

Political Literacy: Why Do We Have to Come to The Voting Booth on Wednesday, 14th February 2024

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ABSTRACT

Democracy is an indicator of the implementation of the highest legitimate state power by the people (popular sovereignty), which is manifested by their involvement in the democratic party (election). The higher the level of political participation, the more likely it is that the people will follow, understand, and involve themselves in state activities. On the other hand, a low level of political participation generally indicates that the people have little appreciation or interest in state issues or activities. New voters are citizens who are exercising their right to vote for the first time in general election activities. They can come from Indonesian citizens (WNI) who are 17 years old or not yet 17 years old but have already been married. Young voters in the general election are a new generation of voters who have different traits and characteristics, backgrounds, experiences, and challenges from voters in the previous generation. Most of them are students, have good economic status, and generally live in urban areas or surrounding areas. This research focuses on Indonesian migrant workers in Penang, Malaysia, regarding the upcoming 2024 elections. The purpose of this paper is to determine the forms of political participation of novice voters in elections, the factors supporting the political participation of novice voters in elections, and the factors inhibiting the political participation of novice voters in elections.

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INTRODUCTION

A democratic party, or what we are more familiar with as general elections (elections), is choosing a ruler, official, or other person by writing the chosen name on a piece of paper or by voting in an election. Elections are considered important because they are the most real form of democracy and the most concrete form of people's participation in state administration. Therefore, the election system and implementation are almost always the main focus of attention because, through the arrangement, system, and quality of election implementation, it is hoped that they can truly create a democratic government, which is of course in accordance with common expectations. Elections are very important for a country because:

- Elections are a means of realizing people's sovereignty
- Elections are a means for political leaders to gain legitimacy
- Elections are a means for the people to participate in the political process.
- Elections are a means of constitutionally replacing leaders.

In this case, those who have the right to vote are Indonesian citizens who are 17 years of age or older or are or have been married. An Indonesian citizen who already has the right to vote can only exercise his right if he has registered as a voter. New voters are voters who are voting for the first time because they have just entered the voting age range of 17 to 21 years. Their knowledge of elections is not much different from that of other groups; the difference is a matter of enthusiasm and preferences. Political preferences can be concluded as the side of a person where he has a tendency and preference towards carrying out political activities, whether in the form of elections, decision-making, playing an active role in government, and so on. Voters in each general election are registered through data collection carried out by officers appointed by the general election organizer. The conditions that must be met to enable someone to vote are:

- Indonesian citizens aged 17 years or more or who are/have been married
- Not having mental/memory problems
- Registered as a voter
- Not a member of the TNI/Polri (Retired / No longer a member of the TNI/Police)
- Not having your right to vote revoked
- Registered with the DPT
- Specifically for the Regional Election, prospective voters must have been domiciled for at least six months in the area concerned

First-time voters play a big role in elections. They play a very important role as participatory observers in the elections that will be held. Participation is determining the attitude and involvement of the desires of each individual in the situation and conditions of the organization so that, in the end, it encourages the individual to participate in achieving organizational goals as well as taking part in every shared responsibility. The term political participation is applied to the activities of people at all levels of the political system; voters (voters) participate by casting their votes; the foreign minister participates in setting foreign policy. Sometimes the term is applied to political orientation rather than political activity; citizens participate by taking an interest in politics. John Stuart Mill in Miriam Budiardjo (1994) stated that participation in political life can lead to the development of "highest and harmonious" personal capacities in order to lead to the path of freedom and self-development. In democratic countries, the idea underlying the concept of political participation is that sovereignty is in the hands of the people who exercise it through joint activities to determine the goals and future of the community and to determine the people

who will assume the reins of leadership. Herbert McClosky, a figure on participation issues, argues that "political participation is the voluntary activities of citizens through which they take part in the process of electing rulers and, directly or indirectly, in the process of forming general policies" (the term "political participation" will refer to those voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of rulers and, directly or indirectly, in the formation of public policy").

Widespread political participation is a characteristic feature of political modernization. In traditional societies, government and politics were usually the business of a small elite group. As a general definition, it can be said that political participation is the activity of a person or group of people to participate actively in political life, including by electing state leaders and, directly or indirectly, influencing government policy (public policy). These activities include actions such as voting in general elections, contacting or lobbying with government officials or members of parliament, becoming a member of a party or social movement with direct action, and so on. In this case, political participation by novice voters is very important because as many as 20% of all voters are novice voters; thus, the number of novice voters is very large, so citizens' rights to exercise their right to vote should not be insignificant as a result of unexpected mistakes. For example, don't let someone who already has the right to vote not be able to use their right to vote because they are not registered or there are still many errors in using their right to vote, etc. Anyone who can grab the attention of the crowd will be able to feel the benefits. The emergence of support from this group indirectly has a very significant imaging impact. At least to safeguard the process of regeneration of political cadres in the future, even though it requires quite a lot of money. The absence of support from these groups will be quite detrimental to the election vote targets that have been set by each political party. Beginner voters, consisting of students, college students, or voters aged 17–21, are a unique segment, often giving rise to surprises and, of course, promising in terms of quantity. It is said to be unique because the behavior of beginner voters with high enthusiasm is relatively more rational, thirsty for change, and has a low level of pragmatism pollution. New voters have high enthusiasm, while the choice decision is not yet unanimous, actually placing new voters as real swing voters. Their political choices have not been influenced by specific ideological motivations and are more driven by the dynamic context of the local political environment.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Priority Problems

New voters are easily influenced by certain interests, especially those closest to them, such as family members, from parents to relatives and friends. Apart from that, the mass media also influences the choices of first-time voters. This can be in the form of television news, banners, brochures, posters, etc. New voters, especially teenagers (17 years old), have cultural values that are relaxed, free, and tend to be informal and seek pleasure; therefore, all things that are less enjoyable will be avoided. Apart from looking for fun, peer groups are the most important in a teenager's life, so a teenager needs to have their own social group of friends. In counting election votes, just one vote is very important because it can influence a political victory. Moreover, there are millions of votes like those of first-time voters. That is why, in every election, first-time voters become a "combat" for various political forces. Before the election, political parties or other election participants usually create advertisements or political propaganda that attract first-time voters. They also form a youth community with various activities that attract young people, especially first-time voters. The goal is for first-time voters to become interested in the party or candidate and vote for them in the election so that they can gain significant votes and achieve victory. Therefore, the political participation of novice voters plays a large role in general elections (elections).

Solution

Solution This activity is useful for Indonesian migrant workers in Penang, Malaysia, to understand and analyze their decisions in the voting booth during general elections. The ability to have political literacy is really needed by the younger generation because they will be the ones who determine Indonesia's future.

METHOD

The method of activities carried out to solve the problems that have been identified and formulated above, the training is carried out for five hours using various training methods, namely:

- **Workshop**
This method was chosen to convey the concepts that are important for the trainees to understand and master. What things should be known both technically and theoretically, as well as providing tips and tricks for making beach tourism news.
- **Frequently Asked Questions**
This method is used to provide opportunities for participants after listening to the presentation and also the training to ask both theoretical and training concepts.

RESULTS

Materials and Equipment for Activities

Workshop materials were distributed to participants related to theoretical and practical materials. Workshop materials are presented in the form of power points. Workshop material is explained interactively in the form of presentations and group discussions.

Activity Material

- **Importance of Material**
The study regarding the importance and role of first-time voters in democracy in Indonesia consists of: studies and journals presented in PowerPoint form.
- **Location of Penang, Malaysia**
On all of Indonesian migrant workers in Penang, Malaysia
- **Situation Analysis**
Low political literacy among first-time voters means that general selection results do not reflect autonomous voter behavior. New voters are not interested in knowing and understanding politics, something that is very necessary for the development of democracy in Indonesia.
- **Why Citizen Journalism**
Beginner voters, who play an important role in determining the direction of change in Indonesia's progress, have the potential to be successful in winning the upcoming elections. With a large estimated number of first-time voters, it is clear that they will have the potential to win the election, so it would be a shame if the votes of these first-time voters are ignored by parties with an interest in the election and should be able to be embraced so that new voters are active in political participation, which in this case is participation. vote and not abstain, considering that this is an opportunity to achieve victory in the election when the voices of first-time voters can be embraced by political authorities. In general, according to International IDEA research (2016), "Voters Turnout Trends Around the World," the trend of voter participation in elections globally has decreased significantly since the 1990s. Global voter turnout was fairly stable between the 1940s and In the 1980s, it decreased from 78 percent to 76 percent. In the 1990s, it fell to 70 percent and continued to decline

to 66 percent in the 2011–2015 period. For Asia and America, voter turnout trends have been relatively stable over time, but in both regions, voter turnout has been far below the global average.

In addition, based on survey results from election participation organizations, Jeune & Raccord (J&R) mentions that the potential for abstention or not voting among millennials in the 2019 presidential election reached more than 40 percent. The survey involved 1,200 respondents in all Indonesian provinces from March 10–16, 2019, with a margin of error of approximately 2.8 percent. The high number of abstentions is caused by the millennial generation's indifference to politics and lack of information on when to vote for the presidential election, with percentages of 65.4 percent and 25.3 percent, respectively. The number of final voter lists (DPT) for the 2019 simultaneous elections that have been determined by the KPU is more than 192 million. Of this number, 100 million of them are aged 17 to 39 years, or what are often referred to as the millennial generation or first-time voters.

- Solution

The solution to low political literacy among novice voters can be overcome through community services carried out by lecturers in the field of political communication as much as possible with the widest possible reach. The community service that we do for all of the Indonesian migrant workers in Penang, Malaysia, is one place where we also do the same thing among novice voters. Hopefully, more and more activities like this will increase political participation and democratic development in Indonesia.

Activity Evaluation

Evaluation is carried out at the final stage of the activity, through data collection based on observations of the course of socialization activities. At the evaluation stage, it is carried out by concluding the participants' understanding and also evaluating the results of the news content production work made by the participants.

Through the attendance list, it is known that there are 36 participants according to the invitation and the target of the workshop participants. The presentation of the workshop material is carried out according to the training schedule

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