

ARTICLE

Political Pragmatics in Indonesia:

Candidates, the Coalition of Political Parties and Single Candidate for Local Elections

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Abstract: Political pragmatics has become its dynamic in Local Elections. The existence of incumbent power and uneven coalition formation of parties in the election can directly reduce or eliminate the opportunity for other political parties to participate in the election. In addition to these problems, so far, candidates' nomination by political parties turns out to pay more attention to the incumbent electability or popularity of the candidates to be carried by them and without assuming to party ideology. This certainly makes the power imbalance so that candidates from political parties or coalitions of other political parties are reluctant to compete. Political parties hold a coalition to carry out the candidates for various reasons. This research article will explain political parties' pragmatics in forming a coalition and carrying a pair of candidates that gave rise to a single candidate's phenomenon. The research article begins with collecting data through a literature study and is supported by the General Elections Commission's data. To answer this phenomenon, the writer analyzes the documentation as long as the Local Elections is held simultaneously. The concept of political pragmatism is expected to explain these phenomena. This paper concludes that the pragmatic methods used by political parties in determining coalitions and candidates in the Regional Head Election are because the purpose of political parties to participate in the contestation is only a victory to gain power.

Keywords: pragmatics; local elections; coalition; local head candidates

1. Introduction

The Local Elections (Pilkada), which was elected directly by the communities, was held for the first time in 2005 and since enacting Acts Number 32 of 2004 concerning the Regional Government. Subsequently, in 2007 through Acts Number 22 of 2007 concerning General Election Commission, then included Regional Head Elections. Since held the Local Elections (Pilkada) for the first time in 2005, it still felt to have not succeeded in creating democratic ways to produce credible leaders, even though these conditions occurred only in a few regions. The principle of democracy should be able to provide equal opportunities to all electoral participants and without violence. The Local Elections felt to be only part of the routine carried out by the people.

According to the study results (Nurhasim, 2010), he stated that Local Head had been carried out sporadically. Many crucial problems still arise, including regulatory issues, setting the schedule for the Regional Head Election, budget readiness, the process of selecting and proposing candidates, organizer neutrality, money politics, conflicts, disputes, riots, or other injustices in their implementation. Based on the above problems, an idea emerged to hold a Regional Head Election simultaneously nationally to elect the Regional Head. Following the Chairperson of the General Election Commission, Arif Budiman (Kristianti, 2018), The objective of the simultaneous Regional Election is to create a more effective and efficient Regional Election. The implementation of Local Elections can simultaneously run smoothly, effectively, and efficiently and can make a democratic spirit if all stakeholders, the people, and supporting facilities can function and act swiftly and with discipline. Acts Number 1 of 2015 concerning government regulations held the simultaneous regional head election for the first time. As a Substitution of Acts Number 1 of 2014 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents and Mayors to become Laws, as amended the second time with Acts Number 10 of 2016 concerning the Second Amendment Acts Number 1 of 2015 was officially issued by the government. The schedule for the implementation of Regional Head Elections in 3 waves is based on Article 201 paragraph (1) to section (3) Acts Number 8 of 2015 concerning Acts Number 1 of 2015. Article The statement states that simultaneous voting was scheduled following the End of Term of Office (AMJ) of the Regional Head, held in December 2015, February 2017, and June 2018.

Table 1 shows regions whose term of office for the Regional Head has expired and held. Regional head elections (in the period 2015, 2017, and 2018).

Table 1. Number of Regions Organizing Regional Head Elections

Year End of Term	Year of Regional Head Election	Area	Information
2015 and January-June 2016	2015	269 area	9 Provinces, 224 districts, 36 cities
July 2016-December 2017	2017	101 area	7 Provinces, 76 districts, 18 cities
January 2018-December 2019	2018	171 area	17 Provinces, 115 districts, 39 cities

Source: KPU-processed from infopemilu

Based on Acts of 2015 Article 1, number 3, 4, and Number 8, the holding of Regional Head Elections is simultaneously followed by election participants from pairs of candidates proposed by political parties. A combination of political parties or candidate pairs from individual lines registered or registered at the General Elections Commission (KPU).

Table 2. Number of Candidate Pairs in Organizing Regional Head Elections

Organization of Regional Head Elections	Candidates	Information
December 9, 2015	852 candidates	21 candidates of governor election, 714 candidates of district head election, and 117 candidates election of mayor
February 15, 2017	310 candidates	24 candidates governor election, 236 candidates district head election, and 50 candidates election of mayor
June 27, 2018	522 candidates	55 candidates of governor election, 346 candidates of district head election, and 121 candidates election of mayor

Source: KPU-processed from infopemilu

In [Table 2](#) can see details of the number of candidates for Local Heads who participated in the contest in each batch of simultaneous Regional Head Elections (2015, 2017, and 2018 periods).

Local Election events are simultaneously starting in 2015, 2017, until 2018 had held. In the holding of the national simultaneous Regional Election, political pragmatism was still apparent, with the discovery of a single candidate in several regions.

According to the Indonesian Institute of Sciences Researchers (LIPI), Syamsuddin Harris ([Pryanka, 2018](#)) stated that factors causing the emergence of a single candidate include regulations related to the requirements for nominating pairs of candidates, the high cost of political dowry in the Local Elections, and political parties' failure to carry out regeneration. These things make political parties use practical methods because political parties' orientation has shifted to victory to gain power. So that party cadres whose numbers are not small or worthy figures and are considered capable do not have the opportunity to participate because they are defeated by famous figures or candidates who have qualified electability to win in the Local Elections.

From the dominance of the pairs of candidates who took part in elections, most came from political parties or a combination of political parties formed from a mutual agreement between political parties. The formation of the coalition did not emphasize the ideology of each party. The party coalition formed was very fluid and random. Based on the existing alliance, religious-based parties will not always merge with religious-based parties. Even political parties with opposing ideologies will suddenly join the same coalition. This is because the political parties participating in the election want to get voters from one group and aim to get as many votes as possible to win.

Pragmatism occurs in the coalition process and can be seen from the nominees that the candidates put forward only promote electability and popularity. According to Arif Wibowo in the Christian Dior Simbolon article ([Simbolon, 2017](#)), today, political parties are starting to forget their parties' regeneration and ideology. This can be seen from the number of candidate pairs proposed but not the party cadres themselves. The purpose of the parties in the contestation is to win and power. According to Arif Wibowo, not many political parties carry out their functions to carry out regeneration. Suppose a political party has carried out this function. In that case, it is not sure that the best cadres who have tested internally will be included or nominated in the Local Elections. Still, the party will use pragmatic considerations, utilize figures known to the public, and elect the candidates they will carry.

In fact, the coalition was formed to carry prospective leaders based on the party's shared vision, mission, and ideology so that party idealism could be fought for. In

reality, many coalition political parties felt to be very fluid and full of compromise or transactional. The coalition was built to win contestation in the Local Elections regardless of party ideology. The waning of ideology, vision, and mission in political contestation makes political parties trapped in political pragmatism and transactional politics.

Political pragmatism is seen as a source of problems in political and state activities. So, is it still necessary for political pragmatism in elections? Based on the description above, this research article will discuss why political parties use practical methods in terms of coalitions and carry candidate pairs in the Regional Head Election. At least some things will examine in this article. These include: How can political pragmatism bring up the phenomenon of a single candidate pair in the Local Elections? How do regulations regulate this? As well as how the future solutions, so political pragmatism raises the phenomenon of a single candidate does not happen in the future.

2. Methods

This article focuses on analyzing the emergence of a single candidate in simultaneous regional head elections. Simultaneous local head elections that began in 2015, 2017, and 2018 in its development have increasingly resulted in single candidates where the number of single candidates has increased in each election organization. The method used was a literature study, where use library was sourced to compile a research framework to analyze and obtain data. Data collection until the analysis process starts from April 2020. The literature used in this study includes the results of previous research, scientific journals, news coverage, and reports related to the implementation of elections, including previous books and articles which contain themes of political pragmatism, especially in the performance of local democracy. Data or information was collected to be processed as a basis for writing. The study results expected to contribute to solving the problem, which conceptual towards the cause of the use of pragmatic methods by political parties.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Candidate Theory in Political Parties: An Introduction to Study

In the case of candidacy in a political party, one concept has become the basic concept of the democratic candidates' model, called intraparty democracy. The ideal practice is for political parties to implement democracy within themselves. Intra-party democracy describes the pattern of equal power relations among those in a political party. Intra-party democracy, according to Croissant and Chambers (2008), a distribution character of power in the decision-making process between members and leaders in a politics based on the principles of inclusiveness and decentralization. Then, the issue of the candidate becomes an essential study in this research. Because to answer this problem, Rahat and Hazan offered an explanation of validation using four dimensions, including the measurement of candidacy (inclusive/exclusive), the height of candidate voters, the measure of decentralization, and the size of voting or appointment. Rahat use these four dimensions as a way to build cross-case studies (Rahat, 2009).

Meanwhile, Krister Lundell argues that determining candidate voting sizes and the voting or appointment system is intersecting things. The voting system is considered more inclusive than the appointment system. Lundell's argument is a dimension that focuses more on the size of decentralization because of the candidacy that took place in Eastern Europe and Southern Europe (Lundell, 2004). On the other hand, Pippa Norris also stated that political recruitment was a matter of nominating elected representatives at the local, regional, national, and sub-national levels and about the appointment of public offices. Political parties have an essential role in selecting candidates for legislative members. Each country indeed determines several conditions for those who are considered capable of getting a legislator position. In an

article written by Pippa Norris (Katz & Crotty, 2006), there are three levels in recruiting candidate candidates, namely certification, nomination, and election.

First, the certification process is about who is eligible to be elected as a legislative candidate. The formal conditions that candidates must meet are established under the electoral law. The requirements are age, nationality, track record, residence, morality, incompatibility, popularity, financial savings, political experience, and the need to submit endorsements.

Second, the nomination process is about who decides which candidate will be nominated as a legislative member. In measuring the level of democracy within the party internal, it can see from several things, such as (a) The level of concentration (how far the nominations are determined by the national party leadership or submitted to the local area). (b) The extent of taking part, whether only a few people elect candidates or whether many people are involved in the process. and (c) The scope of decision-making, whether there is a choice of one, several or various opinions are competing for the nomination.

Third, the election process is about who will elect as the result of the nomination process. The type of candidate chosen by the party can influence the legislator's quality and government composition. For example, to control the legislature, policy-making, and investigation of election results, the party decides to elect professional lawyers, local activists, celebrities, or experienced party employees (Katz & Crotty, 2006).

3.2. The Process of Selecting Political Party Candidates in Election

Studies related to political recruitment also focus attention on important matters, such as the candidate selection process. Candidate selection is a method used by political parties in electing candidates who will sit in various sectors of power in the election result process. Several candidates are then selected from one of them. Each party usually elects only one candidate, or according to a comparison system from the party's preferred list. The selection of candidates is one of the things that must do in a political party and parliament. This condition is for a long time until the deadline ends.

According to Austin Ranney, candidate selection is the primary process officially owned by a party to decide someone elected formally to hold a position marked by the voter vote in election communications as a recommendation and candidate. Supported or from the list of candidates. The selection process is limited to political parties to determine which candidates will be nominated in the election (Katz & Crotty, 2006). There are four most important things to pay attention to (Rahat, 2009). The four things are: First, who are the actors who take part in the selection process (candidacy)? Candidacy describes who can be nominated or appointed as a candidate from a party.

Secondly, who is the electorate? This process is related to a party institution that formed in selecting candidates. The institution is related to how many people are involved in determining the selection process.

Thirdly, where is the selection process carried out (degree of decentralization)? The process explains the problem in which the scope of decision making is related to the degree of decentralization and centralization.

Fourthly, how are candidates nominated by the party (voting or appointment)? In this case, there are two nomination models. Firstly, the model of the voting system. It is a nomination based on votes where all candidates are selected through an election procedure without a selector being able to change the composition list. Secondly, the appointment system model in which candidates' determination is appointed without using election procedures, candidates are selected without requiring other approval except by the party or party leader.

3.3. The Phenomenon of Emerging Candidate Pairs in Local Elections

The nomination or submission of candidates for regional head candidates by political parties begins with developing strategies to achieve victory. This strategy can be done by forming a coalition map in the contestation and determining the pair of candidates to be carried. Practical methods were used by political parties to achieve their goals. The election of political party coalitions was carried out in a liquid and random manner in each region to open up opportunities for political parties to participate in the contestation to achieve broader victory. The coalition no longer pays attention to ideological boundaries or the party's vision and mission.

Moreover, Political parties do not limit themselves. They can join any political party by compromising or transactional. In addition to the coalition, the determination of candidates' pairs to be promoted in the Local Elections can also come from incumbents with high electability or candidates outside the cadre as famous figures. The formation of a random coalition map, and the submission of candidate pairs with increased popularity, often led to a single candidate in contestation.

The holding of the first wave of Local Elections was held in 2015. During the 2015 Regional Head Elections, a polemic appeared because seven regions only had one candidate pair in the Regional Head Election. Following General Election Commission Regulation Number 12 of 2015, article 89A explained, "if until the end of the registration period there is no or only one pair of candidates, the General Election Commission extends the registration period. In the event that until the expiry of the registration period does not exist or there is only one pair of candidates, the General Election Commission shall postpone all stages, and elections will hold at the Local Elections simultaneously in the next period." After the extension period ended, finally leaving three regions with a single candidate pair, are Blitar, Tasikmalaya, and Timor Tengah Utara. Following the existing rules, the three areas must postpone implementing the Local Elections until 2017. However, following the Constitutional Court Decree Number 100/PUU-XIII/2015, in its decision, the ruling allows regions with one candidate pair to be determined as eligible participants as long as they have gone through procedures which had been specified. In the end, three areas can hold Local Elections simultaneously in 2015 with one pair of candidates. With the emergence of a single candidate pair in the holding of Local Elections simultaneously, the number is increasing.

Based on the writer's observation from the General Election Commission publication page, there was a tendency to increase in regions that hold Regional Head Elections with one pair of candidates—recorded three areas with a single candidate pair in the 2015 Local Elections simultaneously. This number increased in the simultaneous Local Elections in 2017 and 2018, respectively, recorded nine areas and 16 areas single candidate pair. During the simultaneous Regional Head Election, the number of regions holding Regional Head Elections with a single candidate pair was 28. The candidate pairs will fight with an empty column. Parts with a single candidate in the simultaneous Local Elections 2015, 2017, and 2018 periods) were described in [Table 3](#).

Table 3. Number of Regions with a Single Candidate

Year	Regional	Information
2015	3 area	District of Blitar, Tasikmalaya, and Timor Tengah Utara
2017	9 area	District of Tulang Bawang Barat, Pati, Landak, Buton, Maluku Tengah, City of Jayapura, Tambrau, City of Sorong, and City of Tebing Tinggi
2018	16 area	District of Deli Serdang, Padang Lawas Utara, Pasuruan, Lebak, Tangerang, Tapin, Minahasa Tenggara, Bone, Enrekang, Mamasa, Mamberamo Tengah, Puncak, Jayawijaya, City of Prabumulih, City of Tangerang and City of Makasar

Source: KPU-processed from infopemilu

Based on the data mentioned above and reviewed based on the factors causing the emergence of a single candidate pair, we can see that an increase in the Local Elections nomination threshold simultaneously sufficiently affects political parties. Political parties were forced to compromise with other political parties to form a coalition to meet the nomination threshold requirements and carry their candidate pairs in the contestation.

The above encourages political parties to accelerate cadre formation to carry out their cadres in the Local Elections. But in the end, for the sake of the calculation of win and loss, political parties began to forget their function to become a machine producing a good leader figure to be nominated in the election, both national and local. Political parties tend to use practical methods to form coalitions and carry pairs of candidates for Regional Head. Many political parties form fat coalitions by buying up political party support and bringing famous figures or incumbents with qualified electability. Political pragmatism can also increase the high cost of political dowry in nominating Local Elections. Bargaining for political office to become the number one person in the region is becoming increasingly wild. The expensive political dowry is because political parties need funds to finance the operation of their parties. The issue of costly political dowry arose during the Local Elections of Tambrauw District (Hutapea, 2016). The pair of challenger candidates could not register because coalitions that carried incumbents had hired the 20 seats of Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) members. Compromise with a political party failed because the pair of challenger candidates could not afford to pay the party's dowry to be invited to a coalition.

3.4. Map of Coalition on Local Elections with a Single Candidate Pair

The holding of the 2014 national elections gave rise to two large coalition camps that were competing. Competition between the Great Indonesian Coalition (KIH) and the Red and White Coalition (KMP) in the 2014 elections seemed unsustainable. It thawed at the holding of the Regional Head Elections simultaneously. The party coalition, which was initially competing and opposing, eventually formed a new alliance at random without being separated by the two big partnerships. Hanafi (2015) revealed this, the coalition's randomness is seen when a political party nominated a candidate pair in the Local Election no longer disputed the ideology, vision, mission, or candidate pair that it espoused.

Based on the author's observation from the General Election Commission (KPU) publication page, it could found that the coalition is very fluid or opposite, compared

Table 4. Recapitulation of Support of Political Parties in Local Elections with a Single Candidate Pair

Year	Regency/City with a Single Candidate	Number of Supporting Political Parties	Information
2015	District of Blitar	2 Political Parties	Total support: 22 out of 50 DPRD seats
	District of Tasikmalaya	3 Political Parties	Total support: 16 out of 50 DPRD seats
	District of Timor Tengah Utara	1 Political Party	Total support: 8 out of 30 DPRD seats
2017	City of Tebing Tinggi	8 Political Parties	Total support: 19 out of 25 DPRD seats
	District of Tulang Bawang Barat	10 Political Parties	Total support: 30 out of 30 DPRD seats (all)
	District of Pati	8 Political Parties	Total support: 46 out of 50 DPRD seats
	District of Landak	8 Political Parties	Total support: 32 out of 35 DPRD seats
	District of Buton	7 Political Parties	Total support: 21 out of 25 DPRD seats
	District of Maluku Tengah	8 Political Parties	Total support: 30 out of 40 DPRD seats

Year	Regency/City with a Single Candidate	Number of Supporting Political Parties	Information
	City of Jayapura	7 Political Parties	Total support: 33 out of 40 DPRD seats
	District of Tambrauw	8 Political Parties	Total support: 19 out of 20 DPRD seats
	City of Sorong	8 Political Parties	Total support: 27 out of 30 DPRD seats
2018	District of Deli Serdang	11 Political Parties	Total support: 49 out of 50 DPRD seats
	District of Padang Lawas Utara	11 Political Parties	Total support: 30 out of 30 DPRD seats (all)
	City of Prabumulih	10 Political Parties	Total support: 25 out of 25 DPRD seats (all)
	District of Pasuruan	9 Political Parties	Total support: 50 out of 50 DPRD seats (all)
	District of Lebak	10 Political Parties	Total support: 50 out of 50 DPRD seats(all)
	District of Tangerang	12 Political Parties	Total support: 50 out of 50 DPRD seats(all)
	City of Tangerang	10 Political Parties	Total support: 50 out of 50 DPRD seats(all)
	District of Tapin	8 Political Parties	Total support: 25 out of 25 DPRD seats (all)
	District of Minahasa Tenggara	8 Political Parties	Total support: 24 out of 25 DPRD seats
	District of Bone	11 Political Parties	Total support: 45 out of 45 DPRD seats (all)
	District of Enrekang	7 Political Parties	Total support: 26 out of 30 DPRD seats
	City of Makasar	10 Political Parties	Total support: 43 out of 50 DPRD seats
	District of Mamasa	10 Political Parties	Total support: 25 out of 30 DPRD seats
	District of Mamberamo Tengah	6 Political Parties	Total support: 20 out of 20 DPRD seats (all)
	District of Puncak	10 Political Parties	Total support: 25 out of 25 DPRD seats (all)
	District of Jayawijaya	10 Political Parties	Total support: 30 out of 30 DPRD seats (all)

Source: KPU-processed from infopemilu

to the alliance in the 2014 election. Besides, it also appears that the fat alliance is dominating. The recapitulation of support for political parties in regions with a single candidate is described in [Table 4](#).

Based on the data above, several pairs of candidates submitted by political parties or a combination of political parties came from a fat coalition formed by political parties to dominate support, thus impacting the challenger candidate pairs' failure to register as candidates in the Regional Head Election. Another coalition was supposed to meet the nomination threshold requirements but chose not to report the candidate pairs. This is evident in the holding of the 2015 Local Elections with a single candidate pair in Blitar. The large coalition between National Awakening Party (PKB), National

Mandate Party (PAN), Functional Groups Party (Golkar), United Development Party (PPP), Democrat, Democratic National Party (Nasdem), People's Conscience Party (Hanura), and Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) has the total support of 28 seats out of a total of 50 seats in the Blitar Regency Indonesian Legislative Election ([BeritaSatu.com, 2015](#)). Originally the coalition planned to move closer to the Blitar Deputy Regent, Rijanto ([detikNews, 2015](#)). But in the end, the incumbent was carried out by the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP), and Great Indonesia Movement Party (Gerindra) was paired with MarheinisUrip Widodo to be nominated in the Local Elections. It makes the coalition led by National Awakening Party (PKB) decide to maneuver by not registering pairs of candidates in the Local Elections and resulted in the emergence of a single couple of candidates in the holding of the 2015 Regional Head Election in Blitar.

Viewed from the map of the political party coalition in carrying the candidate pair looks very liquid. There is already no mapping of the rest of the 2014 electoral coalition, which is part of the KIH and KMP. There is even a coalition that is merged into one of the two big alliances. Again, this is because the regulations regulate the threshold for nominating Local Elections so that there are no other choices for political parties that do not meet the requirements and want to participate in the contestation to conduct coalitions. Besides, a liquid and random coalition also emerged due to the unpreparedness of political parties to bring their best cadres. The formation of the coalition was based on the consideration of a winning strategy to gain power. This is illustrated by the fact that the coalition established by political parties is very pragmatic and is not based on shared ideology, vision, mission, or programs. The coalition between the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP), Gerindra, Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), and National Mandate Party (PAN) is not impossible in the simultaneous Local Head Election. The coalition of the four political parties was also carried out with other political parties.

In contrast, these parties were at odds during the 2014 presidential election. Based on regional data, the Local Elections with a single candidate Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP), Gerindra, Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), and National Mandate Party (PAN) formed a coalition in 10 areas, and 80% received full support from another political party. Besides that, from 28 areas with a single candidate pair in the Local Elections contestation, almost 90% of the regions were followed by incumbents with highly qualified electability. The incumbent was also popular among the people. Especially, if the incumbent is supported by a coalition of political parties that control all nomination threshold requirements, the reality in this field makes there are no other candidates as challenger candidates because the remaining political parties are not interested in becoming competitors for incumbent candidates or the remaining political parties cannot meet the threshold nomination requirements in Local Elections. A single candidate pair almost happened at the Surabaya Local Elections. This was possible because other political parties were reluctant to become incumbent challengers. But in the end, after the extension of the registration of candidates, there are other candidate pairs proposed by the Democratic coalition and PAN to register with the General Election Commission. The coalition brought the pair of candidates Rasiyo-Lucy Kurniasari to compete with the incumbent Mayor and Deputy Mayor who was carried by the PDIP, Tri Risma Harini-Whisnu Sakti Buana.

Based on the simultaneous Local Election results, the regional head candidate pair of incumbent figure carried by a coalition of parties that dominates support tends to bring up a single candidate pair to compete with an empty column. The single candidate pair tends to win the Regional Head Election. At least 28 (twenty-eight) regions with a single candidate pair, 26 (twenty-six) of them carried incumbents, and almost all of them won the contestation, except for the 2018 Local Elections in Makassar, which was won by an empty column. The acquisition of incumbent candidate pairs is only slightly adrift with empty columns, totaling 36,550 voters equal to 6.47% of valid votes. According to General Election Commission data, a single pair

Table 5. Recapitulation of Local Election Results with a Single Candidate Pair

Year	Regency/City with a Single Candidate	Votes		Information	
		Candidates	Empty column		
2015	District of Blitar	421.702	76.941	Incumbent	
	District of Tasikmalaya	488.845	236.240	Incumbent	
	District of Timor Tengah Utara	34.037	8.728	Incumbent	
2017	City of Tebing Tinggi	41.937	16.861	Incumbent	
	District of Tulang Bawang Barat	167.284	5.625	Incumbent	
	District of Pati	514.626	174.900	Incumbent	
	District of Landak	227.531	7.385	Incumbent	
	District of Buton	27.512	22.447	Incumbent	
	District of Maluku Tengah	147.920	61.063	Incumbent	
	City of Jayapura	115.996	21.545	Incumbent	
	City of Sorong	74.885	20.634	Incumbent	
	2018	District of Deli Serdang	538.238	116.193	Incumbent
		District of Padang Lawas Utara	86.915	21.559	-
City of Prabumulih		74.723	19.552	Incumbent	
District of Pasuruan		536.721	155.393	Incumbent	
District of Lebak		453.938	135.879	Incumbent	
District of Tangerang		941.804	183.095	Incumbent	
City of Tangerang		609.428	102.386	Incumbent	
District of Tapin		85.826	20.278	Incumbent	
District of Minahasa Tenggara		47.455	23.098	Incumbent	
District of Bone		232.955	136.535	Incumbent	
District of Enrekang		77.586	35.826	Incumbent	
City of Makassar		264.245	300.795	-	
District of Mamasa		48.552	30.758	Incumbent	
District of Mamberamo Tengah		28.845	4.426	Incumbent	
District of Puncak		146.826	14.813	Incumbent	
District of Jayawijaya	260.012	2.271	Incumbent		

Source: KPU-processed from infopemilu

of candidates who won the contestation, on average, have a vote of the Local Elections win in the range of 70% to 90%. Only incumbent candidate pair from Buton won the contestation with the acquisition of votes that were thinly adrift from an empty column, namely 5,065 votes or equal to 10.14% of valid votes. Recapitulation of voting results that hold Local Elections with a single candidate can be seen in [Table 5](#).

The decision to form a coalition with a political party that was initially at odds with ideology and carried a pair of candidates outside the cadre must ultimately be taken by the political party when in the future in contestation. This is because the voting community in Indonesia is pragmatic. People look at famous figures or the high electability of candidate pairs rather than seeing the vision, mission, or programs offered by political parties. Besides that, almost all candidate pairs won the contestation because of the people's fear that if an empty column wins, no one wins the Local Elections (Pilkada) and results in the Local Head's vacant position. This is evident in the Local Elections holding with a single candidate pair in Buton Regency. The Local Elections against the empty column was won by the incumbent candidate pair, Samsu Umar Abdul Samiun-La Bakry, even though the pair of candidates won narrowly from the empty column. Even though it was clear at the time of the Buton Regional Head Election that the candidate for Petahana Regent was undergoing legal proceedings, Samsu was detained by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) because he was suspected of bribing a former Constitutional Court chief ([Hidayat, 2017](#)).

4. Conclusion

Political pragmatism is a necessity in Indonesia. It already exists and continues to grow. Previously, political parties had maximized their base votes to win, which of course, required enormous effort. However, forming a pragmatic coalition can help the process of winning but does not require too much effort. Political pragmatism is formed because election participants have motives, interests, and ambitions to succeed in a contestation. Pragmatism is mostly done by political parties in terms of cooperation to build coalitions. This coalition was constructed in a very fluid and random manner, without regard to party ideologies opposite each other because it was seen as a more effective strategy. Besides, political party coalitions tend to carry popular candidate pairs with qualified electability. The purpose of the coalition that dominates and promotes qualified candidates is more because these two things can be factors in winning the Regional Head Election.

In fact, with this kind of political pragmatism, it is considered by political parties as a means to win in the Regional Head Election. Based on the coalition map and the submission of pairs of candidates who tend to be pragmatic, carried out by political parties with a variety of reasons and justifications. The coalition was conditional or unconditional, but a liquid and random political party coalition proved that the party's ideology began to fade. Meanwhile, the impact of political pragmatism tends to cause a single candidate pair, which shows an increase in the graph on the holding of the Regional Head Election. In addition, political pragmatism also impacts the voting community because the voting community will have difficulty giving each political party position.

Problems arising from political pragmatism are inevitable, and the stakeholders have to fix them, namely the organizers, the government, and political actors. Based on the above description, the nature and purpose of political pragmatism are: first, political pragmatism in terms of coalition and submission of candidate pairs does not recognize ideological fanaticism towards a political party but is based on short-term benefit criteria. Second, political parties' interests want to achieve victory and power in contestation, so political parties will bring up candidates who can realize their goals. The phenomenon of pragmatism that can lead to a single candidate pair is not suitable for democracy in Indonesia, especially local democracy. In an excellent democratic

system, there must be a challenger as a counterweight. There will not be a single pair of candidates fighting with an empty column.

Several things need to be considered and improved so that political pragmatism does not become more widespread in holding the next Regional Election. First, from a regulatory point of view. Evaluation and improvement need to be done to the Law or Postponement of Debt Payment Obligations. The first point is related to the requirements for the submission of candidate pairs for election participants from political parties and individuals. It needs to be re-examined whether the current threshold for political parties and the support requirements for individuals imposed are too heavy for eligible participants. The second point should be the regulation governing the boundaries of parties that can join to form coalitions. The law can regulate the combination of political parties that register candidate pairs that may not create an alliance with all parties or political parties that may not dominate support.

The coalition limits need to be set so that other political parties can still nominate their candidate pairs. Second, as participants in the election, political parties should carry out their functions to carry out regeneration. Political parties should carry out rejuvenation by conducting basic training on party ideology and political organizations' technical capabilities. Political parties are demanded to offer their best candidates in elections rather than being trapped in pragmatic politics, which tends to carry candidates based on electability in society or well-known figures to win the contestation, regardless of whether the candidate has qualifications is not in political office. This must be done by the party so that a single candidate pair does not appear again in the Local Elections in the next period because a single candidate pair is a form of party failure in recruiting its members. Third, the government and political parties should improve the funding model and make a priority scale for financing party activities so that the interests of particular groups do not trap them. Political parties need funding in operations, but many political parties have poor financial conditions. The poor economic situation was allegedly the result of pragmatic politics, whereby the funders or donors would invest their funds in the party to launch their interests. Fourth, the voting community must be more active and be a smart voter to examine figures who are contesting the Local Elections (Pilkada). By looking for background information and track record of candidate pairs, it is necessary to look at the vision, mission of political parties, and candidate pair programs. Society cannot rely on trust only on famous figures.

At the end of this article, the author concludes if it is reviewed based on the description above that political pragmatism does not always negatively connotate. Pragmatism is mainly concerned with the victory factor, where pragmatism touches reality. Pragmatism in carrying candidate pairs with qualified electability is not harmful because electability and quality are not opposites. It is possible that a candidate pair with qualified electability also has good political attributes. Political pragmatism need not be avoided. It just needs management to not become a nuisance to the sustainability of democracy in Indonesia.

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