IMPROVING THE POLITICAL LITERATURE OF BEGINNER VOTER THROUGH CONTEXTUAL LEARNING APPROACH AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

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Abstract

This paper is a literature review that discusses the issue of increasing political literacy as one of the important prerequisites for producing quality elections with quality participation in the context of a large agenda of consolidating and developing democratic life, especially among novice voters (students) through contextual teaching and learning approaches and civic education. The study method used in this paper is library analysis. Through this method conceptual references, data and information are collected from various literature sources such as scientific journals, books, research reports, and other literature documents; then analyzed with a qualitative approach. The results of the study show that the contextual learning approach has the potential to be very effective as an instrument of civic education in order to improve the political literacy of novice voters.

Keywords: Beginner Voter, Politic, Contextual and Citizenship Education, Political Literature, Education.

INTRODUCTION

As a means of implementing popular sovereignty, ideally, the General Election (including Pilkada) is not only followed by a large number of voters (quantity) so that the participation rate becomes high, but also takes place in a competitive, transparent, fair, and accountable (quality) atmosphere, and can produce choices of political leaders who are competent and with integrity (Limilia & Ariadne, 2018). In other words, elections not only produce a high level of participation but also produce quality participation. To produce quality elections with quality participation, certain preconditions are needed, one of which is the performance of voters who are literate, intelligent, and politically critical, so that their political preferences are rational (rational choice) (Intyaswati, 2021).

Rational voters (smart and critical) can simply be described as voters who not only have electoral knowledge and awareness but are also free from various forms of intimidation; have resistance to attacks or transactional inducements that are not healthy and violate rules such as money politics, and understand very well the importance of the votes they have and the political consequences of their choices in the future (Perangin-angin & Zainal, 2018).

Regarding voter performance, Affan Gafar (1994:34) maps out two typologies of forming voter preferences in elections; 1) the tendency of the emergence of patronage voters, namely voters who base their choices on certain figures and figures, who are considered to be able to imagine themselves as leaders; 2) the emergence of the phenomenon of ABS voters (Originally Mr. Happy), namely voters who do

not have rationality and only become follower voters who follow the majority votes (Juniasih, 2018).

Hypothetically, these irrational voters or "political illiteracy" voters contribute (impact) on the implementation and results of elections that are not of high quality; elections characterized by transactional practices such as money politics and mobilization; elections that give birth to more elected candidates (both legislative and executive elections) who have no integrity and are far from competent (Atmodjo et al., 2014).

Irrational voters who are still far from intelligent and critical categories are generally scattered in the novice voter segment. Namely citizens who are registered and will use their voting rights for the first time as voters in an election. Demographically, the majority of the novice voters consist of students, college students, and/or youth aged between 17-22 years at the time an election or regional head election is held (Sutisna, 2017).

It is important for these novice voters to get attention to improve their intelligence and critical power as voters so that their political choices (voting behavior) fall into the category of rational voters which will automatically contribute positively to quality election results with quality participation performance (Ekawati, 2021).

In order to improve the intelligence and critical power of novice voters, various parties, especially KPU and Bawaslu as election organizers, the government and election participants (especially political parties) have made various efforts to educate voters, especially through outreach activities. However, due to the limitations of space, time, media, and methods, these socialization activities practically do not have a significant impact on growing the intelligence and critical power (political literacy) of novice voters (Munzir, 2019).

In general, election socialization only succeeded in increasing knowledge and awareness of electoral technicalities such as when, where, and how to vote on the day and date of voting. While the electoral substantive aspects such as the importance of each vote cast; the importance of building political autonomy and independence; the bad impact of unhealthy political transaction practices such as money politics; and the impact or consequences of political choices in the future, tend to be neglected and fail to be massively grown as a form of substantive awareness among novice voters (Kuncoro, 2018).

Starting from these phenomenal thoughts and facts, it is important to look for and continuously strive for models of socialization activities as part of political education that can grow and strengthen the intelligence and critical power of novice voters in a broader, deeper, and meaningful way. In the context of this need, the author offers the application of the concepts of contextual teaching and learning and civic education as a learning instrument to improve political literacy (political literacy) for novice voters, which is expected to have a positive and constructive impact on electoral knowledge as well as awareness- more substantive political awareness among novice voters, especially in the segment of high school/MA/vocational high school students.

Citizenship Education has an important role in influencing or providing an understanding of politics through educational facilities in the school environment in particular for novice voters and the general public. Materials related to politics are explicitly contained in the subject matter at the XI (eleven) high school level, namely in the Political Culture Chapter. This chapter explains the meaning of culture, politics, political culture, types of political culture, and so on. So it is hoped that after students finish taking this material, students are able to describe the meaning of political culture, analyze the types of political culture that develop in society, describe the importance of socializing the development of political culture, and be able to show the participation of political culture of participants. Likewise, political education that we can provide to the surrounding community in general, namely by playing an active role in community activities such as participating in RT meetings,

participating in patrol activities, participating in general elections (Village Head), and so on.

The aims of this literature review are: (1) To understand and critically and comprehensively describe the urgency of political literacy in the novice voter segment in the framework of producing quality elections and participation, which in general means also consolidating and developing democratic life; (2) To understand and describe the concept of a contextual learning model as a learning instrument to improve the political literacy of novice voters.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach as an effort to understand the various concepts found in the research process, using content analysis techniques and library research. The content analysis technique is a research method used to find out the conclusions of a text. Or in other words, content analysis is a research method that seeks to reveal the author's manifested and latent ideas. While library research in this study uses the types and sources of secondary data obtained from research results, articles, and reference books that discuss topics related to the research theme (Yaniawati, 2020). This research produces information in the form of notes and descriptive data contained in the text under study (Mantra, 2008) (Raco, 2018).

As a library research, there are two kinds of data sources that will be explained, namely:

1.   Primary Sources

Primary sources are the main data sources that are directly collected by researchers from the object of research, namely books, articles, which are the objects in this study.

2.   Secondary Source

Is an additional data source that according to the researcher supports the main data, namely books or articles that act as supporters of the primary book or article to strengthen the concepts in the primary book or article.

The method used to collect research data in library research is to select, search, present, and analyze library data. This research institute is looking for library materials whose substance requires philosophical and theoretical processing. The literature search here is a literature study without empirical verification (Muhadjir, 1998). The data presented is data in the form of words that need to be processed to be concise and systematic.

This study using data analysis techniques in the form of content analysis (content analysis). The analysis is a scientific analysis of the message content of a data (Muhadjir, 1998). According to Zed (2004), analysis is a simple attempt at how research data are developed and processed for a simple framework. The data that has been collected is then analyzed to obtain information, but first, the data is selected on the basis of its reliability (Mantra, 2008). The purpose of this data analysis is to find the truth of the data that has been obtained so that conclusions can be drawn from the results of the research that has been done. In this study, researchers used 3 stages, namely: data reduction, data display, data verification, and conclusion drawing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

If democracy, according to its literal origin, is understood as a "sovereign people" (demos = people, cratie = power/kingdom) in both the political system and the government system, then the most important and necessary aspect is citizen participation. Namely the involvement or participation of citizens in the process of making political decisions, or in general in political life (Rahman, 2018). As stated by Herbert McClosky (1972: 252), political participation is the voluntary activities of citizens through which they take part in the process of selecting rulers, and directly or indirectly in the process of forming public policies. In line with what was stated by Samuel P. Huntington and Joan M. Nelson (1977:3), political participation is the activity of citizens acting as individuals, intended to

influence government decision-making (Nur Wardhani, 2018).

The main and basic political participation of citizens, and "precedes" all stages and forms of participation in the context of power management, daily governing, and policymaking is manifested in every election event. That is why in terms of electoral legislation in this country, elections are declared as a means of implementing people's sovereignty. Then more than as a form of embodiment of the true meaning of people's sovereignty, the political participation of citizens in elections is also important because it will determine the quality of the elections it produces, as well as the style of political leadership and governance of the elected government in the future (Sukri et al., 2021). It is in this context that the quality of political participation needs to be continuously built and developed to produce quality elections as well as democracy. As mentioned earlier, quality election participation requires certain conditions, one of which is the presence of intelligent and critical voters. And this will be fulfilled if the voters are politically literate. It is at this point in general that the urgency of political literacy finds room for confirmation. In this context, the substance of the power of political literacy lies in the political participation of citizens who are critical and empowering related to the main political concepts that will have an impact on the lives of citizens. Thus, as stated by Heryanto (2012) in Bakti (2012: 109), political literacy is not just a normative concept, but a mix of knowledge, skills and political attitudes (Tamma, 2021).

Based on that reasoning and argumentation, increasing political literacy in the novice voter segment becomes very urgent to endeavor all the time and ideally carried out by various competent parties and have access to education, development, and empowerment authorities for this group, for example, schools, campuses, Islamic boarding schools, student organizations, youth organizations as well as relevant state institutions such as the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Home Affairs and their hierarchical

institutional apparatus in the regions (Ratnamulyani & Maksudi, 2018). It is important to point out here, that efforts to increase political literacy for novice voters, whatever the name of the activity, must be carried out in politically sound ways (among others promoting independence, integrity, and idealism) and educational in nature (developing the potential for reasoning and critical thinking). This method will keep away from doctrinal models that entrap freedom or propaganda that will kill their potential, creativity, reason, and critical power. In this study, the methods referred to are none other than the contextual learning model of civics education which will be described later (Irma & Fajriyah, 2021).

Within the scope of the theme and object of this study (namely: increasing political literacy of beginner voters with the segment of SMA/MA/SMK students), one of the most relevant "entrances" to implementing contextual learning is the learning process in the subject of Citizenship Education (civic education). Citizenship Education is one of the subjects included in the compulsory group. This lesson is given to students from elementary, secondary to tertiary education (generally given in the first semester) in all study programs/departments (Purba, 2020). At the primary and secondary education levels, this subject can be said to be the only lesson that typically contains learning materials that are directly related to political, state, and government issues, including studies on ideology, constitution, and democracy (Ridha & Riwanda, 2020).

Academically, citizenship education is an educational program that functions to foster awareness of citizens in carrying out their rights and obligations in accordance with the spirit and values of the applicable constitution (UUD 1945) (Al Hakim et al, 2012: 8). The thesis is substantively the same as the formulation contained in the attachment of the Minister of National Education Number 22 of 2006 concerning Content Standards for Primary and Secondary Education Units, that Citizenship Education Subjects are subjects that focus on the formation of citizens who

understand and are able to exercise their rights and their obligations to become intelligent, skilled, and characterized citizens as mandated by Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (Wibowo et al., 2020).

The Permendiknas also defines the scope of Citizenship Education subjects for primary and secondary education, which generally include the following aspects (Mangune et al., 2018):

(a) National Unity and Unity, including living in harmony in diversity, love for the environment, pride as an Indonesian nation, youth oath, the integrity of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia, participation in state defense, positive attitude towards the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, openness and guarantee of justice; (b) Norms, Laws and Regulations, which include order in family life, order in schools, norms prevailing in society, regional regulations, norms in the life of the nation and state, the international legal and judicial system; (c) Human rights, including children's rights and obligations, rights and obligations of community members, national and international human rights instruments, promotion, respect and protection of human rights; (d) Citizens' needs, including mutual cooperation, self-esteem as citizens, freedom of organization, freedom of expression, respect for joint decisions, self-achievement, equal status of citizens; (e) the State Constitution, including the proclamation of independence and the first constitution, the constitutions that have been used in Indonesia, the basic relationship of the state with the constitutions that have been used in Indonesia, the basic relationship of the state with the constitution; (f) Power and Politics, covering village and sub-district government, regional government and central government autonomy, democracy and political system, political culture, democratic culture towards civil society, government system, press in a democratic society; (g) Pancasila, including the position of Pancasila as the basis of the state and state ideology, the process of formulating Pancasila as the basis of the state, the practice of Pancasila values in everyday life, Pancasila as an open ideology; and (h) Globalization, including globalization in its environment, Indonesia's foreign policy in the era of globalization, the impact of globalization, international relations and international organizations, and evaluating globalization.

CONCLUSION

Quality elections which are one of the prerequisites for the presence of a democratic political life require preconditions for the existence of politically literate voters, which allows voter participation not only to be high in quantity but also in terms of quality. Politically literate voters are voters who understand, in addition to technical knowledge aspects of electoral, also understand substantive aspects of long-term and daily governing political issues such as policymaking issues, the impact of a political policy on life. citizen etc. In addition, politically literate voters are also expected to have high integrity, intelligence, and critical power, as well as political rationality and responsibility as citizens.

The way to improve the political literacy of citizens, especially the novice voters is generally done through political education or civic education. In the context of the electoral process, this effort is carried out through socialization or voter education, which is limited in terms of time, the breadth of participants, and the material. That is why the socialization or voter education programs carried out by election organizers and election participants (parties or candidates) hypothetically so far have not succeeded in building and growing ideal political literacy, especially for the novice voter segment, especially high school/MA/vocational high school students. Several indications of the absence of good political literacy are the widespread practices of money politics every time an election is held; the tendency of orientation and preference for political choices that are still emotional; and the number of abstentions is still quite high, even those who don't really care about election activities. One alternative way to improve political literacy that is more effective and productive compared to voter socialization and education activities, especially for novice voters in the

SMA/MA/SMK student segment is through a contextual teaching and learning approach, by taking subject matter Citizenship Education (civic education) as an "entrance". Contextual learning is a learning model that connects learning materials with contexts or real (real) situations. This learning model is more effective and productive because, apart from using various methods that empower, encourage independence, trigger critical thinking, and foster student creativity, it also takes place over a relatively long period of time (while being a student). Through this contextual learning model, they are prepared more maturely to become smart, critical, rational, and responsible novice voters.

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