

Abstrak

Artikel ini menganalisis fenomena calon tunggal dalam Pemilihan Kepala Daerah (Pilkada) Kabupaten Banyumas 2024 melalui pragmatisme politik. Studi kasus kualitatif mengungkap bagaimana koalisi partai politik mengabaikan prinsip ideologis dan mekanisme rekrutmen internal untuk mendukung kandidat tunggal demi kepentingan praktis, seperti meminimalkan risiko kekalahan dan memaksimalkan keuntungan jangka pendek. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan elite partai, penyelenggara pemilu, pemilih, serta analisis dokumen kebijakan dan berita media. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pragmatisme politik, kalkulasi rasional berbasis sumber daya finansial, elektabilitas, dan stabilitas koalisi menjadi faktor dominan dalam pembentukan calon tunggal, yang berdampak pada menurunnya partisipasi masyarakat dan melemahnya fungsi *checks and balance* demokrasi lokal. Penelitian ini bersifat kualitatif dengan fokus pada fenomena sosial-politik, maka sampel tidak diambil secara acak, melainkan menggunakan teknik *purposive sampling*. Kerangka teori perspektif William James menyoroti nilai demokrasi substantif menjadi sekadar alat kekuasaan melalui pragmatisme politik. Studi ini juga mengungkap meski masyarakat apatis terhadap proses pilkada, namun sebagian dari mereka memiliki kesadaran kritis akan pemilihan yang tidak kompetitif. Implikasi penelitian merekomendasikan revisi UU Pilkada terkait ambang batas pencalonan, memperketat mekanisme rekrutmen internal parpol, dan menerapkan pendidikan politik bagi masyarakat. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi teoritis dalam memahami dinamika politik lokal di Indonesia, sekaligus menjadi peringatan tentang sistematis pragmatisme berlebihan terhadap kualitas demokrasi.

Kata Kunci: Banyumas, Calon Tunggal, Demokrasi Lokal, Koalisi Partai, Pilkada, Pragmatisme Politik

Abstract

This article analyzes the single-candidate phenomenon in the 2024 Banyumas Regional Head Election (Pilkada) through the lens of political pragmatism. This qualitative study reveals how political party coalitions tend to disregard ideological principles and internal recruitment mechanisms in favor of practical interests, such as minimizing the risk of defeat and maximizing short-term gains. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with party elites, election officials, and voters, as well as document analysis of policy papers and local media reports. The findings show that political pragmatism—marked by rational calculations based on electability, financial resources, and coalition stability—was the dominant factor in the emergence of a single candidate. As a consequence, public participation declined and the function of checks and balances in local democracy weakened. The research employed non-probability sampling through a purposive approach, considering its qualitative nature and focus on understanding socio-political phenomena in depth. William James' theory of pragmatism is used to explain how substantive democratic values have been reduced to mere instruments of power by pragmatic political actors. While most citizens displayed apathy toward the election process, the study also found a degree of critical awareness among some voters regarding the lack of healthy political competition. The study recommends revising the Regional Election Law, particularly the nomination threshold, strengthening democratic internal recruitment within political parties, and intensifying public political education. These findings contribute theoretically to the understanding of local political dynamics in Indonesia and serve as a warning about the systemic consequences of excessive political pragmatism on the quality of democracy.

Keywords: *Banyumas, Single Candidate, Local Democracy, Party Coalition, Regional Election, Political Pragmatism*