the west season, most people go to sea, but during the east season, fishermen will look for side jobs such as farming, working on odd jobs. In addition, although most people go to sea in the west season, they always do side work.

In accordance with the findings of the data in the field, the condition of the coastal community in Dulupi District performed a dual role, both working as fishermen as well as working as farmers, tenants and odd jobs. Geographical factors become the main thing for people to meet their daily economic needs. In addition, regulations are needed to arrange the Dulupi Fish Shelter (Tempat Penampungan Ikan), in order to maintain price stability for fishermen, especially those on the Dulupi Coast. Uncertainty in regulations, geographical conditions, is the biggest obstacle for coastal communities to improve their welfare. The data shows that as a coastal society oriented to patron client political culture. With economic and social capital capital, the political preferences of coastal communities consider more aspects of patron kilen political culture when compared to other political cultural orientations.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that *first* orientation of the political culture of coastal communities in Dulupi Subdistrict, Boalemo Regency in the 2019 Election is more likely to be the political culture of the subject or subjects. *Second*, there are three factors that influence the political culture of coastal communities, including the influence of client patrons on capital and social capital ownership by Harijanto Mamengkey. In addition, consideration of family ties between voters and candidates becomes the political preference of the voting community through support of Riko Djaini and Rensi Makuta. Apart from these two factors, the economic condition of the community is the third factor in influencing the political culture of the community.

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