



Phenomena of Identity Politics in Indonesia: Interaction Analysis between Religion and Ethnicity in West Sumatera

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Abstract

Elections are a means of popular sovereignty which will become a political agenda to provide space for community participation in government, but in reality elections are often a space for societal division due to the phenomenon of identity politics driven by political parties and the substance of election law which can give birth to identity politics, so this study aims to identify the causes of the formation of the phenomenon of identity politics driven by political parties and examine the role of political parties in overcoming the phenomenon of political parties. Writing this article uses the socio-legal legal research method, namely legal research that uses an interdisciplinary approach such as political studies and social studies. Data will be collected through literature study, statutory regulations and observations. The results of this research show that the cause of the formation of identity politics begins with tensions between majority and minority groups which trigger diversity conflicts such as inter-ethnic, cultural, racial and inter-religious conflicts driven by political parties and presidential threshold regimes which result in extreme divisions in society and to overcome this with political education by political parties based on Pancasila populism as well as reconstruction of election law to eliminate the presidential threshold regime and the establishment of a political education system during election times.

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INTRODUCTION

Changes in the political constellation after reform have opened up greater space to fight for interests based on religion and groups in Indonesia (Aminuddin & Ramadlan, 2015). In this situation, primordialism is no longer seen as something that must be abandoned, but instead is deemed effective to be used as a political symbol and language to gain legitimacy and sympathy from the process of achieving victory and power (Yandra, 2017). The constellation shown in the election has illustrated how elites exploit ethnic, religious sentiments and the origins of candidates as a strategy to gain support. Direct general elections in West Sumatra have been held

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patterns and social life that seek to seek group benefits without considering the common interest (social movement); and nationalist attitudes that prioritize certain groups (nationalism).

Therefore, based on these factors, the impact of identity politics is the occurrence of war between fellow politicians or fellow civilians (civil war) and violence committed by certain ethnic groups as a form of dislike for their rival groups (violence). Based on the results of the analysis above, the symptoms of identity politics in Indonesia actually already exist, but are not as severe as in other countries, so the author sees that the study is very important to research as a form of our efforts to eradicate the phenomenon of identity politics and uphold the politics of common interests.

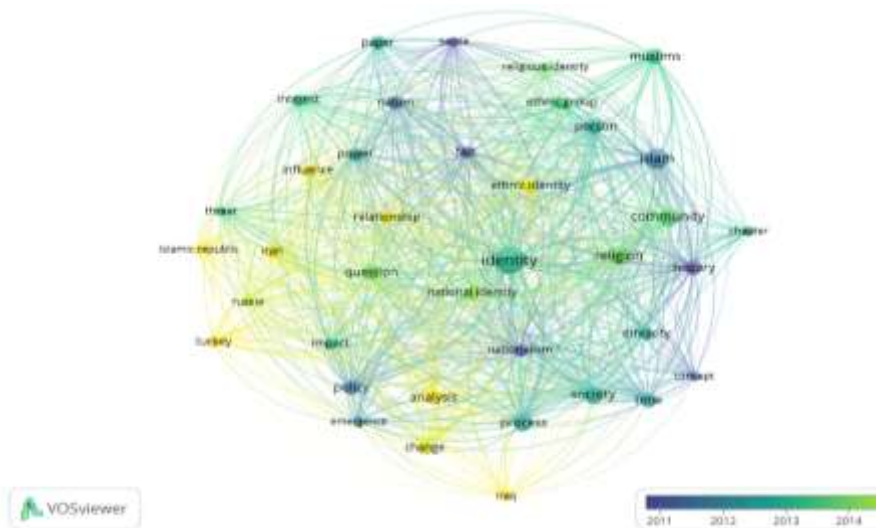


Fig 2. Analysis Title & Abstract with VOSviewer

Based on the results of VOSviewer's analysis of the titles and abstracts of research articles that examine the relationship between the phenomenon of identity politics based on religious and ethnic perspectives. That the results of the analysis are almost the same as the results of keyword analysis where the cause of the emergence of identity politics is caused by religious differences and discrimination against certain religions (religion), recruiting political groups based on similar backgrounds or life histories (history), and threats (threat) from political ethnic groups (group ethnic) specifically towards political minorities. Therefore, the issue of identity politics really needs to be studied, especially identity politics caused by discrimination against certain religions.

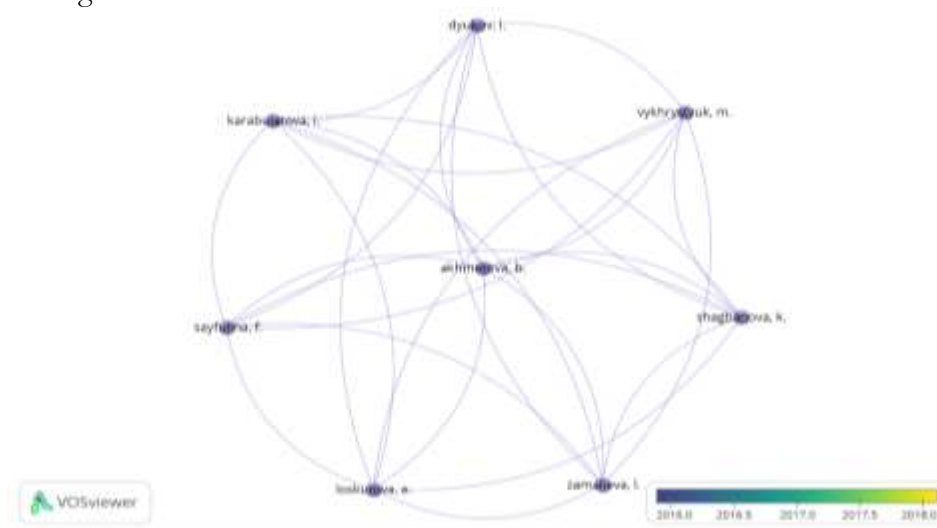


Fig 3. Analysis Authors with VOSviewer

Based on the results of VOSviewer's analysis of writers or authors in research articles about the relationship between the phenomenon of identity politics based on religious and ethnic perspectives, the range is 2016. The results of the author's analysis (authors) here is the same as research on keyword analysis, namely research articles indexed by Scopus. Furthermore, from the picture above, the number of writers each year has not grown steadily, which can be seen from the small number of writers who really focus on researching this matter. So it can be concluded that research experts have started to study this issue, although there are still few. Therefore, the author sees this study as very important to study because it is a phenomenon that has a significant impact on society, culture and the political system.

METHODS

The research was carried out in West Sumatra Province, one of the provinces in Indonesia which will also hold general elections in 2024. These facts and phenomena were the basis for the research team to choose this province as the sample and research location. This research uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach (Adel & Anoraga, 2023; Novebri & Pratiwi, 2021). The phenomenological approach is appropriate to use in this research because it is appropriate to the context of phenomena that are emerging, developing and being discussed in society, especially related to issues of identity, ethnicity and religion in general elections (Firdausi, 2015; Jeffri, 2021; Lestari, 2019; Milana & Muksin, 2021). According to several experts, the phenomenological method design is appropriate to use if researchers want to study an issue and problem that is currently emerging and is being discussed in society (Darmawan, 2018; Firdausi, 2015). Referring to the opinion above, the phenomenological method is appropriate and appropriate to use in this research.

Data sources were taken through previous study data, analyzing phenomena that occur in society and related books that discuss these issues and problems. All interview and observation data were analyzed using thematic techniques analysis interactive Miles & Huberman model. Thematic analysis is a more flexible way to identify, analyze and report qualitative research data. Before the data is analyzed into a research conclusion, all interview results with informants are transcribed, then reduced, grouped into a theme of research results which are displayed in the form of graphs or images. Furthermore, to explain and strengthen the graphic and image data, it is supported by narration of part of the interview with the informant which is presented in the form of dialogue.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ethnic Identity Politics

Identity politics is another name for biopolitics and the politics of difference (Dhani, 2019; Paralihan, 2019; Saputro, 2023; Soenjoto, 2019). Biopolitics is based on differences that arise from differences in individual bodies (Ardipandanto, 2020; Saputro, 2023). Like Agnes Heller who defines identity politics as a political concept and movement whose focus is difference (difference) as a major political category. Because the idea of difference has promised freedom (freedom), tolerance and freedom of play (free play), despite the danger of emerging patterns of intolerance, violence and ethnic conflict.

Ethnic politics refers to the politics of ethnic groups or ethnic minorities who do not have their own theories whose aim is to seek protection and progress for their group as well as freedom of expression and socialization. In this context, the minority group becomes subordinate to the majority group which dominates the sociality of relations, so this minority becomes ethnic, becomes unique, or even alienated and strange. Ethnic political movements were initially oriented towards power, control of territory, control of economic resources, even control of people (other ethnic groups).

Furthermore, in the current modern political era, ethnic politics follows the direction of its development so that ideological content emerges. Ethnic awareness then becomes greater and transforms into a wider tribal and regional awareness leading to the nation (Suradi, 2018).

Next, Cressida Heyes defines ethnic identity politics as political activity that theoretically finds experiences of injustice felt by certain ethnic groups in certain social situations. According to him, ethnic identity politics is more directed at the movement of marginalized people in certain social, political and cultural conditions in society (Aidah et al., 2023; Idham & Amin Pranowo, 2020). In political struggles, the use of ethnic identity provides positive results that have a significant influence. Operationally, ethnic identity politics is a key concept in the political arena that utilizes the classification of people based on differences caused by inequality or injustice in the distribution of economic resources, power, territory, and job opportunities (Soenjoto, 2019).

Meanwhile, Stuart Hall assesses ethnic identity more as a process of becoming (becoming) of the standard value or taken for granted. This means that ethnic identity is not a final process, nor is it talking about totality or essence, but rather a social construction, an identification process that will never end completely (Kunu, 2018; Saraswati & Manalu, 2023). According to the author himself, the concept of ethnic identity politics is relevant to be applied in today's contemporary political context, where society is increasingly plural, presenting its own entities in very multidimensional, multicultural and multiethnic situations.

Implementation of Ethnic Politics

Klausa Van Beyme analyzes and tries to see the discourse of social political movements based on ethnic politics in several stages of development starting from the premodern, modern and postmodern eras. Where he describes the movement patterns, motivation and goals he wants to achieve, he states the following:

The categorization of ethnic political movements described by Van Beyme above can be applied in analyzing the implementation of ethnic political movement patterns. Ethnic political discourse at the pre-modern stage was groups divided based on strong ethnic nationalism, not yet familiar with culture, in the sense of knowing things as they are. The aim of political movements is power or domination over other ethnic groups, this is done for production for survival (tribalism).

Racism (Race Thinking) and Ethnicity in the Aspect of Identity Politics

Racist theories say that different human races have different social and intellectual talents. This is where the view of superiority and inferiority of one race over another arises. According to David Theo Goldberg, racism has become a discourse (discourse) and forms a perspective that is reflected in a person's attitudes and behavior as well as ways of expression. Racist expressions seem to have been cultivated and manifested in various ways and media. Racism has been manifested in various fields of life such as in academics, economics, in the name of science, law and has penetrated into bureaucracy. As a result, there are a number of violations against humanity's own common sense.

This is where the constructivist viewpoint which believes in the existence of elite engineering in exploiting ethnic sentiment, as a factor in the emergence of ethnic spirit, finds its relevance. Contextually, ethnic politics is a form of elite political construction that tries to manipulate political resources through roles in the legislature or in political institutions such as political parties. The ethnic political construction that occurred in the general elections in West Sumatra is a strategy of political elites in influencing people's choices in order to win political competition. In this competition, groups that have limited capital, expertise and influence will be eliminated and then feel alienated and see it as inappropriate if they continue to identify themselves as part of the existing political system.

This influence will form an elite group that is in opposition to the government in power, so that they will influence society for the next competition. This identification provides a pattern of elite behavior in influencing people who are anti-government in the context of general elections in West Sumatera, namely the Minang ethnic group who form their identity based on ethnicity. This has a domino effect on people's behavior based on ethnicity which will provide support based on socio-cultural (ethnic) equality.

The politics of ethnicity in the general elections in West Sumatera occurred not only as a matter of inequality in the bureaucracy (structural government) or socio-culture in society, but also with the engineering of political elites who competed for power by using ethnicity as a factor in generating ethnic spirit. This is done at the elite level in the legislature or in political parties who try to condition various aspects of political interests to be uniform. So the possibility of implementing ethnic politics becomes an effort to approach and lobby politics among elites.

Ethnicity as an Instrument in Campaigns

In political strategy, of course, how to bring figures or regional head candidates closer to their constituents or sympathizers. This aims to keep its sympathizers supportive and continue to influence society. In this context, various methods are used so that various campaign instruments related to attributes become an important aspect in the general election in West Sumatera where candidates or elites are more inclined to choose their partners based on their existing ethnicity. Strengthening ethnic attributes in the campaign implementation stage becomes a medium for regional head candidates to get closer to sympathizers and the community. Of course, this condition will give rise to the meaning that there are nuances of ism that are carried out in influencing society, then people can feel closer to the candidate because they have the same cultural identity. Campaigns that use ethnic attributes as a medium for political communication, create a form of political tension at the level of the political elite or society.

People who are still influenced by regionalism (primordial) become easily provoked and easily influenced by forms of attention which of course benefits them. The reality above shows that the identity inherent in Minang people may be based on traditional maternal lineage (matrilinal) but if you are not Muslim you are not considered a Minang person. Or you may be a Muslim, but if you don't have a mother's lineage, or even if your father is a Minang person, you are still not considered a Minang person. This is deeply embedded in the Minang people's identity, demonstrated in their social and physical structure. This is the difference in traditional society according to the father's lineage (patrilinal) which is shown in the use of the surname after the name.

Ethnic politics that occurs during the general election campaign stage in West Sumatera reflects an individual's sense of belonging to a particular group, and is part of a person's thoughts, perceptions, feelings and attitudes which are mandatory for ethnic group membership. The attributes that appeared during the campaign further emphasized that ethnic political tendencies using attributes are an aspect of strengthening ethnic group solidarity. The politics of ethnicity that occurs is a stereotype of a recognition of the identity of ethnic groups in contributing to politics.

Among the many identities that will be displayed, ethnic and religious identities will always have a place within a person. The concept of situational identity explains that each individual will carry out the process of political communication, through the exchange of symbols, formation of meaning and setting goals in their daily lives according to the situation, conditions and goals they want to achieve. Likewise, the dominant cultural identity or indigenous culture usually influences minority culture or immigrant culture, as well as the majority and minorities. Furthermore, minority groups are influenced by the dominant culture as a result of their own environmental

pressures.

Identity politics is understood to mean that in the struggle for political power, political practice is increasingly seen as progressing. Especially ahead of the big democratic party which will be held in 2019 in Indonesia through a big agenda called PEMILU. One political expert named Donald L Morowitz (1998), a political expert from Duke University, has defined identity politics as providing very firm lines to determine who will be included and who will be rejected (Baidawi, 2022). A line of determination cannot be changed, so your status as a member will appear to be permanent. Identity politics in this case is focused on differences, where the main category promises freedom, tolerance and freedom of play even though in the end it gives rise to patterns of intolerance, violence and ethical conflict. So that in the end identity politics can include racism, bio-feminism, political environmental issues, and ethnic disputes (Wati, 2021).

The local political culture that is currently developing in Indonesia is a social legacy that has been formed since history in Indonesia (Aprianti et al., 2022). Culture is formed from several parts, namely beliefs, habits and social structures that are continuous with the political life of society. The boundaries found in culture can come from religion, customs and also norms that already apply in society. This culture can also be seen from the tendency of people's behavior towards political life in that society.

The political system will also have a cultural influence on each region, and also influence how the bureaucratic pattern that has been implemented and the democratic system. The local democratic system is an illustration of the political culture of a region, and is also the most important aspect because the bureaucratic system influences all areas. political life in society. This democratic culture has a relationship between a strong local political culture, firstly the bureaucracy is a political body, secondly democratic culture has an important role in efforts to understand the upper classes in politics. The third success is regional development which is influenced by the role of the local bureaucratic system. Some of the reasons expressed by the informants were related to whether or not there was a local action that could change a local political system, some assumed that local values were still widely used by the community. However, they do not yet believe or still doubt this, which is based on the assumption that the current political system has forgotten local matters, such as governance and problem solving. In local politics this leads to a governance system that is upheld by the world community.

The first approach, arguing for primordialism to see religious phenomena contained in socio-biological categories. In this view, it is explained that a social group is characterized by territory, religion, culture, language and social organization as things that cannot be denied. Meanwhile, conceptually, this view emphasizes the presence of primordial ethnic and religious identities which function as the glue of a community. Primordialism adherents emphasize efforts to achieve collective interests to define and articulate general views as well as to form a vision for the future. The constructivist approach developed by Frederik Barth. A theory that views a religious and cultural identity as the result of a complex process, and very symbolic boundaries are then built by the benefits of mythology, situation, conditions and goals to be achieved (Ronaldo & Darmaiza, 2021).

Competing Political, Religious and Ethnic Identities

The democratic system is experiencing quite drastic improvements because it is understood by various government parties in Indonesia that in reality the government does not always provide justice to society. In this case, it is used to guarantee the rights that citizens should have, so that every individual has freedom therein. Basically, Indonesia continues to persist with differences regarding diversity which can cause a group to split. One of the interesting things is related to identity politics and

nationalism, providing enlightenment regarding the history of identity politics and nationalism in Indonesia. Identity politics and nationalism have gained a very special space in recent years.

In Indonesia, it is more dominant in relation to ethnicity, religion, as well as ideology and local actors who have an interest in regional expansion. News is used by local actors in injustice to build bargaining politics. Which is explained at every opportunity. However, the target of local actors has been considered only an instinct to lead a group to achieve economic and political goals. Which explains that decentralization is a determining factor in the emergence of identity politics with the amount of authority given by the central government to the region in the reform era made the position of local actors strong on the power in the local political arena. Decentralized political practice serves News about ethnicity, tribe, religion and class as politics in gaining power. Identity politics is influenced by structural factors, its main political dimensions, political and ethnic discontinuities.

CONCLUSION

National identity as a political consideration in Indonesia in responding to acts of terrorism, news of terrorism is currently experiencing an expansion not only in one country but also abroad, which makes the spread of terrorism grow rapidly and become a global event. The cause of this incident was due to the era of globalization which resulted in capital flows and people experiencing an acceleration in terrorist networks. In Indonesia, it is more dominant regarding issues of ethnicity, religion, ideology and local actors who have an interest in regional expansion. The news that local actors use injustice to build political bargaining is explained at every opportunity. However, the target of local actors has been considered only an instinct to lead a group to achieve economic and political goals. Which explains that decentralization is a determining factor in the emergence of identity politics with the amount of authority given by the central government to regions in the reform era, strengthening the position of local actors with power in the local political arena. Decentralized political practices present news of ethnicity, tribe, religion and class as politics in gaining power. Identity politics is influenced by structural factors, its main political dimensions, political and ethnic discontinuities.

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