Social Exchange: Community Participation and the Future of General Elections in Indonesia

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Abstract: *In democratic life, community participation plays a critical role. This is because the ultimate goal of a democracy being built is to create direct public participation. One form of democratic development is through elections. To see community participation in general elections, it can be done through social exchanges. Therefore, this study aims to dissect the social exchange theory perspective on people's participation in democratic life through general elections. Studying social exchanges between the community and political elites is fair. It does not violate regulations—a descriptive qualitative research method with primary and secondary data retrieval through sources relevant to the research object. Humans are rational beings who always count the sacrifices and rewards of a situation. In any condition, humans will still think about what benefits they get. In the context of democratic life through elections between the public and political elites, it is seen that social exchanges occur between elites who need help (need votes) and people who look more at economic benefits and psychological comfort. In this study, the author also reveals mutually beneficial relationships between the elite and the community that lead to social exchanges.*
Keywords: *Social Exchange, Community Participation, General Election, Democracy.*

Introduction

As social beings, humans cannot be separated from the community environment where they live together and interact with other individuals. Humans live in society, will be interconnected, and need each other. That need can lead to a process of social interaction (Tabi'in, 2017). The concept of democracy is a keyword in itself, especially in political science. This is because, currently, democracy is touted as an indicator of political development, including Indonesia

(Jailani, 2015). Democracy occupies a vital position concerning the distribution of state power obtained from the people and must also be used for the welfare and prosperity of the people (Kusmanto, 2014).

Definively, democracy comes from two words, namely demos, which means the people, and kratos, which means government, so that democracy can be interpreted as the people's government, or better known as the government of, by, and for the people. Structurally, the

political system in Indonesia divides state power institutions into 3 forms, namely executive, legislative, and judicial (Yulistyowati et al., 2017). Of course, in its development, the democratic system in Indonesia continues to experience renewal and development. As a country that adheres to the notion of democracy, Indonesia carries out what is called a "General Election." The election selects candidate leaders or members to fill certain political positions. The positions are varied, ranging from the president to people's representatives at various levels of government (Liando, 2017).

In line with the above, democracy was developed to foster participation, not the participation of a person or group. Here, the role of the people is more appreciated because it plays an essential role in the decision-making process for the public interest (Mashuri, 2014). Ideally, in a democratic system, decision-making is in the hands of the people, not a particular group or group. Concerning democracy, public political participation affects the legitimacy of the community towards the running of a government. In an election, for example, community political participation affects the legitimacy of the community towards the elected political elites (Arniti, 2020). Every society has its own preferences and interests to make its choice in elections. It can be said that the future of elected public officials in an election depends on the people's preferences as voters. Public political participation in elections can be seen as a form of public control over a government (Suharyanto, 2016). The control provided varies depending on the level of political participation of each. Apart from being at the core of democracy, political participation is also closely related to the fulfillment of the political rights of citizens. The manifestation of the fulfillment of political rights is the freedom for every citizen to express opinions and assemble (Subekti, 2014).

Seeing what is happening between the elite of political parties and the community as the basis for voting. Each other will influence each other, be influenced, and vice versa. Political parties need supporting voices, and people need channels of political struggle to improve their fate (Heryanto, 2019). This situation creates mutually beneficial relationships in politics. Political party elites provide certain things (material and non-material) to the voting base community and receive benefits from this community. Meanwhile, the community provides support in certain forms (material and non-material) to the elite of political parties, and these people receive benefits both physical and non-physical (Wardhani, 2018).

In every society, there are two classes of the population; namely, one ruling class, called the elite, and one that is controlled, namely, the community. The first-class or elite, which is always a minority, carries out all political functions, monopolizes power, and enjoys the benefits provided by that power. While the second class, which is much more prominent in number, is regulated and controlled by the elite class (Chalik, 2017).

From the many explanations above, the author determines that the theory of social exchange can be an interesting theory to be used as an analytical knife to

explain the above problems. Because basically, social exchange theory is a theory related to social actions that give or exchange objects that contain value between individuals based on specific social orders (Wirawan, 2012). The exchanged objects are not real things, but things that are not real. The exchange idea also involves feelings of pain, burdens of life, hopes, achievements, and statements between individuals. Thus, the idea of exchange is broad but inclusive (Cook et al., 2013).

In addition, humans are rational creatures. This assumption is based on the idea that humans will calculate the sacrifices and rewards of a particular situation within the limits of the information available to them, which will guide their behavior (FitzPatrick, 2019). It also includes the possibility that when faced with a not rewarding choice, people will choose the option that requires the least amount of sacrifice. By assuming that humans are rational beings, Social Exchange Theory states that humans use rational thinking to make choices (Stafford & Kuiper, 2021).

The following assumption is that the standard by which humans evaluate sacrifice and reward varies over time and from person to person, indicating that this theory must consider diversity. No one standard can be applied to everyone to determine what the sacrifices and rewards are (Cropanzano et al., 2017).

From the background of the explanation above, the writer is interested in studying the relationship between social exchange and public participation in general elections. The aim is to increase community participation in democratic life through general elections due to social

exchanges between the community and the political elite. In addition, this research is expected to be able to contribute ideas in the form of writing to enrich the scientific style of socio-political science in the future.

Method

This type of research is qualitative, namely, research that intends to understand the phenomena experienced by the subject, for example, behavioral, perception, motivational, and action research, holistically employing descriptions in the form of words and language, in a context, especially natural ones, utilizing various natural methods (Gunawan, 2013). Descriptive research seeks to collect information about a theme, symptom, or situation according to what it is to find the broadest knowledge of the object of research (Soendari, 2012). Descriptive research is generally carried out with the primary objective of systematically describing the facts and characteristics of the object or subject that are examined accurately. In this study, the authors use primary data sources and secondary data, namely, the central literature of political sociology as the primary source. Secondary data sources, namely, social reality data sources that the authors found either directly in the field or through newspaper media or discussions.

Result and Discussion
Social Exchange

Johnson (2008) views social exchange as an exchange of activities, whether valuable or not, and more or less profitable or expensive for two people who interact. This exchange theory seeks to explain social behavior based on

rewards and costs. Johnson recognized that scientific sociology requires conceptual categories and schemas. Scientific sociology also requires a series of propositions about the relationship between categories. Without these propositions, the explanation is impossible, because there is no explanation without propositions.

Based on the findings of Crosbie (1972), he then developed several propositions which are the core of social exchange theory as described below:

a. The proposition of success: the more significant the tendency to do it again is if someone often acts and the person gets a reward for what they do.

b. Stimulus Proposition If in the past a particular stimulus or series of stimuli occurred, or a series of stimuli was a situation when a person's action was rewarded, then the more similar the current stimulus is to the past stimulus, the greater the tendency for the person to repeat the same or similar action.

c. Value Proposition The more valuable the outcome of an action is to a person, the more likely they will be to perform a similar action.

d. The proposition of benefits and drawbacks. If a person receives more and more certain rewards at a particular time, the less valuable the rewards that will be given to him are.

e. Aggression-Compliment proposition. When a person's actions do not get the reward he expected or receive the punishment he did not expect, he will be angry. He tends to behave aggressively, and the consequences of that behavior become more valuable to him. When a person's actions receive the expected reward, specifically a greater than expected reward, or do not get the punishment they expected, they will be happy. He is more likely to behave pleasantly, and the result of this action is more valuable to him.

f. The rationality proposition. When a person chooses an alternative action, another person will choose the action as perceived. If the value of the result is multiplied by the probability of success, then the result is more outstanding.

In line with the above, social exchange itself has concepts (Mighfar, 2015) as follows:

a. Social exchange. Social exchange is a social relationship in society with one another, and in social relations, some rewards and rewards influence each other. In other words, people relate to other people because they expect something to fulfill their needs.

b. Actions of social behavior. The social behavior in question is an act of will that results in a reward or punishment from others.

c. Fair exchange. A fair exchange, according to Homnas, is an exchange that is mutually beneficial as long as it is considered mutually beneficial by both parties.

d. Activities are actual behaviors that are described at a very concrete level. Part of the description of any group should include a record of the activities of its members. Individuals and groups can be compared according to the

similarities and differences in their activities and the degree of performance of the various activities.

e. Interaction is any activity that stimulates or is stimulated by the activities of other people. Individuals or groups can be compared according to the frequency of interaction, according to who initiated the interaction, with whom, according to the channels through which the interaction occurs, and so on.

f. A sensation is an external or behavioral sign that indicates an internal state. Signs such as the internal state they exhibit can vary. Physiological states such as hunger or fatigue, positive or negative emotional reactions to an event or a stimulus, feelings of liking or disliking a group member, psychological or emotional internal physiological states, and many others are included in one group. General, namely feelings, as long as this internal state is manifested in an observable type of behavior.

g. Habits refer to activities and patterns of interaction that are repeated.

h. Norms are activities or patterns of interaction that are expected to be followed by group members, with positive feelings expressed towards those who follow them and negative feelings towards those who do not follow them.

i. Deprivation is the period when a person receives a particular reward.

j. Satisfaction is the quantity of a large enough reward that satisfies a person and was obtained not long ago so that the award is temporarily no longer desired.

Social Exchange and Community Participation in General Elections

Humans such as *zon politicon* (Aristotle) or *homo homini socius* (Adam Smith) are social creatures. Humans, as social beings, interact with each other to fulfill their needs. Humans as social beings have several distinctive characteristics, different from one another, such as physical attributes, talent, emotions, needs, ideas, initiative, behavior, etc. This all triggers the birth of a collision between interests (Listia, 2015). It is these differences that always place the community in a conflict-ridden situation. Articulating individual and collective needs requires competition, both for individual (personal needs) and public needs. Individual needs are strongly influenced by the direction in which public needs are met because it will be challenging to meet individual needs if public needs are not available. To avoid the emergence of conflicts of interest, conscious and collective efforts are needed to create order, and that order can only be realized through politics (Ruman, 2016).

Political shops, community elites, and other elements compete to gain public sympathy, one of which is by conducting political contracts. The culture of political contracts has become a trend since direct elections in 2004. The agreement between two or more groups in the political contract is very diverse. All regional demands on a priority scale for the local people must be contained in the contents of the contract, which must then be realized by the elite of the winning political party (Syamsuadi & Yahya, 2018). Likewise, community groups are obliged to gather as much support as possible to

make their support a success. A political contract can be defined as an agreement involving coalition party elites, presidential and vice-presidential candidates with the supporting parties, legislative candidates with voters, and the people with their leaders (Sulaiman, 2013). In general, political contracts can be classified into two models: first, those involving party elites and elements of society; Second, political contracts involving fellow parties, or two parties, or even more.

The phenomenon of political contracts can also be explained within the framework of Peter Blau (1964) regarding his theory of social exchange (social exchange theory). Based on this theory, the social exchange relationship between one person and another occurs because of the reward. If in every social exchange, there is an element of reward, sacrifice (cost), and profit. The process of socio-political exchange is possible because there are parties who need help and those who assist. This is where the critical aspect will appear very thick (Molm et al., 2000). So it is not surprising that in a political contract culture, the discussion of who gets what, how, and when is a significant concern for the elites.

According to Peter Blau (1968), social exchange fulfills the characteristics of the main functions. First, the formation of friendship ties for parties who make mutual agreements, both on the same strata (layers) or different strata—second, affirming subordination or dominance, especially when the interaction is built on unequal strata. In the most straightforward society, social exchange occurs through gifts and services. Gifts received are not voluntary but given under obligation. For example, like a group of success teams from elements of society, political party success teams receive gifts from certain parties, but they don't just receive money. However, this successful team should seek support from the order as much as possible because it has received a gift (Lampong, 2018). The results of social exchange appear to be realized to produce two or more groups who are very interested in gaining profit and power. The other side of social exchange is increasing social integrity, building trust, encouraging courage, and developing collective values. In this regard, Blau states, "reciprocity and exchange are expanded and combined with a parallel growth of mutual trust."

In our daily life or society in general, for example, before the general election, we often encounter phenomena in the field that indicate several elements of the community or community leaders who approach the figures who compete in the election, or, on the contrary, the participants in the election competition do approach community leaders or the community. This is done more because of rational considerations, namely relationships oriented to mutual benefit between the community and competing participants in the election. In defining power, Weber considers that "power is an opportunity (gain advantage) for individuals in social interactions to realize their desires in a communal action, even though it is against the current of challenges and resistance of other individuals involved in the action"

(Buchari, 2014). So the exchange that is done here is to get benefits, either material or social status, in the form of positions. The possibility of considering the cost-reward-punishment-value is a reality that we cannot avoid, especially in a society that is ultimately materialist like now, so that the underlying behavior is economic considerations and psychological comfort. The forms of social exchange relations patterns are divided into several specifics, depending on when and how the pattern takes place and what the supporting elements are, as a condition for social exchange to occur. The following are forms of patterns of social exchange relations and their supporting elements, which involve the elite of political parties and the community as follows:

a. The pattern of social exchange, which includes direct funds as an incentive, is the old social exchange model. This is done as evidence to show the seriousness of the party elite so that the exchange process must run, and both parties benefit equally. For the community, these benefits will only have a short-term impact, while for the party elite, the results of these efforts will have an impact in the long-term and support their career path.

b. The pattern of transactional social exchange relationships involves famous names as the primary tools. A famous name is used as a charmer with the broader community; the fame of an elite name is used as capital for a political career from the bottom. The name of an elite person is already well-known in the larger community because he is frequently involved in various matters at the village, sub-district, district, and provincial levels.His involvement is good in terms of management. He has become an investment capital to strengthen the network. Therefore, an elite who does not have financial capital as a source of mobilization for his supporters, but has a vast network as his principal capital and has been known by many circles. Elites who have the capital of well-known names are actors in negotiating and mobilizing so that transactional social exchanges can take place and be a lure.

c. Patterns of social exchange relationships involving influential figures "Character is the key" to entering into a group or a society. Political party elites will prefer influential public figures as political communication partners. In simple terms, this elite community figure describes the typology of the community he knows to the elite of political parties. These community leaders understand that in terms of community needs, obstacles, opportunities, and community potential. Political party elites only follow the advice and input of these figures. When both parties have found a meeting point between the interests of the community and the interests of the party elite, the social exchange relationship will work.

d. The pattern of social exchange relations, using aspiration absorption meetings, takes place in two models. The first model, the "open aspiration absorption meeting," involves many elements in the community, ranging from representatives of farmers, small traders, laborers, elements of the village government, entrepreneurs,

and so on. There were only two interested groups in the meeting for the absorption of aspirations, (1) party interest groups and (2) community interest groups from the various elements mentioned above. The second model was a "closed aspiration absorption meeting," which involved two interest groups from the party elite and only the elite of society. The pattern of social exchange relations discusses mass-raising strategies and what things the community can get, and the elite of the village community can get them later with a note that the main goal is to win the interests of the party elite first and then the realization of the interests of the wider community.

These are some of the forms of social exchange relations that occur. The author considers it essential, which essentially brings together two groups who have mutual interests and want each other to benefit from each other in a political frame. This transactional behavior occurs naturally and is planned with various colors and social settings. And they both hope that the result of this effort will have a good impact on their group. On the one hand, party elites get honor, position, wealth, and social status; on the other hand, the people get village progress, economic income, struggle networks, comfort, and trust entrusted to the ruling party elite.

Conclusion

People need sufficient political knowledge to determine their political stance wisely. What is meant by a "wise attitude" is when individuals have rational decisions when they want to make choices, even though there are influences from family, social environment, and material offers from candidates. But what we have to understand together is the people's tendency to what is an advantage for them if they choose one of the political elites. The pattern of social exchange relations is mutually beneficial for political parties and the community. In this context, there are two groups of interests: (1) political party elites are interested in the community, and (2) the community has an interest in political parties. The driving factor for social exchange: for the elite of political parties in general, it is influenced by pragmatic political attitudes. The power of figures (individual qualities) is sometimes weak in the eyes of the community and does not have an extensive history of performance. For the community, the driving factor for carrying out social exchanges is also caused by skepticism towards the elite. Ultimately, social exchange will always be based on the idea that people view their relationships in a social context. They will tend to count the sacrifices and compare them to the rewards of continuing the relationship.

Acknowledgement

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