

Political Power Shift in the House of Representative of North Sumatra Province, Indonesia: A Political Communication of Post-election

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Abstract

The results of the 2013 regional head election (Pilkada) in the context of the executive and 2014 legislative elections at the level of North Sumatra Province produced new leadership accompanied by a coalition posture of supporting parties. In the context of the legislative institution, it also resulted in changes in votes or seats. Normatively, in the context of executive-legislative relations, it will be more effective if a coalition of executive-supporting parties gets a majority in the legislature since it will facilitate political communication that is involved in the discussion of a regional regulation draft. This study attempts to depict the political power shift in the regional house of representatives of North Sumatra province (RHRNSP), Indonesia. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a content analysis technique. The data were obtained through the documentation method. The results showed that there were obstacles from several factions outside the coalition party, specifically in discussing the regional regulation draft. However, these obstacles were still in the form of criticism and input from several factions against the draft regional regulation to be ratified. This is known through the ongoing political communication.

Keywords: power shift, politics, election, Indonesia

1. Introduction

1.1 The Background of the Study

It is impossible to disentangle the continuation of the political system of a country from the political process taking place in that country. The individuals and organizations that are actively engaged in the political process are the elements that have the most impact on how smoothly it is carried out. Democracy places a strong emphasis, in terms of the dimension of political development, on the availability of crucial instruments in the formation of political institutions, such as political infrastructure and political superstructure. In the political system, there are various political structures or political institutions that have certain functions, one of which is the political party. A political party is an organized group whose members have a common perspective, set of beliefs, and ideals. This organization's primary objective is to amass political power and, once in a position of authority, to implement its preferred ideas (Marzuki, 2020).

Political parties are instruments that are quite influential in determining the future of political development in a democratic country. It will have an institutional impact on the accomplishment of state goals if it is possible to carry out the functions that are associated with it (political parties). Obviously, this has to do with the fact that political parties serve as a form of check and balance between the institutions that make up the political superstructure, specifically the legislative and executive institutions (Ayeni, Cinjel, Chenge, & Ozoigwe, 2020; Fitsilis & De Vrieze, 2020; Humaizi, Yusuf, & Sinaga, 2019; Igbokwe-ibeto & Anazodo, 2015; Ufen, 2010). The harmonization of both two institutions is very important since they have an equal level (Hasan & Dani, 2018). In addition, the multi-party system format provides an excellent opportunity for political parties and other political forces to participate in political institutions such as the legislature, executive, and government (cabinet).

When it comes to the legislative and executive elections that have taken place in Indonesia, it is a typical occurrence for party coalitions to be established in the lead up to the election for the executive branch, although parties remain autonomous when it comes to the legislative elections. This can be denied that the relationship between legislative and

executive deals with majority (Shugart, 2008) and also political system (Kopecký, 2004). The predicament will become problematic in the event that the political party that obtained the most votes in the parliamentary elections is unable to triumph in the executive election. Therefore, it is logical to predict that the legislative branch's relationship with the executive branch will be strained. Both parties' output will be slowed as a result of this predicament. Andeweg (2006) found that the election system affects the number of parties in power and the distribution of parliamentary seats, which affects the cabinet's ability to function.

This phenomenon of political party coalitions can be seen based on the 2014 election. Election is regarded as one of the main pillars of democracy (Nasution & Kushandajani, 2019; Pratama, Jamil, & Briandana, 2021). The results of the 2013 North Sumatera provincial election (*Pilgub*) led the pair Gatot Pujo Nugroho (Gatot) and Tengku Erry (Erry) (henceforth called as GANTENG). GANTENG is jargon in the campaign which stands for Gatot and Tengku Erry as the governor and vice governor candidate. This election is not flawless. The research done by Sirait (2018) found one of behavior called as *golput* or not to use the right to vote. In 2014, the election for the member of regional house of representative of North Sumatra province (RHRNSP) provided 100 seats. From the total number, the coalition of executive parties that support governor of North Sumatra received 19 seats which were divided into several parties, namely *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (PKS) 9 seats, *Hati Nurani Rakyat* (Hanura) 10 seats, meanwhile *Partai Bintang Reformasi* (PBR), Patriot Party, and *Partai Kebangkitan Nahdhatul Ulama* (PKNU) did not participate in the 2014 elections. This concludes that the political power of the executive in the legislature is only nineteen percent. This signifies that political parties that are not a part of the coalition control the majority of the political power in the legislature.

Andeweg (2006) says there is no association between the number of seats in each chamber following elections and the relationship between the executive branch and the legislature; rather, it concentrates on legislative members who can "contest" without relying on their party's "vote". This ensures that every parliament member has the ability to exercise power. This argument is in great agreement with the fundamental tenets of democracy, given that the role of legislative representatives is conventional in a democratic state. However, in practice, Andeweg's (2006) scenario is extremely unlikely to play out in a democratic nation with a multi-party election system and the establishment of a threshold condition for the number of seats for executive candidacy. Both of these factors make the scenario extremely unlikely to take place (threshold). Based on this, political communication helps parties achieve their goals before and after elections. So, political communication becomes a way for parties to promote national and local candidates.

After the general election and Pilkada, executive and legislative ramifications are probable. In addition to this, it possesses its own dynamics as a result of the inclusion of a conversation mechanism that places an emphasis on rationalization and support coalitions. For example, the shift in the number of RHRNSP seats from pre- to post-elections affected the regional revenue and expenditure budget discussion. It is related to the support of executive political power. This assumption can be used to investigate political communication after Pilkada.

The shift of political power or even political ideology is also common action and it happens due to a certain event (Facchini, 2016). Moreover, these actions are part of political communication. One of the researches dealing with political power shift was done by Turtiantoro (2015) and Prasetya (2011). The political communication is commonly found in the political processes (Danil & Fitri, 2021; El Adawiyah, Hubeis, Sumarti, & Susanto, 2020; Maharani & Nurafifah, 2020; Sibarani, 2018) and it is expanded more after reformasi (Gazali, Hidayat, & Menayang, 2009). It can be identified through several discussions on the regional regulation draft (RRD) namely concerning the tourism development master plan for the province of North Sumatra for 2016-2025 and the draft regional regulation on the implementation of child protection.

In the context of the executive-legislative relationship in the discussion arena of draft regional regulations, the interaction of reason can be considered as a dialogical activity with a major function in launching and ending debate against a draft regional rule, which leads to a policy decision (local regulation). This is related to the communication that exists between these institutions. Theoretically, political communication involves transmitting information downward from government institutions to the public, horizontally among political actors, and upward through popular opinion to the authorities (Norris, 2004). So, it can be said that Norris' theory also reflects a democratic climate emphasizing communication and equality.

1.2 The Problem of the Study

Post-election political consequences between the executive (government) and legislature are probable to happen in the legislative arena, especially in the discussion of regional regulation draft (RRD). Changing party seats in RHRNSP from the election results before and after the Pilkada resulted in a change in the power dominance. This condition raises the question on how is executive-legislative political communication in the post-election legislative arena?

1.3 Relevant Studies

There are some studies dealing with local election and house of representative member election in Indonesia that is relevant

to this study. Sari (2016) in her research is focused on the the problem of violations that occurred in the governor election of North Sumatra in 2013. Her study exhibits that the complexity of the forms of violations and the actors involved in the gubernatorial election hint at the problems in regional head elections. This violation is certainly a black record in the process of building local democracy. In addition, the massive violations that occurred in the gubernatorial election are evidence of the lack of understanding of local political actors in guarding democratic procedurals. Hassan & Sheely (2017) explore executive-legislative relation in Kenya. Parji & Prasetya (2020) in their study attempt to see phenomenon of social communication action of regional house of representative candidate. They conclude that social actions done by candidate including program socialization through billboards and other platforms. Fauzi, Marhamah, & Rahmani (2021) in their study explore how political communicator deliver political message in legislative election in 2014 in Northern Aceh regency. Their findings exhibit that mass media plays used by political communicator to deliver political message.

2. Method

This study employed qualitative approach with content analysis design. This research was conducted at the RHRNSP. The choice of study location for this research was based on research considerations related to the theme / title of this research which is still considered rare in North Sumatra Province and as a heterogeneous area. Political dynamics in North Sumatra Province will contribute to political development in North Sumatra Province. The data were obtained through the document of the minutes of some party faction's (registered as the member in RHRNSP) views on the RRD discussed in the RHRNSP.

3. Results

3.1 Political Power Shift in the Executive Institution after the 2013 Regional Head Election

When it comes to general elections, the majority of nations that practice a form of democracy with many parties resort to the phenomena of interparty coalitions as a means of increasing their chances of winning the executive seat. In this case, the chances of a candidate winning are higher if more parties support them as part of a coalition. On its way, this situation will make it easier for elected leaders to make policies and decisions because it has the support of the majority of parties, which in this case have a lot of seats in parliament. As expressed by Hendrix, de Ridder, Rusinowska, & Sáiz (2013), there is a strong link between the results of regional head elections and the results of legislative elections. Political power players who win the majority of legislative seats will then win executive seats, even if they work together in a coalition. On the other hand, it is thought that making policies or decisions will be harder if there are fewer votes or seats in the parliament from parties that support them.

During legislative and executive elections in Indonesia, it is common for party coalitions to form before the executive election, but parties remain independent when facing legislative elections. When the parliamentary election winner doesn't win the executive election, difficulties arise. This issue may prevent the legislature and executive from working together. This will slow down the work of both parties, which is bad for the people (voters). According to Andeweg (2006), the electoral system affects how parliamentary seats are divided. It also determines how many parties are in the government, which in turn affects how long the cabinet will last. Chen (1997) adds that "external" issues like "power sharing" and changes in party discipline affect party leaders' preferences. On the other hand, The executive-legislature relationship may be strained because the legislature's present control system isn't maintained (Ugalde, 1999). The pre-executive and post-executive coalition is certainly an important concern for political parties to create an effective government. This phenomenon can be seen based on the victory of the governor and deputy governor of North Sumatra province in 2013.

The pair of GANTENG was elected as the governor and vice governor of North Sumatra Province as a result of the 2013 Pilkada. Previously, the Governor and deputy governor of North Sumatra Province as a result of the 2008 Pilkada were Syamsul Arifin (Arifin) and Gatot Pujo Nugroho (Nugroho). In 2008 Pilkada, Syamsul Arifin and Gatot Pujo Nugroho were promoted by several coalitions of political parties, namely *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP), PKS, *Partai Bulan Bintang* (PBB), *Partai Patriot Pancasila*, *Partai Karya Peduli Bangsa* (PKPB), and *Partai Persatuan Nahdlatul Ummah Indonesia*. The governor pairs elected from the 2013 the head regional election was supported by 2 political parties participating in the election, namely PKS and Hanura and 2 political parties that were not participants in the election, namely the *Partai Patriot* and PKNU.

Table 1. Comparison of Results of the 2008 and 2013 North Sumatra Pilkada

Year	Governors and Deputy Governors	Supporting Party (Election Contesting Parties)	Votes
2008	Syamsul Arifin dan Gatot Pujo Nugroho (SAMPURNO)	PPP, PKS, PBB, Partai Patriot Pancasila, PKPB, PPNU	1396892
2013	Gatot Pujo Nugroho dan Tengku Erry Nuradi (GANTENG)	PKS, Hanura	1604337

Source: Regional general election commission of North Sumatra Province

Table 1 shows the political power of the executive (governor and deputy governor) of the results of the 2008 Pilkada from a coalition of seven political parties. Meanwhile, the executive political power of the 2013 Pilkada came from 2 coalitions of political parties. From the indicators based on the number of coalitions of political parties, it carries the assumption that the political power of the executive as a result of the 2013 Pilkada is in a position of *minority political power*. This assumption is strengthened by the votes acquired by the political party that carries the executive in the 2009 election. The result of the election shows that PKS won 11 seats, and Hanura 5 seats. Then, in 2014 election. PKS received 9 seats, Hanura 10 seats out of a total of 100 seats available in RHRNSP.

The above assumptions are strengthened by arguments from the comparative data on the acquisition of seats for political parties carrying the executive in the 2013 Pilkada with the results of the 2014 legislative election at the level of North Sumatra Province. In these situations, it could be hard for the executive branch and the legislative branch to talk to each other about politics. But this assumption doesn't mean that it's only because of the number of seats held by minorities. There are other things at play as well. This is because the results of this study show that there isn't a strong link between the executive and legislative bodies and the number of seats in parliament held by minorities. Chen (1997) said that "outside" variables like "power sharing" and party discipline changes affect party leaders' preferences. Breakdown in legislative-executive relationship could be because the legislature doesn't have enough support to take control (Ugalde, 1999).

3.2 Shifting of political power in the Legislative Body after the 2014 Election

From one general election to the next, the number of seats for political parties in RHRNSP has changed. After the election, new political forces emerged in the RHRNSP because of the way the number of seats changed based on the political parties. This leads to changes in political power and affects how the legislative and executive branches of government talk to each other. If the political party that controls the executive in the Pilkada loses seats in the RHRNSP in the legislative election, it will have less political power. Then, it makes it hard for the executive to get help from the legislature when making decisions.

Table 2. Shifts in Political Power in the RHRNSP Based on the Number of Parliamentary Seats Acquired in the 2009 And 2014 Elections

No	Political Party	Parliament Members	
		2009	2014
1	Partai Demokrat (PD)	27	14
2	Partai Golkar (P.Golkar)	13	17
3	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDIP)	12	16
4	Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS)	11	9
5	Partai Gerakan Indonesia Raya (P.Gerindra)	3	13
6	Partai Hati Nurani Rakyat (P.Hanura)	5	10
7	Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN)	7	6
8	Partai Nasional Demokrat (P.NasDem)	-	5
9	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP)	8	4
10	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB)	1	3
11	Partai Keadilan dan Persatuan Indonesia (PKPI)	0	3
12	Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB)	-	0
Number of party following general election		38	12

Source: Regional general election commission of North Sumatra Province

Table 2 displays party seat changes in the RHRNSP. The way political power works in the area where decisions are made is through a voting system. In this area, the biggest political groups have a big say in how votes are counted through voting systems. When it comes to policies that are made by the executive and legislative bodies, executives who are elected in the Pilkada from a coalition of parties with few seats in the RHRNSP may have trouble getting the support of a majority of political forces. Andeweg (2006) said the relationship between the executive and the legislature isn't based on seat distribution after an election, but members of parliament who "conform" without being too dependent on party "votes" can use their legislative power to the maximum. What Andeweg has put up does not appear to be an impossibility. Even though the elected leader (governor) of North Sumatra province is from a minority seat party, it doesn't pose too many problems when it comes to making decisions, especially when it comes to talking about the RRD. This condition can also be looked at by looking at how the two institutions talk about the RRD in a political setting.

3.3 Executive-Legislative Political Communication in Regional Regulation Draft Discussions Related to the 2016-2025 North Sumatra Tourism Development Master Plan

Political communication according to Mulyana (2007) is the communication dimensions of political phenomena and the political dimensions of communication. Blumler & Gurevitch (1981) mention that it is important to consider the following four aspects when discussing political communication. In the stipulation of a RRD, there must be political communication between the legislature and the executive branch. This is so that the executive doesn't have to work too hard to make decisions if the legislature agrees with them all. In the discussion of the RRD regarding the tourism development master plan for the province of North Sumatra, there were not too many significant challenges faced by the majority of factions in the house of representatives. This will be represented by the view from political party factions in RHRNSP.

Nasdem, as a new party, gained 5 seats in the 2014 North Sumatra legislative election. As a new party that wasn't part of the coalition of parties that carried the GANTENG pair, Nasdem hasn't had much of an effect on how laws are made. In general, the faction speaking for the Nasdem party said that the master plan for the development of tourism in the province of North Sumatra is a key part of increasing local income and making North Sumatra tourism competitive and sustainable for the good of the community. Regional original revenue derives from regional potential and helps a community's economy.

Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDIP) obtained the second largest number of seats in the 2014 North Sumatra legislative election totaling to 16 seats. This number is a lot bigger than the number of seats gained by the party that voted for GANTENG. When it comes to the tourism master plan, it is also clear that this party, which is not part of the party coalition, does not fully support RRD's plans for tourism in North Sumatra. They usually point the finger at the local government. They also say that it's a shame that the North Sumatra provincial government is taking care of and following up on tourism issues in North Sumatra so late. This can be seen from the development of Lake Toba through the Lake Toba authority agency whose target is to make Lake Toba as a Monaco of Asia. From the overall of this RRD, The North Sumatra provincial government hasn't prioritized tourism as a key sector to expand. From the general view of PDIP factions, more criticism was conveyed to the results of the RRD that have been made.

The Democrat party in their view believes that Many North Sumatra tourist spots are national tourism development areas (NTDAs), such as the Nias archipelago, particularly the inner bay and its surroundings, Sibolga and its surroundings, Medan-Toba and its surroundings, Tangkahan, Bahorok and others, all of which await the touch of all stakeholders to promote tourism in North Sumatra. In addition, they also say that the regional government must take steps to make sure that all district and city governments in North Sumatra know about territory. This is because the provincial tourism development area is located in the whole area of the North Sumatra regency/city area. Therefore, the existence of regional aspects of tourism development in North Sumatra must be really coordinated with 33 districts/cities. With this regional aspect, it will later become the basis for regencies/cities to organize their tourism development.

Hanura Party faction in their view considers the RRD for the plan to develop tourism should be more broad and thorough. When this RRD is put into action, the four pillars of tourism development—tourism marketing, the tourism industry, and tourism institutions—are expected to grow and develop.

“We want the governor of North Sumatra to be more aware of how to build a community that has things for tourists to do, like keeping cultural heritage alive. It is a step toward achieving more advanced goals, which will make it a place that people want to visit from both inside and outside the country”.

This group of party members also backs government policies for building roads and other infrastructure in authority areas like Lake Toba. From those explanation above, it is concluded that the factions of several parties support the policies established by the provincial government through the RRD on the master plan for tourism development of North Sumatra Province for 2016-2025 even though there are assessments that must be reconsidered which is only as a form to improve the RRD.

3.4 Executive-Legislative Political Communication in Regional Regulation Draft Discussions on Child Protection Implementation

When it comes to the RRD on how to protect children, almost all factions disagree with each other and feel like they are not part of the process. *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*, as part of the coalition, strongly supports the regional regulation. They also like that the rule is being changed because, right now, children can go to internet cafes and use the internet without limits. They can also buy alcohol and liquor on their own, and many are forced to beg on the streets. More tragically, children are exploited and traded into sex slaves (human trafficking) by the mafia. In this case, the law enforcement authorities have known about this. This is proven because there are still night entertainment venues such as night pubs and other nightclubs. There are still a lot of children who are too young to work, but the owners and

businesspeople have not been punished. Also, the implementation of children's rights, like child-friendly areas, has not been seen in many places. This RRD tries to solve this problem.

Partai Hanura states that Basically, the North Sumatra provincial regulation number 3 of 2014 about how to protect children was taken away because it was against higher regulations. It makes that Hanura faction argued that the revocation was in order to correlate the decision of the Minister of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia number 188.34-3603 of 2016. Whereas, in the case of the formulation of criminal provisions, it must explicitly state the prohibition norms or command norms that are violated where in Article 27 the regional regulations referred to are contrary to Law No. 12 of 2011 concerning the formation of laws and regulations.

The Democrat party admitted that they were very disappointed because their opinion has received no attention from the provincial government. It was finally corrected by the Ministry of Home Affairs in its evaluation. This is also a self-correction for everyone, with the hope that in the future, the legal aspects of drafting in the discussion of RRD must be carefully observed. So, the incidents like this do not happen again. In general, they also expressed their anxiety about the contents of the RRD in relation to the implementation of child protection, which is quoted again as follows.

“As far as technical legal drafting is concerned, we sincerely ask the government be responsible for the preparation of regional regulations. The legal aspects should be considered of this RRD, for example, the mention of the term "child-friendly city" in chapter VI article 19, seems to only be indicated for cities not the district”.

According to Democrat party, If the different rules that are passed down as a governor's decree or regulation have not been put into place, it is likely that the regional regulation on the protection of children will only exist on paper. OPD and other relevant stakeholders should also be responsible for implementing all regulations or governor's directives that include the things they've listed.

4. Conclusion and Suggestion

The conclusion obtained from this study is that shifts in political power are common in the election arena. When talking about an RRD, there was some disagreement in the form of criticism from numerous non-coalition factions, despite the fact that it did not have a particularly substantial impact. This makes it more difficult to establish policies and make judgments by the executive branch, particularly in the context of the RRD discussion. Nevertheless, in general the shift in the political power of the executive-legislative after the 2013 and 2014 elections did not really have an effect on the discussion of the RRD. It is suggested for further research to conduct political force shift after 2019 general election and 2018 governor election in North Sumatra and other provinces in Indonesia.

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