The Political Strategy of a Migrant Candidate in Pilkades of Batu Meranti Village

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Abstract

In academic literature, the term political identity such as primordial is nothing new, Clifford Geertz, as an American anthropologist introduced that term in the 1960s. Indonesia as a multicultural nation with diverse identities also has a political identity’s problem even at the national or local level. This study has brings the opponent's argument which found that Primordial issues are not the determinant factor of people's choice in a political election, cause identity was fluid, have interchangeable nature, and related in many aspects. This research used a qualitative method with a study case approach located in Batu Meranti Villages, in South Kalimantan. Key informants were all of the candidates, the winning team of candidates, KPU, BPD, and the community in Batu Meranti Village. The data collection techniques are carried out by field research techniques, library research techniques, and documentation method techniques. The result was shown that people's perspectives have transformed the identity issue to be habitus of all candidates. The migrant candidate political strategy to win the political scramble was used the harmonization of generated formula to use his personality, economic capital, and most people's concern about those village. The migrant candidates have used the opportunity to show his personality as philanthropist and concern with soccer to get a good image and get support from society. In the end, the personality of a candidate has been replaced by the identity issue in a local election.

Keywords: Identity, Migrant, Election

Introduction

Indonesia was known as a plural and multicultural nation with a tremendous diversity, which consists of 30 tribes that are spread across 34 provinces, and 240 million people who occupy more than thousands of islands spread from Sabang to Merauke (Agusmawanda, 2018). Although the world is called a global village in the present age, yet the political system of Indonesia based on identity is persisting in certain forms. The global world has asked the Democratic system with the decentralization of power to the local government should bring the opportunity for multi-actor from diversity identity to uphold the multiculturalism, but the political strategy that used in power competition in Indonesia didn’t reflect the pluralism.

A primary concern in the political systems of multiethnic countries is the fear of domination or exploitation of some ethnic groups and assimilation by the other ethnic group. The problem is
real and exists because in local politics studies showed the emergence of political identity has dominated local democracy to achieve power access and resources (Sen, 2016). Political Identity refers to the political mechanisms of organizing identity (both political identity and social identity) as a source and a political means. The meaning that the politics of identity as a source and political means in the struggle for the struggle for political power is very possible and increasingly surfaced in the daily practice of politics (Kambo, Politik, & Hasanuddin, 2018). Local democracy in Indonesia has showed identity as a weapon of elites to do exclusive or inclusive access for the political actor. Political identity has grown up of the experience of identity-based oppression: the experience of inequalities in resources and opportunities that people encountered as members of particular identity groups (Sen, 2016). This paper brings different results about political identity in local politics at the village level. This paper has argued that identity cleavages were fluid and impermanent concept for local people. People relation in politics has changed from primordial to plural society. The study case of this paper was the migrant candidate elected as head of Batu Meranti Village.

Batu Meranti is a potential village in Tanah Bumbu Regency at South Kalimantan with tremendous natural resources. Geographically Batu Meranti area is ± 3.430 ha that consists of 65% of lands and 35% of hills (Sibuea, 2019). In 2017, Batu Meranti Village has held a local election for headman village which followed by 3 (three) candidates with diverse backgrounds and identity. The first candidate is Nurdin, who is a migrant candidate that get married to the local women in Batu Meranti, the second candidate is arigato, who is an incumbent of Batu Meranti Headman Village, and the third candidate is Agus Subagio, who is a local people which birth and grow up in Batu Meranti Village. Surprisingly, the result of the election has brought a migrant candidate to be elected of headman village, which means he can defeat an incumbent and local people as his competitors in the Batu Meranti election. Identity politics issue has been used to disadvantage a migrant candidate, but in the end, the primordial ties have been replaced with a rational strategy of migrant candidates to elect as new headman villages in Batu Meranti. That’s why the political strategy of migrant candidates to be elected for the headman election in Batu Meranti Village needs to be investigated more deeply.

The research method used in this study is a qualitative study with a case study approach. Case studies are used to delve deeper into information about the political strategy of a migrant candidate to be elected for the headman election in Batu Meranti. There are three rationalities why the author used case study methods. First, Batu Meranti is one of the Villages which held an election (PILKADES) to uphold local democracy at the village level. Second, PILKADES in Batu Meranti has followed by three candidates who have different backgrounds and identities. Third, PILKADES in Batu Meranti has brought a migrant candidate as elected village headman and defeat the incumbent and local candidates. This paper was conducted in Batu Meranti Village, located in South Kalimantan Province. This study has interviewed 3 key informants who were the candidates in Batu Meranti Village’s election and 15 informants as representatives of all candidates winning team, a committee of Batu Meranti Village’s election, representative house (BPD) in Batu Meranti, and also a representative's people in Batu Meranti Village. There are three steps in finding data which used desk study, in-depth interview, and according to archives. The multiple sources of evidence aim to allow researchers to focus on broader historical issues, attitudes, and observations (Usman Husaini, 2017).
Discussion

Identity concept has a problem that brings two debatable perspectives and opposite each other (Stets & Burke, 2000). The first perspective has explained that identity is “single affiliation” and denies another identity, which argued that a person only has one collectivity and identity has clear fragmented and limitation among people (Stets & Serpe, 2013). The second perspective has certainly said that identity is a complex concept, which showed every person has a level of interest and priority of loyalty based on context (Stets & Serpe, 2013). So, the individual has related to a diversity of identity. This paper has found that both of concept already has dialectic in social perspective. In one time people have seen identity was a single concept to excuse and include other people, but in a split moment, people can see the identity as complex which not define by background and history but also in another category that makes them related in social life. The changes of social perspective have been used by the migrant candidate as political strategy to be elected head of a village in Batu Meranti. This paper has been giving a result that shows about “Political strategy against political identity in making a migrant candidate be elected head of the village for Batu Meranti”. So, this part will be explained about interchangeable identity to political Habitus in Transmigration village, capital contention in political competition, and the candidate strategy in Batu Meranti local election (PILKADES).

Interchangeable of Identity to Political Habitus in Transmigration Village

Social identity theory and personal identity theory has defined the self is reflexive as an object and can categorize, classify, or name itself in particular ways about other social categories or classifications (Stets & Burke, 2000). Stryker also has stated that an identity is a set of meanings attached to roles individuals occupy in the social structure (Stets & Serpe, 2013). In the former sense, an “identity” refers simply to a social category, a set of persons marked by a label and distinguished by rules deciding membership and (alleged) characteristic features or attributes. In the second sense of personal identity, and identity is some distinguishing characteristic (or characteristics) that a person takes special pride in or views as socially consequential but more-or-less unchangeable (Fearon, 1999).

In this study has found that the history of Personal identity of Batu Meranti people has differences with their social identity, because Batu Meranti Village was form by the Transmigration program by President Soeharto national policy in 1981. Batu Meranti Village which called at that time as Sebamban III, Block E has been dominated by Java people especially from East Java and the Center of Java (Sibuea, 2019). Those history of personal identity of Batu Meranti as Javanese people was different with their social identity as transmigrate people who got influenced by South Kalimantan habit. In 1984, the history of Batu Meranti Village has begun, because this village had chosen government official for temporary which made Yoga Arisandi becomes the tentative head of the village. Yoga as head of village had a job to set government systems from preparation village to be official and in those year the village had officially name as Batu Meranti Village.

By history as a transmigrant village, this research has found the transformation of identity concept, which not only shows that the identity of people of Batu Meranti Village was fluid but also interchangeable. In the first place, social identity in Batu Meranti was defined by the similarity of geographically birth. The geography factor becomes dominant in making the position of personal
identity for the Batu Meranti people, especially in Pilkades. Batu Meranti local election has been followed by three candidates who run for the competition with a diversity of geographical backgrounds. The first candidate was a new transmigrant from the neighbor village and get married to the woman in Batu Meranti Village’s, the second candidate was an incumbent who is a transmigrate from java with his family to Batu Meranti Village, and the third candidate was a local man which birth and stay in Batu Meranti.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nurdin</td>
<td>Dukwah dan komu Sebamban 1 Blok A, 28 Oktober 1980 / Desa Sari Mulya atau Sebamban 1 Blok A</td>
<td>Paket C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ariyanto</td>
<td>Temanggung, 01 Mei 1977 /</td>
<td>Senior High School Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Agus Subagio</td>
<td>Kotabaru, 19 August 1982 / Batu Meranti Village</td>
<td>Bachelor of English Teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

People in Batu Meranti has seen that the differences of personal were a problem for social identity, they said the migrant candidate will get difficulty to get the vote and support from society. At the beginning they have a perspective that migrant candidate was an outsider which can’t be a part of people in Batu Meranti, that’s why they called Nurdin as a migrant candidate. People also have defined that the three candidates in Pilkades of Batu Meranti were from different identity which emphasized the difference of origin based on geographically. But a person can have many identities, or self-definitions, based on attributes such as organizational membership, profession, gender, ethnicity, religion, nation, and family roles and that multiple identities shape people’s actions interchangeably.

As people of Transmigrant village who actually from Java, they have lack of loyalty about identity origin of a personal candidate, because based on scholars said that identity as “parts of a self-composed of the meanings that persons attach to the multiple roles they typically play in highly differentiated contemporary societies” (Ramarajan, Unit, & Business, n.d.). In Batu Meranti, every individual tries to stick together in a new place and keep survive for basic needed. They create new solidarity to be social identity as Batu Meranti people. That’s why the geographical identity is not only a single factor of identity formed, but in Batu Meranti people their identity has transformed into the solidarity of social needed and social habit.

Bourdieu has systematized the idea of habitus for a more general understanding of the nature of social. Habitus is an acquired system of schemes that allow for everyday instances of perception, categorization and the production of action and most importantly for the production of mundane judgments (e.g. judgments of moral propriety or impropriety, of likelihood or unlikelihood, of certainty or uncertainty, or judgments of taste such as likes and dislikes) (Aquinas, Mauss, & Bourdieu, 2012). In Bourdieu’s rendering, the habitus is not just the producer of actions and reactions, but it is a product of the environmental conditions that the person encounters during ontogenetic development. Habitus concept has symmetric with the idea of social needed which produced a daily habit of individuals into social habitus.
Identity and habitus have interchangeable relations in making social life. In the first place, People in Batu Meranti has multiple identities. Their first identity before coming to Batu Meranti their identity was Java People. Even, they create new solidarity since they transmigrate to South Kalimantan, but it also has solidarity as Java people. All of the candidates in Pilkades have Java descendants, three of them have a different identity of place but still had solidarity with people in Batu Meranti as Java descendants. Incumbent candidate has said that “I’m not a migrant in Batu Meranti, because at the past people in here were transmigrated people like my parents, that’s why as transmigrate people they still have solidarity with another migrant like me”. Besides of the solidarity, people in Batu Meranti also has a similarity of social interest, needed, and criteria for the leader in Batu Meranti.

People in Batu Meranti is not only defined identity but also judge by capability and competency which appropriate with their needed and habit. Based on an interview with Joko who lived in Batu Meranti said that:

“Mr. Ariyanto, an incumbent candidate was a good leader in administration disciplined and he makes Batu Meranti become the best administration village in sub-district level, based on that capability I believed that he is a good leader”.

In another hand, Randy as people in Batu Meranti also said that,

“The most potential candidate in this Pilkades was Mr. Nurdin because he has strong dan brave as a leader. But an incumbent candidate has weak and inconsistent character”.

This statement also got support from other people in Batu Meranti like Erviansyah, who also stated that,

“Mr. Nurdin has a good personality, he is firm and reliable as a leader, it doesn’t like Agus who are local candidates which not ready yet to be a leader”. Mr. Ugik as one of the people in Batu Meranti argued that the competency of Agus Subagio is nothing and he can’t do anything”.

Most people in Batu Meranti have agreed that Nurdin who is a migrant candidate can be a leader of the village. They see Nurdin as a courageous person who bravely defends people’s rights against the illegal private sector. In the past, when Mr. Ariyanto has governed the village, there is the private sector that wants to exploit the coal resources in Batu Meranti Village, but Mr. Nurdin as a migrant people are bravely blocking the way and against the illegal private sector to not mine the coal in the village. Based on the people needed and perspective they have a similar habitus to resist the coal mining in their village. People in Batu Meranti have opposed the illegal of a coal mine, which makes them support the action of Mr. Nurdin has been taken.

Capital Contention in Political Competition

According to Bourdieu, capital concepts have a very broad definition, which includes material things that can have symbolic value and cultural significance. For example Prestige, status, and authority are referred to as symbolic capital and cultural capital that is defined as cultural value tastes and consumption patterns. Cultural capital can also be in the form of art, language, and education. Besides that, the Bourdieu capital concept also includes social relations contained in a system of exchange both material and symbol without any difference. The value given by capital is associated with various social and cultural characteristics of habitus, in this case, Bourdieu also views capital as the basis of dominance that can be exchanged with other types of capital (Bourdieu, 1986).
Basically, Bourdieu has seen capital differently with Marx who defined the economy as a single capital that dominated social and cultural life. Bourdieu has divided capital into 4 (four) concepts such as economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital. The forth of those capital has interchangeability with another capital. Before the capital has interchangeable, the researcher has to define the basic capital of candidate ownership based on the Bourdieu concept.

### Table 2 : Candidates Capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Economy</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>Symbolic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nurdin</td>
<td>Rp. 492.000.000</td>
<td>Closed with Youth People in Batu Meranti</td>
<td>C Package (suited senior high school certificate)</td>
<td>PSHT Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ariyanto</td>
<td>Rp. 196.000.000</td>
<td>Closed with Local Figures in Batu Meranti</td>
<td>Senior High School Certificate</td>
<td>An Incumbent and PSHT Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Agus Subagio</td>
<td>Rp. 34.900.000</td>
<td>Closed with PSHT Member</td>
<td>Bachelor of English Teacher</td>
<td>Chief of PSHT in Batu Meranti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source : KPU of Batu Meranti recapitulation

According to the table of capital, every candidate has a different amount of capital. Three of them already have all of the capital. Every capital has defined the difference of strategy in every candidate. The first candidate was Nurdin which is a migrant candidate from the neighboring village. Nurdin has superior in economic capital than another candidate. To compete with another candidate, Nurdin has used his money to be his strategy to get people's attention and win over with other candidates. Based on interviewed Mr. Agus Subagio who is a local candidate in Batu Meranti Pilkades, it has been said that,

“Mr. Nurdin has dominance in financial or economic capital, he becomes financial donor in regular sports competition every 17 August. Even he is not the only one who donate but he has succeeded to get people's attention and make a good image in society”.

Nurdin also stated that,

“I’ve been spent much money for so many events and help social activities to make a good relationship with Batu Meranti people to support me in Pilkades”.

The second candidate was Ariyanto who is an incumbent of a head village in Batu Meranti. He became a candidate for Batu Meranti Pilkades, to run this village for the second round. As an incumbent status, Ariyanto already has symbolic capital with legitimate power and legal authority to rule the village governance. Besides that, he also has more social capital than another candidate, which means he closed with local figures in Batu Meranti. Mostly, local figures have gotten informal legitimation in society. Ariyanto also said that,

“I’ve already sure that I’m gonna win the election, because I have started to build relations with the community earlier, such as religious leaders, cultural leaders and other figures in society. I have established it, since my previous leadership”.

The third candidate was Agus Subagio who is a local candidate who births in Batu Meranti. Agus Subagio has dominance in cultural capital because he has the highest education than other candidates. He is the only one who has study at the university and has a bachelor's degree when other candidates only get a senior high school degree. Agus Subagio has said that,

“among all of the candidate, I am the only one which origin from Batu Meranti or local people in here and it makes me has enough experience and knowledge about this village. Besides that I also the only one who studies at university among all candidates and it’s gonna be my strategy in Pilkades to use my knowledge”.

Politea : Jurnal Pemikiran Politik Islam
The explanation of capital contention above has shown that all of the candidates have fulfilled the four basic concepts of capital. Every candidate has different superior capitals but at the same time, they also inferior in other capitals. The differences of capital in every candidate have been an impact on the combination strategy among habitus, capital, and arena to win the political competition. In the generative formulation, Bourdieu explained the relationship between habitus, capital, and the realm of direct nature which the most powerful exchange according to Bourdieu is a symbolic exchange. This form capital is perceived and recognized as legitimate and authority when this research has found differently which showed that every capital has equal power to be generated with habitus and arena. This study has shown the harmonization and consistency of candidate’s strategy to generate their personal character, manners, and behavior with their capital, and social perspective is the effective formula to win in Pilka"des of Batu Meranti village.

"Pilkades" of Batu Meranti or the election of village heads is a political event at the village level which shows that the village community has been involved in politics directly. Pilka"des is also proof that democratization in the level of small government is carried out. Village head election has organized by the General Election Commission (KPU), the KPU formed by the Village Consultative Body (BPD) aims to ensure that village head elections can be carried out properly through institutions that handle it specifically or the so-called KPU.

In this research Pilka"des of Batu Meranti Village as an arena where there are battles to get certain positions in it, this fight in order to achieve that position is closely related to capital ownership (capital) of social actors in this arena. Political battles of candidates need a strategy to manage their capitals to synchronize with the social environment in order to be elected in the Pilka"des of Batu Meranti. Three of the candidates in Batu Meranti Pilka"des have a different strategy to use their capital and get harmonize with an arena and social habitus. The first candidate who is a migrant candidate has a strategy to approach and making relations with people in Batu Meranti especially with a lower and middle class of society. He used to try approaching people Batu Meranti by giving contributions to social events. The second candidate who is an incumbent, he used strategy to build relations with some elites in Batu Meranti. Since he was an official government in Batu Meranti, he likes to be close to some of the religious figures, cultural figures, and social figures in Batu Meranti. Ariyanto has confidence that he will get support from people because he already has legitimacy from social figures or Elite in Batu Meranti people. The third candidate who is a local man who births and grows up in Batu Meranti Village has a strategy to set his vision and mission with some experts even from Batu Meranti or with an expert from outside Village. He was pretty sure that with clear and good offering about vision and mission to a village can impress people in Batu Meranti to choose him.

Based on the differences of candidate strategy which combined their own capital, personal habits and social norms in an arena can make a different model of interchangeable capital into another capital. The first candidate strategy has combined his economic capital with his habit as a philanthropist, so he achieved much social capital such as support from most people in Batu Meranti. The second candidate strategy has combined his symbolic capital as an incumbent with his habit as a powerful person which has control with some legitimate people in Batu Meranti such as Ustadz, Chiefs of RT, and some local strongman in Batu Meranti. He has strengthened his symbolic capital among elites in Batu Meranti people. The third candidate strategy has combined his cultural capital with his habit as a well-educated local man in making study to be his visions and missions. By that combination, he gets more cultural capital such as knowledge about his hometown.

For Pilka"des as an arena, to win the political competition the candidates need to get the vote or to be chosen by most of the people in Batu Meranti, which means they are scrambling for social capital. Based on the candidates' strategy, three differences of combination with
different capital achievement has been showing that the economic capital is the most potential capital to interchangeable with social capital. Not only used economic capital but it also needs an aligned habit to encourage interchangeable to be social capital. Mr. Nurdin as a migrant candidate has a consistent strategy in harmonized his capital and habit to get the acceptance and vote from people in Batu Meranti. He has used much money to contribute to social events. He became primary financial donors in a regular sports competition which drew the entire community of Batu Meranti. He also knows that Batu Meranti village soccer is always respected in the sub-district competition and even in the district that is why he has promised that he will reconstruct the football field for this village. People have seen him as a migrant but he has willing to contribute to social events in this village and it creates a good image in society. People have respected his action which has to pay attention to the Batu Meranti village soccer team rather than the previous leader.

The strategy of managing social issues also one factor to get elected in Pilkades of Batu Meranti. The first issue has emerged in Pilkades that is an identity issue that attacked the identity of Nurdin as a migrant candidate. The identity issue has changed into a corruption issue to define which were the good candidate or the bad candidate. This issue has been flowing into a retrospective issue which evaluates the history or track record of candidates. The incumbent candidate has become a center of attention because of this issue, people judge his style to govern the village was considered as an indecisive leader. He can’t solve the problem of the illegal coal mine which makes people worry, but Nurdin has bravely against the illegal corporate to mine the coal in Batu Meranti. The local candidate, Agus Subagio was an unpopular candidate in society, because his image in society was an arrogant person. Before he becomes a candidate in Pilkades, Agus Subagio has never made a contact with people in Batu Meranti, but after becoming a candidate he tries to be more friendly with people but people in Batu Meranti still believe that his changes just for political interest. Social capital scrambled is the strategy of candidates in making a relationship in society and get the most support from people. Capital's ownership is not the only factor to get involved with society, because they have to harmonize their personal habit with people's perspective, manners, and behaviors. In order to achieve social capital, the candidates should combine their capital, and personality to generate social capital, and also they have to harmonize their actions with a social paradigm which spreading in Batu Meranti Village.

Conclusion

The multiethnic country likes Indonesia has a fear of domination or exploitation by a single identity to another identity. Political identity has grown out of identity-based on oppression and inequalities of resources and opportunities. Identity has used as a “single affiliation” and denies another identity for political interest. Politics has triggered the fragmentation and limitation among people. Indonesia politics has a complex identity with a hundred variety of ethnicities, cultures, languages, races, religions, and beliefs with overlapping and compete with each other. Indonesia has implemented democracy with decentralization and autonomy to local politics until the village level. Decentralization has not only giving governance authority but also bring local democracy for village people to get involved in political activity directly. But, Local democracy in Indonesia has consolidated with political identity to be a weapon of elites to do exclusive or inclusive access for the political actor.

Identity concept also has brought a different perspective which has certainly said that identity is a complex concept. Every person has a level of interest and priority of loyalty which based on context, such as a person has related in diverse identity. But in this research, identity has
shown as a dialectic concept among a single identity with a complex identity. Identity cleavages were impermanent and fluid which means identity has the nature of interchangeable. People have easily adapted and change frequently because identity is a part of the human itself which always be changed.

Batu Meranti Village was held by a transmigration project from the central government which is intended to equalize population density and economic conditions in Indonesia. As transmigrate people from Java, their identity has parts of a self-composed of the meanings that persons attach to the multiple roles they typically play in highly differentiated contemporary societies. Their identity and habitus have interchangeable relations that create their action and decision as personal and also as social mankind. But, the interchangeable of the identity of the Batu Meranti people couldn’t erase their personal identity as Javanese in the first place. Three of them have a different amount of capital, which means different superior capitals but also inferior in other capitals. This research has found that every capital has equal power to be generated with habitus and arena. Their style and strategy that make the value of capital become different and they need to make the combination between their capital, habitus, and arena be harmonized to be an effective formula to win the political scramble in Pilkades of Batu Meranti village.
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