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# Dynamics of Local Political Democracy in Indonesia

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**Abstract:** One of the dynamics of Indonesian democracy is the birth of local parties in Aceh Province and providing opportunities for individual or independent candidates to participate in the election of regional heads and deputy heads. The existence of local parties in Aceh Province is one form of democracy as regulated in Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh. Meanwhile, the participation of individual or independent candidates is to answer the voices of the people who want to participate in developing the country through independent channels without political parties. The purpose of this study is to understand the dynamics that occur in local political democracy in Indonesia. The research methodology uses qualitative methods with data collection techniques conducting observations, interviews, and documentation studies. The results of the study indicate that the dynamics of local political democracy in Indonesia have been running and developing following the evolving world political system. The Indonesian government has also prepared regulations to accommodate the democratic process. This can be seen from the opportunity for individual or independent candidates to be able to participate in the election. However, the results of the study also found that the participation of individual or independent candidates has not shown the strength of the competence, charisma, and image of the candidate to be a determining factor for victory. This can be seen in the percentage of participation and victory in the regional elections that continues to decline. In 2017 there were 101 regions in Indonesia that held simultaneous regional elections with the participation of 80 individual or independent candidates. The data shows that the results of the victory achieved by individual or independent candidates are only in 3 regions and the other 98 regions are dominated by representatives of political parties. Meanwhile, the existence of local parties continues to show their existence by continuing to win seats in parliament. The Aceh Provincial Election Independent Election Commission noted that even the Aceh Party in 2009, 2014, and 2019 always won the elections in Aceh Province by having the most council representation in all regions. However, the number of council representatives from local parties continues to decrease in number, in 2014 there were 33 people and in 2019 there were 28 representatives. The factors that cause the decline in the popularity of local parties are due to the loss of a unifying figure, loss of trust from the community, and many programs that are not pro-people.

**Keywords:** Dynamics, Democracy, Politics, Local, Party, Individual Candidates

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## 1. Introduction

The dynamics of local political democracy in Indonesia has developed very rapidly with the emergence of local parties in Aceh Province and individual or independent candidates can take part in the election of regional heads and deputy heads. One of the factors supporting the dynamics of local political democracy in Indonesia is the issuance of Law No. 12 of 2008 concerning.

Second Amendment to Law Number 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government. The law re-regulates the

implementation of regional head and deputy regional head elections, it is necessary to make changes by providing opportunities for individual or independent candidates to participate in elections, of course, will make local political dynamics have a new color [16].

In addition to providing the opportunity for individual or independent candidates to participate in the election of regional heads and deputy regional heads, there are also local parties in Aceh Province. The basis of local parties in Aceh Province is the issuance of Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh (UUPA). The birth of

the UUPA was due to the huge tsunami disaster and became one of the factors that contributed to the signing of the Helsinki MoU on the warring parties [7] Aceh province has greater autonomy after the 2005 Helsinki peace agreement and the passing of Law no. 11/2006, which authorizes the Aceh government to manage regional politics and economic development [14].

The dynamics of democracy in Indonesia cannot be separated from the encouragement of the people who want to participate in building the country. "The thing that encourages the birth of provisions regarding individual or independent candidates is the desire of the community to elect regional heads without having to go through political parties, in addition to Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh where this Law first allows individual or independent candidates. to participate in the post-conflict local election" [12]. Democracy is now considered the best administrative system in the world [2]. This is in principle because democratically, there is systemic vigilance to prevent the rulers from acting autocratically against their people [3]. "This dynamic means that human efforts are relentless against various external impulses and demands from within a group of people" [2]. The dynamics of demands are not to disrupt the state, destroy the political, economic and legal order, but the demands are sought to reconstruct the political structure and economic structure so that the dynamics do not cause chaos in society [10]. Various aspects of democracy such as freedom of speech, human rights, individual freedom, media freedom, and minority rights have been incorporated into the current democratic system and have become very important [4].

In the course of the dynamics of local political democracy experienced ups and downs in its implementation. There are many basic problems that occur in the field, such as for individual or independent candidate pairs who face difficult requirements to take part in the elections. The requirements for an independent candidate pair for the election of governor and deputy governor with the number of Permanent Voters List (DPT) 0-2 million, with a minimum support of 10 percent. Meanwhile, for the election of candidates for regent and mayor, the number of DPT is 0-250 thousand, the minimum requirement is 10 percent support. Another problem is that it is difficult for independent candidates to fight and win in the pilkada. "These problems include the absence of a political machine that can garner mass support, limited funding and difficulties in regulating the balance of power with members of the legislature and the assumption that independent candidates are deparpolating [14].

Meanwhile, the problem with local parties in Aceh is that many local parties no longer exist in Aceh. In the 2009 General Election there were 6 local Aceh parties that took part but in the 2019 Election only 4 local parties took part. "In the 2019 elections, there are four Acehese local parties participating in the general election along with 16 other parties, namely the Aceh Party, Sira Party, Aceh Regional Party and Aceh Nangroe Party (<https://kumparan.com/acehkini/mengenal-party-lokal-di-election-2019-from-ex-gam-to-santri-1qr41N8ZcB5/1>). In

addition, there has also been a decrease in the number of seats obtained by local parties in Aceh. The purpose of this study is to understand the dynamics of local political democracy in Indonesia.

## 2. Research Methods

The type of research used is qualitative research, "qualitative research is a method to explore and understand the meaning that a number of individuals or groups of people consider to be derived from social or humanitarian problems" [3].

The consideration underlying the use of qualitative research is due to its characteristics as stated by [13], namely the natural environment (natural setting) qualitative researchers tend to collect field data in locations where participants experience issues or problems to be studied. Researchers as a key instrument (researcher as key instrument) qualitative researchers collect data themselves through documentation, behavioral observations, or interviews with participants.

## 3. Results and Discussion

The dynamics of local political democracy in Indonesia is a new dimension that is being carried out by the government. Community demands for involvement in the political space have become the basis for the birth of policies that accommodate this. At the time of public encouragement from various elements emerged related to providing opportunities for individual candidates to participate in the election of regional heads and deputy regional heads as well as local parties participating in the general election. "Democracy as a system of government with four key elements (i) A system for electing and replacing a government through free and fair elections (ii) Active participation of the people, as citizens, in politics and civil life (iii) Protection of the human rights of all citizens (iv) A country where laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens" [3].

"The current local political condition in Indonesia also shows that in a formal way it is quite realistic, with the people being allowed to directly elect regional heads by the citizens. At the same time reducing the process of dropping elites from the center to the regions, as was experienced during the New Order era, the emergence of female regional heads and the realization of financial well-being to more equitable regions than before [8]". The journey of the dynamics of local political democracy in Indonesia with the possibility of individual candidates or independent candidates participating in the regional elections has come as a surprise. In the 2015 local elections, there were individual candidates or independent paths who won victory over candidates from political parties, namely Tomohon City, Tanjungbalai City, Bukittinggi City, Bontang City, Banjarbaru City, Supiori, Sabu Raijua, Rembang, Rejanglebong, Kutai Kertanegara, Ketapang, Gowa and Bandung district.

Based on research conducted by the Indonesian Survey

Institute (LSI) in February 2007, only 23% of Indonesians stated that they were affiliated with a political party. The rest trust other circles, both from religious groups, intellectuals, or individuals who have other professions [5]”. However, the victory achieved by individual candidates or independent paths has not shown that Indonesia's local political democracy has

been running properly. The results of the Indonesian Survey Scale (SSI) research in the 2015 simultaneous regional elections, the percentage of independent candidates was quite small. There are 264 regions that held the 2015 Pilkada, there are only 174 independent candidates.

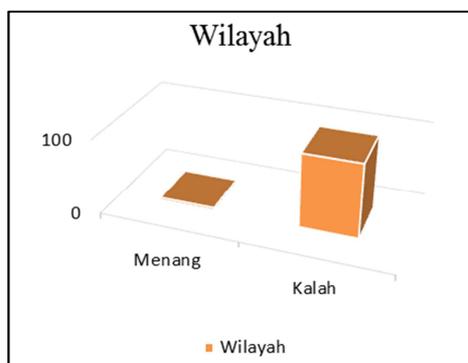


Sumber: <https://www.skalasurveiindonesia.com>

Figure 1. Achievements of Independent Candidates in the 2015 Pilkada.

The figure 1 above shows that the number of independent candidates who won was 14.4 percent of the regions, while in 85.6 percent of the other regions they lost. The results of [15] "found that support in the form of an ID card is a requirement that must be met by every candidate who takes part in the Pilkada through individual channels. The terms of support in the form of an ID card are only limited to conditions and cannot be used as a benchmark for obtaining election results in accordance with the support in the form of an ID card”.

In 2017 there were 101 regions that held Pilkada with 328 pairs of candidates participating at various levels. It consists of 25 pairs of candidates for governor and deputy governor, 246 pairs of candidates for regent and deputy regent, and 57 pairs of candidates for mayor and deputy mayor. There are 80 pairs of candidates who take the independent path, aka the individual path of non-political parties. <https://news.detik.com>.



Sumber: <http://perludem.org>

Figure 2. Achievements of Independent Candidates in the 2015 Pilkada.

The figure 2 above shows the defeat of pairs of individual

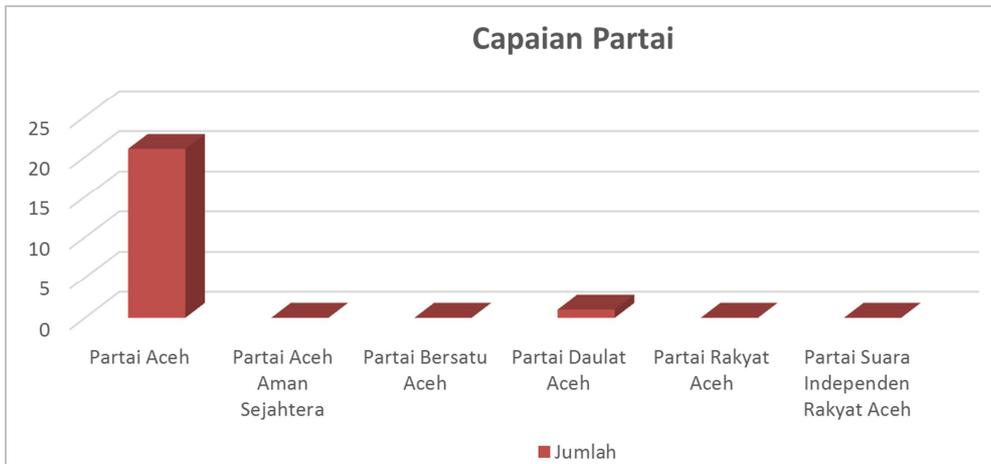
or independent candidates in the 2017 Pilkada. There were 101 regions that held Pilkada and there were 80 individual candidates, the victory of which was achieved only in 3 regions. "The person or image of the candidate often determines the choice decision, which is related to the process of forming the confidence of the voters [11]. Based on a rational approach, especially those related to the main orientation of voters, it can be based on issue orientation and candidate orientation. The candidate's orientation itself can be based on the position, information, achievements, and personal popularity concerned in various fields of life such as organization, arts, sports, and politics [16].

According to KPU data for the 2020 elections, there are 23 pairs of individual or independent candidates who have met the initial support requirements. Meanwhile, there were 73 pairs of individual or independent candidates who were still making factual improvements and indicated that they would fail to nominate themselves. This is in contrast to the number of candidate pairs supported by political parties as many as 270 pairs. [9] local political parties are parties whose network is limited to a certain area and does not cover the national level, however, they can compete at the national level. Locality becomes an important word when defining political parties that are different from national parties because they are limited by territory, and only exist in certain regions. The existence of local parties in Aceh has made the dynamics of local political democracy in Indonesia more developed.

Through local parties in Aceh gave birth to public euphoria. This can be seen in the 2009 General Election, followed by 38 national parties and 6 local Aceh parties. The Aceh local parties are (1) Aceh Party (2) Aceh Safe and Prosperous Party (3) Aceh United Party (4) Aceh Sovereign Party (5) Aceh People's Party (6) Aceh People's Independent

Voice Party. The results of the 2009 legislative elections, the Aceh Party placed 21 representatives in the DPRA. The Aceh Sovereign Party places 1 representative in the DPRA.

Meanwhile, other local parties failed to place their representatives in the Aceh Parliament.



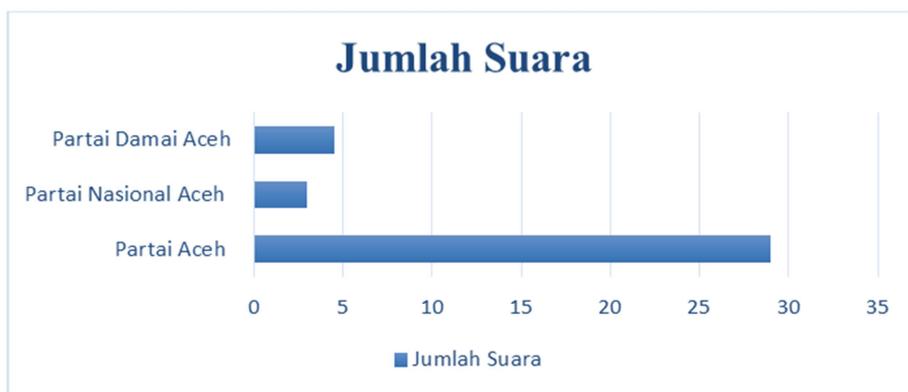
Source: KIP, 2019

Figure 3. Local Party Achievements in the 2009 Legislative Election.

Figure 3 shows that the presence of local parties in Aceh was well received by the community. This can be seen in the votes obtained by the Aceh Party as many as 21 votes. According to [6] first, democracy is about people's sovereignty, and one cannot get an adequate purchase of the quality of democracy without knowing how the people of a country evaluate the level and performance of its democracy. Second, democratic stability is highly dependent on strong public support for democracy. To measure progress toward democratic consolidation, we must know the extent to which citizens perceive it legitimately as a better form of

government than they can imagine.

However, the dynamics of Indonesian local political democracy are experiencing instability, problems that occur in independent candidates also occur in the presence of local parties in Aceh. In the course of the existence of local parties began to experience problems and the decline in the number of votes that affected representatives sitting in parliament. In 2014 the local parties participating in the general election consisted of the Aceh Party, the Aceh National Party, and the Aceh Peace Party. Local parties, namely the Aceh Party, won 29 seats, the Aceh National Party 3 seats, and the Aceh Peace Party 1 seat.



Source: KIP, 2019

Figure 4. Local Party Achievements in the 2019 Legislative Election.

Figure 4 In 2019 there are only 4 local parties that still exist, namely the Aceh party, the Sira Party, the Aceh Regional Party and the Aceh Nanggroe Party. Vote gains continued to decline, in the 2019 election the Aceh Party won 18 seats, the Aceh Nanggroe Party 6 seats, the Aceh Regional Party 3 seats, and the Sira Party 1 seat. The results of Abdullah & Sari's research [1] the decline in the electability

of the Aceh Party in the 2019 DPRA legislative election due to several factors (1) due to a vacancy of figures in the Aceh Party, making voters shift support to figures from other parties (2) decreasing public confidence in the Aceh Party (3) the weak marketing of the Aceh Party in gaining votes (4) money politics, a very massive movement made voters switch support. "The results of an interview with one of the

Aceh Tamiang DPRK Members from the PKS Party said that I think the Aceh Party's (votes) decreased because the people were able to get seats in 2014 in almost all regions in Aceh but in reality there is no program that really works. right for the benefit of the people.

#### 4. Conclusion

The results show that the dynamics of local political democracy in Indonesia have been running and developing following the world political system. By providing an opportunity for individual or independent candidates to be able to participate in the election of regional heads and deputy regional heads, it is an advancement in political democracy in Indonesia. The results of the participation of individual or independent candidates have not shown the strength of the person or the image of the candidate can be a determining factor. So that the results of participation and victories in the regional elections continue to decline and victories are still dominated by representatives of political parties.

Meanwhile, the dynamics of local party democracy in Aceh shows that local democracy is taking place in Indonesia. The people of Aceh have local political vehicles that are very familiar with the needs and desires of the people. Local parties show their existence by winning seats in parliament. The Aceh Party since 2009, 2014, and 2019 has always been the winner of the general election in Aceh by having the most representation. However, the popularity continues to decline due to loss of figure, loss of trust, and programs that are not pro-people.

This research is one of the follow-up studies on how local political democracy in Indonesia is dynamic and has the uniqueness of the archipelago. The limited scope of research on local politics in Indonesia which includes individual or independent candidates being able to participate in the election of regional heads and deputy regional heads and local parties in Aceh is an opportunity for further research that wants to reveal the dynamics of local political democracy in Indonesia such as Papua which also has local political dynamics.

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