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Analysis of Public Opinion on Capabilities of the Candidates for Governor of Riau, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study analyzes the public's opinions and assessments regarding the candidates' capabilities for Governor of Riau, especially regarding candidates who are suitable to lead Riau Province. In addition, people's predictions regarding the candidates who will win the second re-election. This study uses descriptive qualitative methods to thoroughly, broadly, and in-depth explore social situations. The results found that the community's assessment of candidates more suitable to lead Riau Province is balanced. Of the 20 informants, eight people (40%) considered Herman Abdullah more suitable, eight people (40%) stated that Anas Ma'amun was more appropriate, and the remaining four people (20%) considered the two candidates for Riau Governor equally suitable. It means that the two candidates are still balanced when viewed from the context of appropriateness. Besides that, the informants generally sided with the AM figure for the community's prediction of the candidate being promoted as the winner. Of the 20 informants, the majority, namely 16 (80%), favoured AM as the winner, three (15%) favoured the chances of both being equal (fifty-fifty), and one (5%) predicted HA would be the winner. This study concluded that the two candidates for governor have balanced capabilities, but according to the majority prediction, AM will win the gubernatorial election. Furthermore, this study seeks to explain the process of forming public opinion from various perspectives.

1. Introduction

General elections are one of the political consequences of the democratic system adopted by a country to determine the leaders who will control the wheels of government within a certain period (Bryce, 2008). No exception to the holding of general elections in the regions, or what is known as Pilkada (General Election of Regional Heads), must also be carried out to produce regional leaders, either at the level of Governor or Regent. With the democratic system currently adopted by the Indonesian state, the mechanism for selecting prospective national and regional leaders is carried out directly, where the people choose the desired leader figure without going through the intermediary of the people's representatives in parliament. This means that

political support from parties cannot be used as the main benchmark. In the current presidential and regional head elections, people no longer choose parties but directly choose individual figures as prospective leaders. So, it is not surprising that before the general election is held, candidates' supporters are competing to campaign to promote their candidates to the public. In addition to attracting public sympathy by offering various ideas or work programs, even political promises from candidates if elected, in the hope that the public will vote for their candidates.

However, today's society is increasingly critical and intelligent. People have their views on who is most suitable to be their leader. Character advantages possessed by prospective leaders, such as high morality,

integrity and capability, strong commitment, populism and other personal capacity advantages, are important to attract public sympathy. Many factors influence public opinion, so public opinion is prone to change. If methods such as black campaigns and money politics are allowed to develop, it is not impossible that this can shake the consistency of people's choices (Key, 1961). This phenomenon shows how dynamically public opinion develops, so predictions must be made. This research analyzes the public's views on the gubernatorial candidates who contested the gubernatorial election, namely Herman Abdullah (HA) and Anas Ma'amun (AM). In this case, AM, who was paired with Arsyad Juliandi Rachman with serial number 2, was a candidate promoted by the Golkar Party and the United Development Party (PPP).

Meanwhile, the HA-Agus pair, number 1, is running by gathering votes from smaller parties, including the Gerindra Party, the Moon Star Party (PBB), the Labor Party, the Hanura Party, the Prosperous Peace Party (PDS), and the National Party. Concern Party for the Care of the Nation (PKPB). The Patriot Party, the Indonesian National Unity Party (PKPBI), the National Democratic Party (PDK), and the National Awakening Party of the Ulama (PKNU) plus the support of two parties, namely the Democrats and PAN. However, after the first round, the map of supporting political parties changed, where AM-Arsyad, in the re-election, received additional support from several parties, namely PPP, PKS, PDIP, and PKB. This increased the confidence of both candidates to win the re-election. This context is interesting to study to reveal the issues and phenomena that developed before the implementation of the Riau Regional Election. To get a broad picture of the trends that may occur after the elections. This research is about people's views on the capabilities of the candidates for Governor of Riau during the 2018 elections in Riau Province. Specifically, this research focuses on the community's assessment of the candidates' eligibility to be re-elected to lead Riau Province and the community's prediction of the winning candidate.

2. A Brief Discussion: Politics, Autonomy and Regional Leaders

Local communities can determine their future by electing leaders who can change their fate for the better. It's been a long time since local communities had local leaders. During the New Order era, provincial leadership was controlled by the center for more than three decades. There are three types of central intervention: first centralized, second from the military, and third from the Golkar party. As a result, local people had to fulfil these criteria. So, they were forced to accept the political game played by the central government power, known as the bureaucratic political regime (Hartanto, 2009). This was done because the electoral system was conducted

indirectly through party representatives in the provincial legislatures.

During this regional autonomy period, people can change their future through local leaders. Meanwhile, the quality of democracy is an important term that indicates whether political decentralization succeeds or fails. According to John Gaventa in Eko et al. (2009), the main challenge of the 21st century is to build a new order of relationships between ordinary people and institutions, especially government institutions that affect their lives (Eko et al., 2009). Local democracy is not a single concept but a combination of democracy and autonomy. Governance can be local without being democratic or local (Miller et al., 2000; Bovaird et al., 2003). Local development and democracy, however, are interacting fields. It is even a battleground between the State and civil society (Eko et al., 2009).

A regional leader is important in advancing the region (Haris, 1999). Because people always admire political power and genuine commitment to the region they lead. A personal definition of an effective leader is someone who delivers positive results and manages current risks. My favourite president, Theodore Roosevelt, summed up this leadership philosophy by saying, "The best executive has the sense to select people who are fit to do what he wants and restrained enough not to interfere with them when they do it" (Ricardo et al. 2007). According to Mann and Yulianto (1999), after that, the development of reform towards democracy examined the figure of Habibie as a reformer and fighter for democracy. He said: "The president, he served the people and honestly tried to achieve democracy." Although many considered Habibie weak, as president, he provided a unique opportunity to re-establish Indonesia as a law-based democracy (Mann & Yulianto, 1999).

So now after the reform of the general election system is done directly, because of the pressure from below, the will of the region's people is granted to lead the region and not from the military. One of the pressures that came at the beginning of the 98 reform was the decision of the Indonesian People's Representative Council (DPRI) in the institution at the insistence of the Riau 98 Exponent group so that in the future, there would be no more disputes, the leader of Riau must be a regional son. Finally, with the approval of the DPRD, it was decided that the future leader of Riau should be a son of the region.

After several terms, Riau Province has been led by a local rather than by the military. This time, the competition to determine Riau's leadership was intense. The competition for leadership candidates came from both sea and land. Each of them was greatly experienced in administration and experienced in politics. The election process was so complicated and various political tricks took place that a "re-election" was conducted as happened in the determination of Riau Governor between Anas Ma'amun and Andi Rahman versus Herman Abdullah.

The quest to become a leader in Indonesia today costs a lot of financial capital. Most of the candidates who emerge in the regions have big capital from anywhere, as long as there is support. Being a leader is also ready to compete, healthy or unhealthy, even fighting continuously. This is unique, and some say this political practice is dirty politics. The most important thing for them is to gain power, and this power is the capital needed to get something more. Dubrin (2009) says that if being a leader does not yield great benefits, few people would want to be one. The main advantage of being a leader is that you will gain power and prestige.

In lay administration, the role of leaders today is crucial to take care of the interests of the common people and adopt various methods or strategies to achieve the goals effectively (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). According to Broussine (2009) and Morse et al. (2007), today's world is interconnected and interdependent, and public leadership must go beyond leading public sector organizations (Tasmara, 2006). Since most people agree that leadership is the key to organizational effectiveness, political leadership, for me, is about developing a vision and a direction that will captivate and inspire those around us to make it happen (Broussine, 2009; Nugraha, 2012).

This study is descriptive qualitative research, focusing on observation and natural settings, meaning that researchers go directly to the field and act as observers (Ardianto, 2010). According to Kriyantono (2006), qualitative research aims to explain phenomena in the deepest possible way by collecting the deepest possible data. Daymon and Holloway (2007) mention that qualitative research focuses more on words, not numbers, although there are times when numbers are used to mark the frequency of the presence of a theme in a transcript or certain action events.

This research is in Pekanbaru City and Dumai City, Riau Province. Because these locations are city-type. Only Pekanbaru represents the mainland Riau region, while Dumai is one of the cities that represents the coastal Riau region. The data collection techniques are documentation, observation, in-depth interviews, and literature study. Groups who feel the same fate as the community: Lassey and Sashkin (1983) said that most communities would benefit from improving leadership quality. According to them, again, the characteristics of community leadership are (1) Systems perspective, (2) Local perspective, (3) Community involvement (4) Cultural awareness of the community. (5) Minimal conflict (6) Locally relevant needs. (Lassey & Sashkin, 1983).

3. Materials and Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, focusing on observation and natural settings, meaning that researchers go directly to the field and act as observers (Herdiansyah, 2010; Ardianto, 2010; Mulyana,

2008). According to Kriyantono (2006), qualitative research aims to explain phenomena in the deepest possible way by collecting the deepest possible data. Daymon and Holloway (2007) mention that qualitative research focuses more on words, not numbers, although there are times when numbers are used to mark the frequency of the presence of a theme in a transcript or certain action events. This research is in Pekanbaru City and Dumai City, Riau Province. Because these locations are city types. Only Pekanbaru represents the mainland Riau region, while Dumai is one of the cities that represents the coastal Riau region. The data collection techniques were documentation, observation, in-depth interviews, and literature study.

Twenty key informants will be the subjects of this study, 10 informants from each city. Meanwhile, the key informants were determined purposively, i.e. the researcher chose people who were considered to know the issues under study (Faisal, 1990). Mainly those who have the right to vote, at least 10 years domiciled in the city, actively participate in elections, have knowledge, and at least have seen/heard the two gubernatorial candidates campaigning. In addition, they convey certain messages in various mass media, both print, electronic, and online media, and are not affiliated with certain political parties or as members of the success team of one of the gubernatorial candidates. Using these criteria, researchers took informants from academics, journalists, community leaders, students, and NGOs. Finally, data analysis was conducted through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification (Sugiyono, 2009).

4. Results and Discussion

Various factors can be used to analyze the public's views on gubernatorial candidates considered more suitable to lead Riau in the future. Among them is the candidate's figure in the eyes of the public, which involves aspects such as appearance and communication style, experience factors, and his work in administration, organizations, and politics (Nimmo, 2004). In addition, we learned about the intellectuality and insight possessed, the vision and mission carried, concern and closeness to the community, and the performance or contributions made to Riau Province. The results show that the community's assessment of who is more suitable to lead Riau in the future can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Public Opinion on Who is More Appropriate to Lead Riau Province, Indonesia

No.	Initial	City of origin	Candidate for Governor
1	AR	Pekanbaru	Equally qualified
2	AI	Pekanbaru	HA Abdullah
3	FA	Pekanbaru	AM
4	MS	Pekanbaru	HA Abdullah
5	MP	Pekanbaru	HA Abdullah

6	PS	Pekanbaru	AM
7	RE	Pekanbaru	AM
8	RF	Pekanbaru	AM
9	SY	Pekanbaru	Equally qualified
10	YT	Pekanbaru	HA Abdullah
11	AM	Dumai	HA Abdullah
12	US	Dumai	AM
13	AH	Dumai	AM
14	BA	Dumai	Equally qualified
15	EF	Dumai	HA Abdullah
16	MR	Dumai	HA Abdullah
17	NE	Dumai	AM
18	RM	Dumai	Equally qualified
19	SP	Dumai	HA Abdullah
20	SN	Dumai	AM

Table 1 shows the public's assessment of candidates who are fit to lead Riau. The Table explains that the eligibility of the two candidates is balanced. The number of informants rated HA as more feasible was eight informants (40%), and AM eight informants (40%). The remaining four informants (20%) considered the two gubernatorial candidates equally fit to lead Riau. In the eyes of the community, some of the advantages of HA over AM include: (i) the highest education (S1 / S2); and (ii) adequate basic capital; (iii) impressed "careless"; and (iv) poor communication style.

Meanwhile, some of AM's advantages in the eyes of the community include (i) more straightforward and low profile and (ii) experience in government and politics. In this context, AM has served as regent for two periods, has served as Chairman of the Bengkalis and Rokan Hilir DPRD, and as Chairman of DPD Golkar Riau Province; (iii) has a strong commitment to developing Rokan Hilir. He built the first and second bridges across the Rokan River. These bridges connected isolated tribal areas (suku kubu) smoothly, and (iv) the highway from the Sumatra crossroad to the capital of Rokan Hilir, namely Bandar Bagan Si-Api-Api.

In his campaign political manifesto in Bengkalis district, he destroyed the bridge across the Bengkalis Strait from Sungai Pakning to Bengkalis Island, the capital of Bengkalis Regency. Plans for the construction of the bridge are already in place. The following diagram illustrates the analysis of public opinion on who is more appropriate to lead Riau Province.
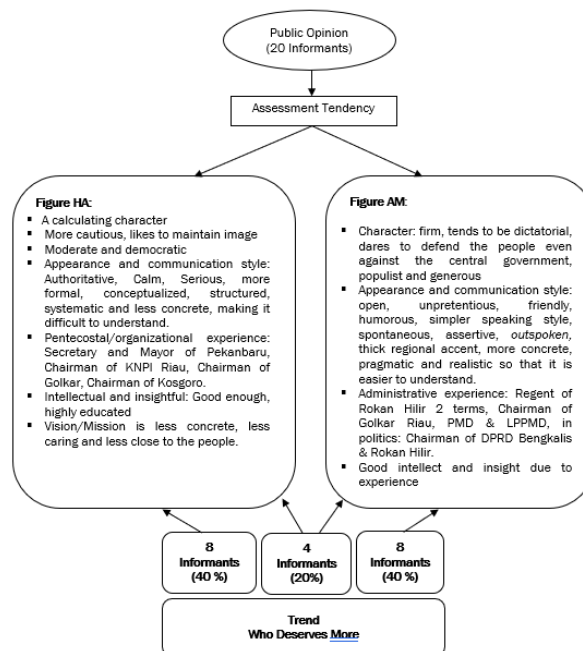

Figure 1. Public Opinion on Eligible Candidates to Lead Riau Province

There are various factors, namely the popularity and strength of the political machines owned by the two candidates for governor. Public opinion on the prediction of who will win the re-election can be seen in Table 2.
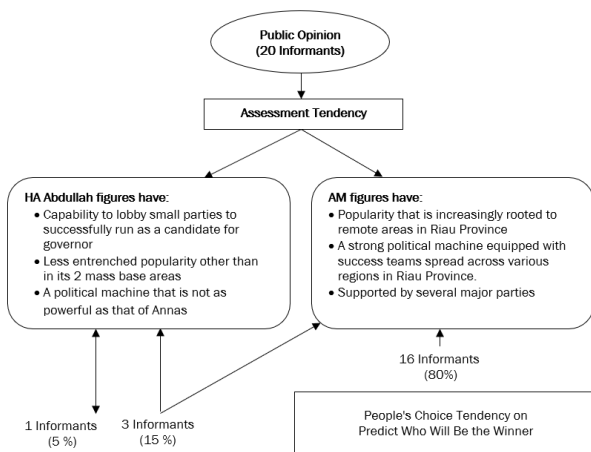
Table 2. Predicted Public Opinion on the Winner of the Re-election in Riau Province

No.	Initials Informant	City of Origin Informant	Winner Prediction Re-election in Riau
1	AR	Pekanbaru	AM
2	AI	Pekanbaru	AM
3	FA	Pekanbaru	AM
4	MS	Pekanbaru	Equally powerful
5	MP	Pekanbaru	AM
6	PS	Pekanbaru	AM
7	RE	Pekanbaru	AM
8	RF	Pekanbaru	AM
9	SY	Pekanbaru	AM
10	YT	Pekanbaru	Equally powerful
11	AM	Dumai	AM
12	US	Dumai	AM
13	AH	Dumai	AM
14	BA	Dumai	AM
15	EF	Dumai	Just like stron g
16	MR	Dumai	AM
17	NE	Dumai	AM
18	RM	Dumai	AM
19	SP	Dumai	HA Abdullah
20	SN	Dumai	AM

Table 2 shows that the majority of informants, namely 16 people (80%), including informants 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18 and 20, predicted that AM would emerge as the winner. This is because AM's polarity and political machine are stronger than HA's. According to all 16 informants, AM is very popular

in the Riau Pesisir, an archipelago region. He is a regent and chairman of the DPRD in Bengkalis and Rokan Hilir regencies. Even when contesting the election, he was still active as the regent of Rokan Hilir in the Bengkalis district. AM is well known by most of the people of Riau, part of the coastal islands of East Sumatra, with the largest number of voters in the Bengkalis district.

In addition, most informants considered AM superior in terms of a strong political machine in the form of the Golkar Party and a successful team that was busy spreading and socializing him throughout Riau. AM was also supported by major parties outside Golkar, such as PPP, PKS, PDIP and PKB. In contrast, HA advanced as a candidate for governor by collecting votes from several small parties. The re-election received additional support from two major parties, Democrat and PAN.

Figure 2. Public Opinion on Predicting Who Will Be the Winner in the Riau Province Re-election.

In addition to the 16 informants (80%) who predicted AM as the winner, 4 informants had a different view: 3 of them (15%) predicted that the chances of the two gubernatorial candidates would be the same (fifty-fifty), and 1 person (5%) predicted that HA would emerge as the winner. In general, the four informants believed popularity and political machinery did not have much influence on the winning efforts of the gubernatorial candidates. They argue that the quality of the candidate's capabilities is more decisive. For example, HA's ability to lobby small parties so that he can run as a gubernatorial candidate should be recognized as a strong competitor to AM. The following diagram illustrates the analysis of public opinion regarding predictions of who will be the winner in the re-election.

5. Conclusions

This study concludes that of the 20 informants, 8 people (40%) considered HA Abdullah better, 8 people (40%) said AM was better, and the remaining 4 people (20%) considered the two candidates for Riau Governor equally worthy. This means that when viewed from the suitability of the two candidates, it turns out that they are still balanced, meaning that both candidates are equally

feasible to become Riau leaders. Second, people's predictions about who will win the re-run elections in Riau are more inclined towards AM. Of the 20 informants, the majority, namely 16 people (80%), predict that AM will be pushed as the winner, 3 people (15%) predict that the chances of both are equal (fifty-fifty), and 1 person (5%) of them predicts HA as the winner.

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