

## Citizen Political Participation In Governor Elections: A Case Study Of Limboro Village, Donggala Regency

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**Abstract:** This study examines the phenomenon of public political participation and its various forms in the 2020 gubernatorial election using Max Weber's theory of social action. This study employs a qualitative method, with the research site located in Limboro Village, Banawa Tengah Subdistrict, Donggala Regency. The unit of analysis is the community members who exercised their right to vote, while the informants in this study numbered seven individuals, selected using a purposive sampling technique. The findings indicate that the community views candidates who have strong social ties within the community, possess a track record of effective leadership, and propose programs that prioritize community welfare. Furthermore, the research findings regarding the forms of political participation engaged in by the residents of Limboro Village during the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor Election consist of three forms, namely: 1) Election Day, 2) Political discussions, and 3) Forming and joining interest groups. Based on this political participation, the researcher found that the forms of participation engaged in by the residents of Limboro Village included casting their votes at polling stations and holding discussions or talking about politics at gathering places during the gubernatorial election.

**Keywords:** Participation; Politics; Society; Election of Regional Heads

## 1. Introduction

The first simultaneous regional head elections (PILKADA) were held on December 9, 2015, for regions where the terms of office for regional heads were set to expire in 2016. These simultaneous regional head elections were held at the provincial and regency/city levels. Simultaneous regional head elections have been held four times: in 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2020.

Regional head elections serve as a gateway to establishing a government that enjoys broad legitimacy from the public. If elections are conducted democratically, fairly, honestly, directly, and by secret ballot, the success of high-quality elections depends heavily on how well each stage of the electoral process is carried out. Regional Head and Deputy Regional Head Elections, or Pilkada for short—including the election of Governors and Deputy Governors, Regents and Deputy Regents, as well as Mayors and Deputy Mayors, hereinafter referred to as the “Elections”—constitute the exercise of popular sovereignty at the provincial and regency/city levels to elect Governors and Deputy Governors, Regents and Deputy Regents, and Mayors and Deputy Mayors directly and democratically. (Pratama, 2021).

In the context of democracy, political participation influences the public’s perception of the legitimacy of a government’s administration. In elections, for example, political participation affects the public’s acceptance of the elected candidates or candidate pairs; it can be said that the future of public officials elected in an election depends on the preferences of the public as voters. Furthermore, public political participation in elections can be viewed as a form of public evaluation and oversight of leaders or the government. (Liando, 2017).

Political participation is a crucial aspect of a democratic state and a hallmark of political modernization. Citizens’ involvement in influencing decision-making and shaping the nation’s future remains relatively minimal. Citizens—particularly those from ordinary backgrounds—tend to be marginalized in political processes. (Sastroatmodjo, 1995).

Every community has its own preferences and interests that shape their choices in elections. It can be said that the future of public officials elected in an election depends on the preferences of the public as voters. Not only that, but the public’s political participation in elections can be viewed as a form of public oversight of the government. The extent of this oversight varies depending on the level of political participation of each community. In addition to being the core of democracy, political participation is also closely related to the fulfillment of citizens’ political rights. The fulfillment of political rights is manifested in the freedom of every citizen to express their opinions and assemble. As stipulated in Article 28 of the 1945 Constitution: “Freedom of association and assembly, and the freedom to express one’s thoughts verbally, in writing, and so on, shall be regulated by law.” (Yalvema, 2012).

Public participation in democracy is crucial to realizing popular sovereignty. One of the goals in realizing popular sovereignty is the involvement or political participation of the people in elections. Political participation is a critical issue in electoral democracy. Public participation—or political participation—is a vital aspect of the practice of democracy. (Sahren Raden, 2019).

During elections, the public's level of political awareness is a crucial determining factor in political participation; that is, knowledge and awareness of the rights and obligations related to the community and political activities serve as a measure of the extent to which an individual engages in the political participation process. If an individual possesses a high level of political awareness and trust in the government, political participation tends to be active; conversely, if awareness and trust are very low, political participation becomes passive and apathetic.

The election for Governor and Deputy Governor in Central Sulawesi took place amid the unavoidable COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated conditions, including during the stages of the general election (Pemilu). During the election for Governor and Deputy Governor, there were two pairs of candidates running for these regional leadership positions. The two candidates, listed as number 1, were Hidayat Lamakarate and Bartholomeus Tandigala, who were endorsed by The Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) and the Great Indonesia Movement Party (GERINDRA), the No. 2 ticket consisting of Rusdy Mastura and Ma'mun Amir, who are backed by the DEMOKRAT Party, the United Development Party (PPP), the People's Conscience Party (HANURA), the National Mandate Party (PAN), the Functional Groups Party (GOLKAR), the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), the National Awakening Party (PKB), the Indonesian Unity Party (PERINDO), and the National Democratic Party (NASDEM). Based on the plenary meeting of the Central Sulawesi Provincial Election Commission (KPU) held on December 18–20, 2020, the second-numbered pair, Rusdy Mastura–Ma'mun Amir, emerged as the winners with 891,334 votes out of a total of 2,022,191 voters spread across 12 regencies and 1 city. (Sahren Raden, 2019)

According to data from the Donggala KPU, specifically regarding the number of voters in Donggala Regency, there were 205,662 voters, comprising 105,532 male voters and 100,130 female voters. These voters were distributed across 16 subdistricts, 9 urban villages, and 158 villages, as well as 667 polling stations. Voter turnout in the 2020 regional election in Donggala Regency reached 74.5%. This figure represents an increase compared to the 2015 regional election, which saw a turnout of only 69%. (M. Unggul, 2020)

Meanwhile, in Banawa Tengah Subdistrict, the number of voters was 23,251. The number of voters in the 2020 regional election in Limboro Village, Banawa Tengah Subdistrict, Donggala Regency, Central Sulawesi Province, was 1,074. This number consisted of 537 male voters and 537 female voters. (M. Unggul, 2020) Looking at the turnout for the gubernatorial election in Limboro Village, it was quite high—even though the COVID-19 pandemic was ongoing at the time. Based on the researcher's initial observations, the community's political participation in the regional election was highly dynamic. Some members of the community certainly have their own motivations for participating. This prompted the researcher to investigate the community's political participation. Consequently, the author chose the title for this proposal: "The Phenomenon of Community Political Participation in the 2020 Governor Election: A Case Study of Limboro Village, Banawa Tengah Subdistrict, Donggala Regency."

## 2. Method

This study is a descriptive qualitative study. It was conducted in Limboro Village, Banawah Tengah Subdistrict, Donggala Regency. The author selected seven (7) informants for this study. The types of data collected in this study are primary data and secondary data.

## 3. Discussion

The village of Limboro was founded by people who came down from Kayu Kayunaya, a mountain where people once lived. They were led by Lolotake, accompanied by his wife, Tambaray. Initially, they established a settlement on Pangape, a hill that is now the site of the Islamic cemetery in Limboro Village. Lolotake began the work of establishing this new village, but he passed away before it was completed. The work was continued by his sons, Langgoba (Pue Ndae), Bambalemo, and Tirolemba.

Limboro Village is one of the villages located in Banawa Tengah Subdistrict, Donggala Regency. The population of Limboro Village is 1,957 people. The total area of Limboro Village is 6,715 km<sup>2</sup>/617,500 ha. Geographically, most of Limboro Village consists of rice fields, which means that the majority of the Limboro community works as farmers. The phenomenon of political participation among the residents of Limboro Village, Banawa Tengah Subdistrict, in the 2020 gubernatorial election demonstrated the community's enthusiasm for participating in this democratic process. Although the gubernatorial election at that time was unlike a typical election—due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which required residents to adjust their lifestyles to avoid contracting the virus—the level of public participation in exercising their right to vote remained quite high.

Based on research on the phenomenon of political participation, the residents of Limboro had their own perspectives and reasons for choosing their preferred candidate pair. This study indicates that in making their political choices, the residents of Limboro considered candidate pairs who had strong social ties within the community, a proven track record of effective leadership, a strong sense of social responsibility, and campaign platforms prioritizing community welfare. Most residents of Limboro Village carefully study the vision, mission, and work programs offered by the gubernatorial candidates, research the backgrounds of the candidate pairs running in the election, and observe and get to know the candidates through social media platforms dedicated to them. This demonstrates that social media has a significant influence on shaping voters' perceptions of political candidates. The research findings regarding the forms of political participation engaged in by the residents of Limboro Village during the 2020 gubernatorial and vice-gubernatorial elections revealed three main forms: 1) Voting on election day, 2) political discussions, and 3) forming and joining interest groups (campaign teams or political parties). Among these three forms of political participation, the researcher found that the residents of Limboro Village exercised their right to vote at polling stations and also engaged in political discussions or conversations at community gathering places during the 2020 gubernatorial election.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the research findings presented and discussed in the previous chapters, the researcher concludes that:

The phenomenon of political participation among the Limboro community in the 2020 gubernatorial election. Many factors influence community participation in politics, but this study focuses on the phenomena present within the community that encourage people to participate in political activities. Community participation in the election for Governor and Deputy Governor is influenced by many factors; it does not exist in isolation but is interrelated with other aspects. For example,

1. The political participation of the residents of Limboro Village in the 2020 gubernatorial election—specifically, their choice of candidate—was not influenced by the offering of money (political bribery).
2. Background factors: The researcher found that some residents chose a candidate pair based on the candidates' personal characteristics or their social life, family, ethnicity, and religion.
3. Emotional closeness: Some residents voted for a candidate pair due to a sense of closeness that had been established long before the election for Governor and Vice Governor took place; this emotional bond motivated them to vote for that candidate.

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