

Understanding the Electoral Preferences of Beginner Voters in the 2020 Bulukumba Local Elections

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ABSTRACT - Law no. 10 of 2008 concerning general elections states that first-time voters are those who are voting for the first time and are 17 years old or more or are/have been married and have the right to vote in general elections (and the Regional Head Election). New voters who have just entered voting age also do not have a broad political reach to determine where they should vote. So, sometimes what they choose is not what they expected. The aim of the research is to find out the preferences of novice voters in the 2020 Bulukumba regional elections. The type of research used is qualitative with a case study approach. The informants in this research were six (6) people consisting of the Bulukumba KPUD, political parties and first-time voters. The results of the research regarding the Political Preferences of Beginner Voters in the 2020 Pilkada in Bulukumba Regency are: first, sociological, the condition of beginner voters who are still unstable and have minimal understanding of politics tends to make their political attitudes and direction of support follow the family and community in the voter's environment. Second, psychologically, the emotional closeness and image of the candidate to first-time voters makes new voters participate as volunteers in supporting the candidate through campaign activities using a social media approach and competition activities. Third, Rational, the level of education of novice voters is a determining factor in voters' attitudes in determining political attitudes, where only a few novice voters make their choices through program analysis and candidate profiles obtained from various information.

Keywords: Electoral Preferences, Beginner Voter, Regional Head Election

Introduction

The democratic system is a form of government that applies in Indonesia, which is based on the people by the people and for the people. Having freedom of opinion, equality in public, and having rights, one of which is the right to vote and choose (Amelia Febrianasari, 2022; Nasution, 2020). As elections develop in Indonesia, the level of public political awareness also develops. Many factors influence this, one of which is public perception of parties which have an influence on political choices. Political preferences are choices of action based on values that are believed to provide a political response that exists within a person (Fauzan, 2023). In one research journal, it was revealed that the environment around an individual influences what they believe and what they will do in relation to politics, especially political preferences and behavior. This principle is taken from a fundamental view of perception, cognition and action: that humans are social creatures (Perangin-angin & Zainal, 2018).

When individuals interact and anticipate interactions, each individual influences what other individuals will think, judge and do (Prasetya, 2018). Voters' political preferences are largely

determined by elements of choice that are rational, seemingly irrational, details of appearance, and even seemingly trivial tone of voice.

Contextual forces, which include competition among political elites, the ability to deliberate, and individual skills in opinion and communication, are considered crucial attributes for politicians in influencing voters' decisions. Long history has shown that the study of voter behavior has an important role in understanding political dynamics and the general election process (Suparto, 2021). The history of the democratic movement in the 19th century was an important turning point in the evolution of elections. The success of this movement not only changed the face of politics in certain countries, but also influenced global developments. The widespread spread of democracy throughout the world brought with it the concept of general elections as the main foundation in the modern political system (Sujati, 2018). One important indicator of democratic general elections is the increasing diversity of voters, reflecting the plurality of society and the complexity of the political process (Ristyawati et al., 2016). This indicates that democratic elections do not only take into account the majority vote, but also respect diversity and more inclusive representation.

Voters are the main supporters who are very important in the democratic election process, in accordance with the principle of popular sovereignty. Every voter in a general election will not be separated from the political or sociological background at that time, so this is very influential in determining their choice, this is what is called voting behavior or voter behavior (Falck et al., 2014; Tigue et al., 2012). In the political category, teenagers are included in first-time voters, they are a group that is exercising their right to vote for the first time. With the right to vote, teenagers aged 17 years or married will have the same citizenship responsibilities as other adults.

New voters, most of whom are high school students and university students who have just reached the age of voting rights, certainly do not have a broad political reach to determine where they should vote. So, sometimes what they choose is not what they expected. This reason also causes novice voters to be very vulnerable to being approached and approached with a material approach. Voters in which first-time voters are potential voters. Because first-time voters are subjects of participation and not objects of mobilization.

From data released by the KPU, the total number of registered voters for the 2014 elections was 186,612,255 Indonesians. Of this number, 20-30% are beginner voters. In political education, young people who will exercise their right to vote for the first time in an election are called Beginner Voters. Like new voters, they have no experience of voting in previous elections, but the lack of experience does not mean that they are limited in channeling political aspirations (Wibowo, 2020). New voters who have just entered voting age also do not have a broad political reach to determine where they should vote. So, sometimes what they choose is not what they expected. This is the reason why novice voters are very vulnerable to being influenced and approached by approaches to political material in the interests of political parties.

Ignorance in practical political matters, especially regarding choices in elections or local elections, means that novice voters often do not think rationally and think more about short-term interests (Azmi, 2016; Wahid et al., 2020). New voters are often only used by political parties and politicians for their political interests, for example used to mobilize the masses and form party organizations. Election of Regional Heads is a real manifestation of democracy and is a means for the people to express sovereignty. Popular sovereignty can be realized in the regional election process to determine who should run the government of a region (Hamdani & Fauzia, 2021; Majid et al., 2018; Setyagama, 2021). With the Regional Head Election, people's sovereignty has been implemented as an embodiment of the people's basic political rights, apart from that, with the Regional Head

Election, it is possible to carry out a change of government in a safe, peaceful and orderly manner, then to ensure the continuity of regional development.

To organize Regional Head Election, the General Election Commission receives grant funds from the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget of each regional government holding Regional Head Election, in accordance with Law Number 15 of 2011 concerning the Implementation of Elections and Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government. Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 44 of 2015 which was amended by Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 51 of 2015 states that regional election funding is handed over to the APBD in the form of direct grant funds to the KPU as the election organizing institution (Herawati et al., 2019).

One of the areas in South Sulawesi province that is holding simultaneous regional elections is Bulukumba Regency. The 2020 regional head election for Bulukumba Regency was attended by four pairs of candidates, namely: pair number 1 Andi Hamzah Pangki and Andi Murniyati Makking. Pair number 2 Askar HL and Arum Spink. Pair number 3 Tommy Satria and Andi Makkasau . Pair number 4 is Andi Muchtar and Andi Edy Manaf .

The Bulukumba Regency KPUD is currently designing a work program which is expected to increase voter participation. One of them is by maximizing socialization evenly to all levels of voting society. The KPU also studied the experience of the last election, in the form of obstacles and triggers for the number of participants. Meanwhile, socialization of new voters is also being carried out, through data collected from the Bulukumba Regency KPUD, the number of new voters in Bulukumba Regency is presented in the following table:

Table 1. Comparison of Beginner Voters in the 2019 Legislative Election and the 2020 Regional Election

No.	Subdistrict	Number of Villages/ Subdistricts	2019 New Voters			2020 New Voters		
			ML	FM	Total	ML	FM	Total
1.	Bonto Baharai	8	197	492	389	282	266	548
2.	Bonto Tiro	13	180	172	352	218	253	471
3.	Bulukumpa	17	380	403	783	527	469	996
4.	Gantarang	21	492	546	1,038	661	676	1337
5.	Herlang	8	221	204	425	262	288	550
6.	Kajang	19	362	340	702	476	472	948
7.	Kindang	13	249	249	498	280	273	553
8.	Rilauale	15	319	302	621	405	406	811
9.	Ujung Bulu	9	357	370	727	476	452	928
10.	Ujung Loe	13	320	335	655	445	451	896
Total		136	3,077	3,113	6,190	4,032	4,006	8,038

Source: Bulukumba KPUD 2019-2020

In table 1, it can be seen that the participation of first-time voters in the 2019 elections was less than in the 2020 regional elections. In the 2019 general elections, the total number of first-time voters was 6,190, while in the 2020 regional elections the number of first-time voters was 8,038. From the results of the Bulukumba KPUD presentation, there was an increase in the participation of first-time voters from 2019 to 2020 due to the presence of additional voters who had reached 17 years of age. Apart from that, the political education carried out by the KPUD is believed to provide new knowledge to novice voters in increasing their participation in general election contestations.

Beginner voters in their participation in the world of politics greatly determine a candidate's victory in an election. Therefore, this is the role of political parties and candidates in their outreach to seek support and increase the political participation of novice voters to participate and exercise their political rights in the general elections in Bulukumba Regency. New voters should understand what democracy means and how to make it happen. Considering the contextual backdrop provided, the author finds it compelling to delve into an investigation centered on elucidating the Political Preferences of Novice Voters during the 2020 Regional Elections in Bulukumba Regency.

Method

This research uses a qualitative approach which aims to understand the Political Preferences of Beginner Voters in the 2020 Regional Head Election in Bulukumba Regency in depth. In this research process, researchers are directly involved in observing, interacting, and understanding the language and interpretations of sources in sufficient time. Data collection techniques used include observation, interviews and documentation. The collected data is then analyzed through steps of data reduction, data presentation, as well as drawing and testing conclusions to obtain a comprehensive understanding regarding the political preferences of first-time voters in the relevant context.

To ensure the validity of the data, this research applies triangulation of sources, techniques and time. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing data from various sources such as observations, interviews and related documents (Sugiyono, 2016). Meanwhile, technical triangulation was carried out using several different data collection techniques to ensure data consistency and validity. In addition, time triangulation was also implemented to consider the influence of time and situation on the credibility of the data. With this approach, this research ensures that the data obtained is reliable and provides an accurate understanding regarding the political preferences of first-time voters in the context of the 2020 Regional Head Election in Bulukumba Regency.

Result and Discussion

As a state institution mandated by the 1945 Constitution to organize elections, in this case the General Election Commission (KPU) is a public organization that carries out the function of organizing elections at both the central and regional levels. It is given a national identity, namely permanent and independent, and is required to carry out its functions. by implementing good governance. Therefore, legislation mandates the General Election Commission to carry out its duties based on the principles of independence, honesty, fairness, legal certainty, order, public interest, openness, proportionality, professionalism, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.

As is known, in the KPU's internal structure there are two important parts that form the backbone of election implementation, namely the commissioners or members of the KPU and the KPU Secretariat. These two parts have different structures where the KPU commissioner is the top leader of the institution. The commissioner membership in the district consists of 5 independent members with 1 of them being the chairman of the KPU. The term of office of KPU commissioners based on Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections is five years and is renewed or re-selected at the end of the term of office or renewed before the election. Meanwhile, the KPU Secretariat is an important part that assists the performance of commissioners to support the smooth running of the KPU's duties and authority, which is filled by organic KPU employees and employees seconded to KPU institutions.

In the 2019 Election, the Bulukumba Regency DPRD election was divided into 4 electoral districts (dapil) as follows:

Table 2. 2019 DPRD Electoral District, Bulukumba Regency

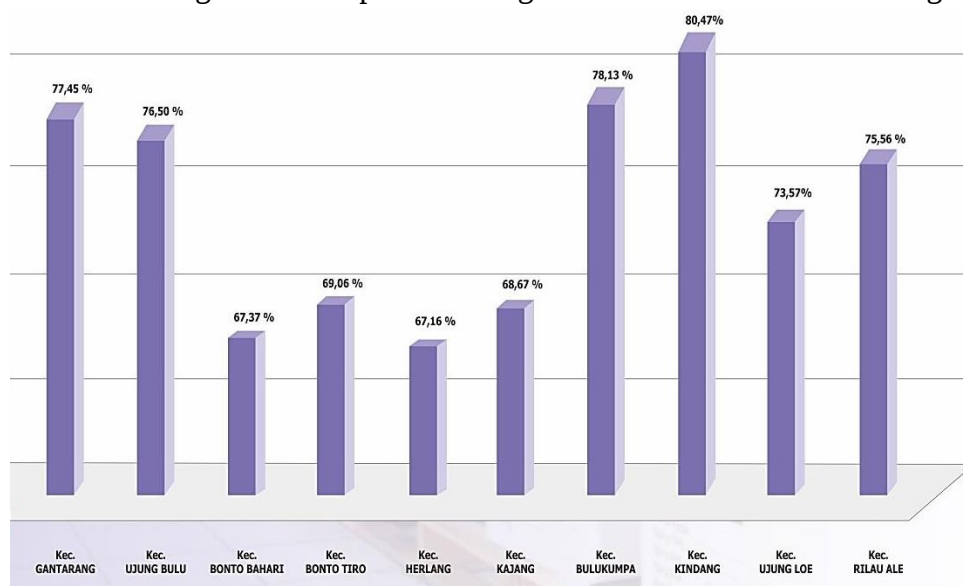
Name of electoral district	Electoral Area	Chairs amount
Bulukumba 1	Bonto Bahari, Ujung Bulu, Ujungloe	11
Bulukumba 2	Gantarang and Kindang	10
Bulukumba 3	Bulukumpa and Rilauale	9
Bulukumba 4	Bonto Tiro, Herlang, Kajang	10
Total		40

Source: Bulukumba KPUD 2019

In table 2 it can be seen that the highest number of seats obtained was in the Bulukumba 1 electoral district which covers the Bonto Bahari, Ujung Bulu, Ujungloe areas with a total of 11 seats. Meanwhile, the Bulukumba 3 electoral district, which covers the Bulukumpa and Rilauale areas, had the lowest total number of seats, namely 9 seats. Meanwhile, the Bulukumba 2 and Bulukumba 4 electoral districts both received a total of 10 seats, bringing the total number of seats in the Bulukumba DPRD for the 2019-2024 period to 40 seats.

The enthusiasm of first-time voters in the 2019 legislative elections was less than in the 2020 regional elections. The participation of first-time voters in the 2019 elections was less than in the 2020 regional elections. In the 2019 general elections, the total number of first-time voters was 6,190, while in the 2020 regional elections the number of first-time voters was 8,038. From the results of the Bulukumba KPUD presentation, there was an increase in the participation of first-time voters from 2019 to 2020 due to the presence of additional voters who had reached 17 years of age.

The percentage of first-time voter participation in Bulukumba Regency in 2020 can be seen in the following picture:

Figure 1. Percentage of Participation of Beginner Voters in Bulukumba Regency 2020

Source: Bulukumba KPUD 2021

According to Law Number 22 of 2007 concerning Election Organizers, the composition of KPU membership must take into account women's representation of at least 30% (thirty percent). The KPU membership period is 5 (five) years from the time the oath/promise is taken.

Election organizers are guided by the principles of: independence, honesty, fairness, legal certainty, orderly election management, public interest, openness, proportionality, professionalism, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.

The 2020 Bulukumba regional elections were successfully won by the couple Muchtar Ali Yusuf and A. Edy Manaf with the vote recapitulation results as follows:

Table 3. 2020 Bulukumba Regional Election Recapitulation Results

Candidate Number	Candidate Pair	Number of Votes
1	H. Andi Hamzah Pngki-Hj-A. Murniyati, M.SI	12,517
2	H. Askar HL, SE-Arum Spink, SHI	67,855
3	Tomy Satria Y, S.IP-HA Makkassau, MM	63,672
4	Muchtar Ali Yusuf-HA Edy Manaf, S.Sos	92,978
Number of Valid Votes		237,022
Number of Invalid Votes		1,986
Number of Votes Entered		239,008

Source: Bulukumba KPUD 2021

Based on table 3, the total number of votes received was 239,008 voters, of which the pair Muchtar Ali Yusuf-H. A. Edy Manaf, S.Sos received 92,987 votes and was declared the winner in the 2020 Bulukumba regional elections.

Political Preferences of Beginner Voters in the 2020 Bulukumba Regency Regional Head Election

Voters' political preferences are largely determined by elements of choice that are rational, apparently irrational, details of appearance, and even seemingly trivial tone of voice. Contextual forces including elite competition, deliberation skills, expressing opinions and communicating individual expertise in a field are displayed as attributes. politicians to influence voter decisions (Tamma, 2021; Yunus et al., 2021). New voters are those who are voting for the first time and are 17 years of age or older or have previously been married and have the right to vote in general elections. Like new voters, they are always considered to have no experience of voting in previous elections. However, the lack of experience does not mean they are limited in expressing their political aspirations, but they still exercise their right to vote at the polling station.

Bulukumba Regency is also involved in the 2020 Regional Head Election event involving four pairs of candidates, namely number 1, Andi Hamzah Pangki-Andi Murniyati Makking. Serial number 2 is occupied by Askar HL-Arum Spink. Then, serial number 3 is the pair Tomy Satria Yulianto-Andi Makkasau. Meanwhile, pair number 4 is Muchtar Ali Yusuf-Andi Edy Manaf.

Based on the results of research conducted by the author regarding the political preferences of novice voters in the implementation of the Bulukumba Regency regional elections using sociological, psychological and rational indicator approaches, they will be discussed in the following discussion:

Sociological

The sociological approach explains that a person chooses to live in a certain context such as economic status, religion, place of residence, work and age can influence a voter's decision. Each social circle has its own norms and compliance with these norms results in integration that is able to control individual behavior by applying pressure for individuals to conform. Because everyone wants to live in peace without conflict with their social environment.

New voters are voters who take part in determining leaders in certain areas. The behavior of first-time voters is a substantial indicator of the quality of democracy now and in the future . Because

his condition is still unstable and is easily influenced by political groups. New voters basically just follow the majority vote without knowing the identity of the candidate and the programs offered during the campaign.

The 2020 Bulukumba Regional Election was acknowledged by the KPUD that most voters who participated in the post-conflict regional elections tended to only follow the political choices of their families and parents, so that it was quite easy for candidates to get votes from first-time voters. From the results of interviews with informants, it can be seen that most beginner voters in determining their political stance on the general election agenda tend to follow the choices of their family environment, making it easier for political actors involved in regional elections to gain support from the beginner voter segment. Sociological approaches tend to place voting activities in relation to the social context. Concretely, a person's choice in general elections is influenced by demographic and socio-economic background, such as gender, place of residence (urban-rural), occupation, education, class, income and religion (Lamerlabel & Lattu, 2018).

Political participation for first-time voters usually comes from high school students and early semester students, because this activity is not just about how to vote, but rather political awareness and maturity that needs to be developed from the start. New voters who are using their right to vote for the first time do not fully understand the activities in general elections, they may experience confusion about who their representatives will choose. However, novice voters must realize that election activities determine the future of their community and nation.

The beginner voter segment involved in the 2020 Bulukumba regional elections is very aware of the importance of being involved in determining the regional head as the wheel of government for the next period. This encourages them to take part in making regional election activities a success. The condition of first-time voters, who are still very unstable and easy to influence, means they tend to follow the choices and votes of the majority of voters in their area. From the results of interviews with informants, it can be seen that the political preferences of novice voters in determining their choice of candidates are influenced by the conditions of the surrounding environment. New voters tend to follow the majority of votes in the new voter environment.

Examining voter behavior to be able to see the participation of these first-time voters in determining their choices based on their manifesto or simply emotional connection. A voter's political actions or decisions are determined by political behavior, attitudes and perceptions. These actions are related and have similarities with participation in political life, voters as individuals must use their political rights as citizens to participate actively in political life. Therefore, participation is an action carried out by an individual or group by trying to influence the decision-making process, so that it can be used as an indicator of political activity in general election activities.

The political attitude of novice voters in Bulukumba Regency in giving their voting rights in the 2020 regional elections was an invitation from local families. New voters are informed that the candidate chosen by their family is a native Bulukumba person and understands Bulukumba's problems. This information makes novice voters participate in determining their attitude in making their choice. From the results of interviews with informants, it can be concluded that the political behavior of novice voters in determining their choice of candidates competing in the 2020 Bulukumba regional elections is based on information obtained by novice voters from their families about the candidates they should support. Although basically this invitation has a political slant to it because it carries tribal identity.

The characteristics of novice voters in Bulukumba Regency who still have minimal knowledge of politics means that voters tend to follow the dominant vote that is the choice of the people in their

area. The ease with which novice voters can be directed in determining political attitudes makes it very easy for actors to mobilize novice voters.

From the results of interviews with informants, it can be concluded that novice voters determine their political attitudes in accordance with the direction of the local community, so that voters' attitudes tend to lead to an emotional relationship that is tied to the community. Based on the results of the author's observations in the field, it can be concluded that sociological indicators related to the political preferences of novice voters in the Bulukumba Regency regional elections have an influence on novice voters in determining political attitudes in regional election activities. The majority of first-time voters make their choices based on invitations from their families and local communities without knowing the programs and vision and mission of the candidates they support. The condition of novice voters who are still unstable and do not understand political activities means that they are only involved and participate in regional election activities.

Psychological

According to the psychological approach, there are several factors that encourage voters to make their choices, namely: party identification, candidate orientation, and issue/theme orientation. First, party identification is used to measure a number of personal and political predisposing factors. Such as personal experiences or political orientations that are relevant to the individual. Personal experiences and political orientation are often inherited by parents, but can also be influenced by the environment, marital ties, and crisis situations (Azmi, 2016; Hasriani et al., 2015). Political preferences are defined as determining choices using various considerations in accordance with the values that are built in determining the standard of assessment of a candidate or political party. The behavior of each type of voter will then determine a person's political preferences. In a psychological approach, voters tend to determine attitudes based on the candidate's identity and vision and mission.

The interest of first-time voters in getting involved in activities such as the 2020 Bulukumba regional elections is based on the identity of the candidates who influence the choices of first-time voters. The emotional ties and connections between first-time voters and candidates make voters provide support in the election. From the results of interviews with informants, it can be seen that the relationship that exists between a candidate or party and first-time voters is a determinant for first-time voters in directing their support. So that the first-time voter segment forms a separate group that emphasizes the direction of their support for the candidate. The psychological approach is the main study, namely emotional ties to a political party, orientation towards issues, and orientation towards candidates. Meanwhile, evaluation of candidates is greatly influenced by the history and past experiences of the candidate both in the life of the state and society. Several indicators commonly used by voters to assess a candidate, especially for officials who wish to run for re-election, include the quality, competence and integration of the candidate (Rasidi & Ubaidullah, 2020).

New voters, especially students, are voters who take part in determining leaders in certain areas. The behavior of first-time voters is a substantial indicator of the quality of democracy now and in the future. Because the condition is still unstable and it is easy to provide correct political and democratic insight both from the political superstructure and political infrastructure. The millennial group who supported one of the candidates in the 2020 Bulukumba regional election event is an important point indicating that the participation of first-time voters is really needed by candidates or parties in achieving their political goals. So that the candidates give freedom to novice voters to play politics according to their hobbies.

In influencing the political psychology of first-time voters, candidates hold various forums and activities that enable new voters to form groups and participate in activities according to their wishes. Through activities such as discussion meetings, side campaigns, and youth forums, first-time voters can interact and share their views with others, thus forming their perceptions about the candidates competing in the election. By providing space for first-time voters to actively engage, candidates can influence their political perceptions and increase their chances of gaining support during the election. The psychological view of first-time voters is a person's identification with a particular party which will then influence that person's attitude towards candidates and developing political issues. The strength and direction of identification with the party in emotional ties, issues and candidates are key in explaining attitudes and voting behavior.

The participation of first-time voters in the 2020 Bulukumba Regional Election through the millennial community who supports one of the candidates is a reflection of voters' views of the candidate being supported, as well as showing the candidate's attention to youth activities. This results in an emotional closeness between voters and the candidates they support. The emotional closeness between political actors and first-time voters is a determining factor in the political attitudes of first-time voters during the election. This closeness is not just a campaign strategy, but is also a manifestation of seriousness in empowering the millennial group, the majority of which are made up of first-time voters.

The mobilization of first-time voters to support one of the candidates in the 2020 Regional Head Election in Bulukumba Regency involves various approaches taken by the candidates. One of the most common approaches is through interpersonal communication and social activities, including eating together, as a way to shape voters' psychology in determining their political attitudes. The results of interviews with informants show that this effort has succeeded in having a significant influence on first-time voters in determining their support for the candidates competing in the election contest. This dialogic campaign approach provides an opportunity for candidates to directly interact with first-time voters, build personal relationships, and strengthen their perceptions of the candidate's vision and mission. Thus, the mobilization of first-time voters is not only a political strategy, but also an integral part of the democratization process that involves active participation from all elements of society.

Based on the results of the author's observations in the field on psychological indicators related to the political preferences of novice voters in the Bulukumba Regency regional elections, novice voters determine their political attitudes and views towards one of the candidates through the emotional closeness that is built. New voters form a group that is part of the millennial group and have different campaign methods. The candidate's approach to the group of novice voters is based on the interests and hobbies of the voters so that through this approach the novice voters can determine their choice of the candidate.

Rational

New voters are voters who have the potential to gain votes in the election. The behavior of novice voters has characteristics that are usually unstable and apathetic, they lack political knowledge, they tend to follow their peers and they are just learning about politics, especially in general elections. The spaces where they study politics are usually not far from spaces that are considered to give them a sense of comfort.

Various candidates' programs and vision and missions became campaign materials in the process of implementing the 2020 Bulukumba regional elections. Starting from providing educational assistance, sports facilities and infrastructure to developing youth interests and talents, they became

candidate campaign materials. This has an influence on the support of first-time voters in determining political attitudes.

Based on the results of interviews with informants, it was found that the level of education plays a crucial role in determining the rationality of new voters in responding to the political process, especially in the context of the 2020 Bulukumba Regional Election. Education influences the ability of new voters to participate actively in the democratic process as well as their ability to analyze candidates who compete in regional head elections. The higher a person's level of education, the more likely they are to have a better understanding of political issues and be able to make more rational decisions in determining their political support. Therefore, it is important for election organizers and other stakeholders to pay attention to the role of education in shaping political attitudes and participation of first-time voters.

The political knowledge of first-time voters is actually not much different from other voter groups (Ohme, 2019). Voter behavior is still closely related to sociological and psychological factors in making political choices when viewed from *voting behavior studies*. However, what differentiates first-time voters and other groups is the matter of political experience in facing elections. The preferences that are relied upon in making elections tend to be unstable or change easily according to the information or preferences that surround them.

Political actors play a very important role in improving political education for groups of novice voters in analyzing the vision and mission of candidates who will be supported as regional heads in Bulukumba Regency. So that the momentum for the 2020 regional elections is that candidates are trying to receive input regarding the needs of youth and provide exposure regarding strategic programs to first-time voters.

The existence of first-time voters often becomes a target for political parties to gain votes. These novice voters are generally uninformed and do not have adequate political education. With this assumption, political parties attempt to influence the political choices of novice voters through various efforts. Many political parties are competing to promote their candidates for election. Media is one way that can convey information widely and comprehensively. Therefore, all components or people who have authority are obliged to educate (political) novice voters so that they become critical and rational voters. This means that the choice is not based on popularity, ethnic similarities and emotional closeness, but because of track record, vision and mission, credibility and bureaucratic experience.

The support of novice voters for candidates in the 2020 Bulukumba regional elections largely determines their choice because of the track record of candidates whose information was obtained by voters through the media and searches in cyberspace. As we know, the current era of digitalization makes it easier for every segment of voters to find out candidate profiles through online media.

Based on the results of the author's observations in the field regarding indicators of rationality in the political preferences of novice voters in the implementation of the Bulukumba Regency regional elections, basically most novice voters in Bulukumba are just joining in providing support and choices for the candidates competing, but there are also some novice voters who determine their political stance by looking at the candidate's track record and the programs offered. This depends on the level of education of novice voters. The higher the level of education, the more rational they are in making choices. So the process of maturing political education for the beginner voter segment must continue to be carried out by every stakeholder in Bulukumba Regency.

Conclusion

Based on the results of research and discussion regarding the political preferences of novice voters in the implementation of the Regional Head Election in Bulukumba Regency, several conclusions can be drawn. Sociologically, it was found that the tendency of first-time voters who are still unstable and have minimal understanding of politics tends to follow their political attitudes and support for candidates who are supported by their family and social environment. In a psychological context, it appears that the emotional closeness and image that candidates have towards first-time voters plays an important role in shaping their support. This is proven by the active participation of first-time voters as volunteers in supporting candidates through campaign activities, especially through social media approaches and competition activities. On the rational side, the level of education of first-time voters is a determining factor in determining their political attitudes. Although some first-time voters may make choices based on program analysis and candidate profiles from a variety of available information, only a handful do this.

Responding to the results of this research, several suggestions can be put forward. First, the Regional General Election Commission (KPUD) of Bulukumba Regency is advised to conduct more frequent outreach to novice voters to increase their understanding of the democratic process and the importance of using the right to vote intelligently. Second, political parties and candidates are expected to provide a better understanding of politics to new voters, as well as focus on offering programs and vision and mission rather than campaigning on negative issues or engaging in money politics. Finally, for first-time voters themselves, it is recommended to increase their participation in monitoring the implementation of the Regional Head Election and reporting violations they witness in accordance with the provisions of the applicable laws.

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