

Successful, yet Worrying: 2019 Concurrent Election in Indonesia

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Abstract

Indonesia has experienced several models of election ranging from representative, direct, sporadic and then concurrent systems. In the outset of reformasi which was marked by the downfall of the authoritarian leader, Suharto in 1998, Indonesia experienced regional, central and presidential election which took place in different times. This typical model of election is considered as complicated, inefficient and does not support the presidential system. In 2015, 2017 and 2018 the elections of regional heads were changed into concurrent system. In 2019 the legislator, the senator and the direct presidential elections were carried out concurrently. This paper seeks to analyse the implementation of 2019 concurrent election in Indonesia and the problems posed. It seeks to find out whether the election had run smoothly as planned and problems faced. Using qualitative approach with document, news media data collection methods, this paper finds that the implementation of the election had run successfully, despite worrying. Sixteen political parties and 81% of voters participated in the election. Joko Widodo, the incumbent, and Ma'ruf Amien are elected Presidents and its vice. 575 legislators and 136 senators are elected. Nonetheless, during the process, Indonesian people were worried that elections would run into social chaos as the contesting participants used undemocratic strategy comprising from social upheaval, spreading hoax, provocation, threats leading to growing distrust to government and social conflict.

Keywords: Election, concurrent, successful, worrying.

Introduction

Since its establishment in 1945, Indonesia is a democratic country. General election has become a permanent procedure in the succession of political leadership. Indonesia has experienced number of general election systems ranging from representative, direct yet sporadic, and direct concurrent system. In the Old Order period (1945-1967), Indonesia firstly experienced liberal and representative system. The bloody political succession from the Old Order (Orde Lama) to the New Order (Orde Baru) brought Indonesia to a new system which the New Order government claimed to be democratic but, in fact, it was then widely known as bureaucratic authoritarian system with the domination of military leadership. The new ruler of the New Order continued representative presidential system. During this time, Indonesia adopted representative system in which people voted member of local and central parliament. Local parliament voted heads of regional governments, mayors and governors. Central parliament voted president and vice president.

The end of New Order changed political system from authoritarian to democracy, later called *reformasi* or democratization. Since the beginning years of *reformasi*, political parties mushroomed like the ones in the beginning of Old Order. In its beginning years, Indonesia continued its representative system when people voted members of parliament which then elected executive heads; president, governors, mayors, regional heads and their vices. However, in the second period of general election, the system was changed from representative to direct. In the system people directly voted members of parliament and executive leaders; president, governors, mayors, regional heads and their vices, but the elections were held separately in different provincial and national levels. Using the system, Indonesia held local elections almost every months. Law makers and government consider the system as inefficient. Therefore, they changed the system into direct concurrent elections in which legislative and executive elections were held in the same time.

The adoption concurrent election in some countries had produced positive as well as negative outcomes. Its positive outcome includes the increasing people participation and the quality of election. The election become an instrument to increase people participation as it had attracted people to channel their aspiration. It can also be used as an arena to contest ideas, to increase political conscience and to improve national political activities. In addition, national issues can be deliberated during political campaign in the election and popular leaders would increase legislative and party votes and election sanction would be more easily applied in concurrent system than others. (Bracco & Revelli, 2018) (Huang & Lin, 2012) (Miguel & Yasemin, 2013) (Nikolenyi, 2009).(Rose, 2004) (Samuels,2000). Constituencies will have interest to actively select issues being debated or will participate in the election (Fornos, Power, & Garand, 2004). On the contrary, concurrent election also has negative outcomes, especially in regional or rural areas. Regional or rural people who usually have micro issues or are classified as low politics will be less exposed than national or macro issues. Local legislative will have less opportunity to conduct political manoeuvres than the national ones (Bracco & Revelli, 2018). Therefore, to implement concurrent election successfully, a state needs to add some new regulations to motivate people to vote such as regular schedule, strict contestation system and solid political system (Huang & Lin, 2012, Miguel & Yasemin, 2013 and Nikolenyi, 2009). A state whose people have poor political conscience needs political mobilization in order their people to vote. (Miguel & Yasemin, 2013). This article seeks to analyse the implementation of 2019 concurrent election. It attempts to find out what good impacts can be learnt, problems posed and whether good and bad impacts of concurrent election in other countries also apply to Indonesia's concurrent election.

Methods

The research uses qualitative approach with document and media news data collection. Documents were garnered from off-line sources such from the institutions which are responsible for the implementation of election such as Election Commission (Komisi Pemilihan Umum /KPU), Election Supervisory Body (Badan Pengawas Pemilu/ Bawaslu), Coordinating Ministry For Politics, Law and Security (Menteri Koordinator Bidang Politik, Hukum dan Keamanan /Menko Polhukam) Ministry Of Interior (Kementerian Dalam Negeri) in terms of reports, minutes of series of coordinating meetings, report of focused group discussions. To get balance information, the research also benefit from media news which massively disseminate the election, notably the on-line version.

Results and Discussion

According to current regulation, the ideal concurrent system in Indonesia would be implemented in 2024, that is when all regional and national legislative elections would be held in the same time. The election would vote members of parliament and national executive leaders such as regional heads, mayors, governors all over Indonesia, president and vice president. Before the ideal implementation is done and to adjust with previous system, the implementation of concurrent elections in Indonesia had been held gradually since 2015. Since then, Indonesia has conducted 541 concurrent elections, comprising from 33 provincial concurrent election, 415 regional head concurrent elections and 93 city mayor concurrent elections (Surbakti, 2016). In general, the concurrent election had run smoothly, despite small challenges posed such as the issue of security, logistics and also a few disputes over the result of election. Logistical challenges take the form of the delay in obtaining electronic citizenship required for registration of the election and the delay of the delivery or distribution of ballots, paper and ink to remote areas. Security challenges take the form of political tension amongst the followers during the preparation period until after the election or usually during the dispute time and the spreading hoax, provocation, hate speech and other black campaign strategy. Other serious issues pertain to the massive use of money politics. (Polhukam, 2019)

Different from 2017 and 2018 regional head election, in 2019 concurrent election, people directly voted national parliament (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat /DPR), Provincial Parliament (DPRD TK 1) and Regional and city Parliament (DPRD TK 2), Senators, President and Vice President. The 2019 concurrent election which combines types of election has at least three strategic goals as explicitly stated in decree of constitutional court, first, improving the effectiveness of government with three indices: strengthening presidential system, improving the effectiveness of representative body (parliament), simplifying party system by avoiding tactical, temporary and short-term political bargaining. Second, promoting the originality of intents by having five ballots. Third, improving the

efficiency of the election management with three indices ; improving the financial and time efficiency, reducing the potential of horizontal conflicts caused by political polarization, pushing smart voters to build checks and balances principles as people decision to vote legislators are in line with their decision to vote president and its vice. (Constitutional Court Decree Number. 14/PUU-XI/2013). The 2019 concurrent election is regarded as a unique system that Indonesia has ever experienced: First, it was the biggest, the most competitive and the most complex election in the electoral history of Indonesia. Second, with 192 voters registered, 2019 election is believed to be the biggest one-day concurrent election in the world. Third, from territorial, geographical and organizational point of view, 2019 concurrent election was the most complex election in the world (Polhukam, 2019).

Successful Outcome

2019 concurrent election in Indonesia was considered as successful yet worrying. There are three indices which can be used to grade the election is successful. First, people participation in the election reached 81%, higher than previous three regional concurrent elections in 2015 , 2016 and 2017. Second, sixteen Political parties participated in the election. Of the sixteen political parties, 9 passed electoral threshold (ET) 4 % and successfully posted their cadres in the national parliament, as figured out in the following table 2.

No	Political parties	Number of Votes (Seats) in the parliament)	Percentage
1	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (The National Awakening Party/PKB)	13.570.097 (58)	9,96 %
2	Partai Gerakan Indonesia Raya (The Great Indonesia Movement Party /Gerindra)	17.594.839 (78)	12,57%
3	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (The Indonesian Democratic Party Of Struggle/PDIP)	27.053.961 (128)	19.33%
4	Partai Golkar (Golkar Party)	17.229.789 (85)	12%
5	Partai Nasionalis Demokrat (The Democratic Nationalist Party/ NASDEM	12.661.792 (59)	9,05%
6	Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (Justice and Prosperity Party/ PKS)	11.493.663 , (50)	8,21%
7	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party/ PPP	6.323.147 (19)	4,52%
8	Partai Amanat Nasional (The National Mandate Party/PAN.)	9.572.623 (44)	6,84%
9	Partai Demokrat (the Democratic Party/PD)	10.876.507 (54)	7,70%,

(Modified from <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2019/08/31/11152361/hasil-lengkap-perolehan-kursi-dpr-2019-2024?page=all>).

Dewan Perwakilan Daerah) were elected . Seven others parties do not pass electoral threshold as they only get less than 4% of votes, they are; Partai Garuda (The Garuda Party) with 702.536 (0,05%) votes, Partai Berkarya (Working Party) with 2.929.495 (2,09%) votes, Partai Persatuan Indonesia with 3.738.320 (2,76%,) votes, Partai Solidaritas Indonesia (The Indonesian Solidarity Party /PSI) with

2.650.361 (1,89%) votes, Partai Hati Nurani Rakyat (The People Conscience Party/Partai Hanura) with 2.161.507(1,54%) votes, Partai Bulan Bintang (The Crescent and Star Party/PBB) with only got 1.099.848 (0,79%) votes, Partai Keadilan dan Persatuan (the United and Justice Party/PKPI) with 312.775 (0,22%) votes. (<https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2019/08/31/11152361/hasil-lengkap-perolehan-kursi-dpr-2019-2024?page=all>)

Second, direct presidential election successfully elects Joko Widodo and Ma'ruf Amin (Jokowi-Ma'ruf) the Indonesian President and vice for the period of 2019-2024. They collect 85.607.362 votes (55,50%), defeating Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno who collect 68.650.239 (44,50 %) votes or with 11% gap. (<https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1219768/sah-jokowi-ditetapkan-jadi-presiden-terpilih-2019-2024/full&view=ok>). Third, The Indonesian government received recognition, appreciation and congratulation from foreign state leaders. They appreciate the Indonesian government for its success in holding the complicated concurrent election. They also congratulated Jokowi and Ma'ruf for being elected President and Vice for the period 2019-2024. (Polhukam, 2019).

The Worrying Outcome

As Indonesia experienced this sort of election for the first time, the implementation of 2019 concurrent election was surely not a perfect, despite its success. It was coloured by worrying condition in its preparation, implementation and results such as which respect to management of the election, fraud, political implication and security. The worrying condition happened before, during and after the election. The managerial problems mostly took place in the preparation period. They were similar to the ones in the three previous regional concurrent regional elections such as the problem with the ownership of the electronic citizenship required for the registration of voters and the distribution of logistical needs. Before the election, Ministry Of Interior recorded that around 6 million people did not obtain electronic citizenship (E KTP) which potentially would affect the losing of their voting rights. Other significant problem which is similar to the ones in the regional concurrent election in 2015, 2016 and 2017 was the delay of the distribution of logistical needs for the election such as ballots, boxes and ink especially to remote areas. While legal problem stemmed from the suspected fraud. Election supervisory Bawaslu (Badan Pengawas Pemilu/ Bawaslu) recorded 7.299 frauds in terms of suspected criminal, administrative and ethics. The success team of presidential candidate no 2 Prabowo Subianto and vice presidential candidate Sandiaga Uno questioned about the validity and accuracy of the technology used to calculate the votes (<https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/indonesia-48199273>).

Political problems also took many forms. The one-day calculation system has caused the exhaustion of the organizing officers leading to the death of 647 officers in charge in the implementation of election. They were found for suffering from diseases and exhaustion. Of all the dead, 527 are from organizers, 92 is from supervisors, 22 from Police and 3 from Military officers. (Polhukam, 2019). Other political challenge was that the concurrent election has sidelined the appeal of legislative election as it was covered by the popularity of presidential election. People attention focused more on presidential campaign, not legislative nor senator campaign. People only enjoyed debates of presidential candidates, not debates of legislative or senator candidates. On top of that presidential election system which requires 20% of party votes of the election and 25% of seats in the parliament in proposing the president and vice candidate has resulted in only two presidential and vice presidential candidates; Joko –Widodo and K. H Maruf Amin with Election number 01 and Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno with election number 02. The requirement has created wide polarization between supporters of the two candidates. Such polarization has caused the tense presidential campaign which capitalized political identity notably religious issues to attack the candidates, mostly to the incumbent Jokowi. They have capitalized political identity, notably the use religious symbols, to attack the incumbent. They accused Jokowi as a former member of communist party, anti-or humiliating Islam and destroying Islamic organization. (<https://news.detik.com/kolom/d-4030659/meredam-polarisasi-pilpres-2019>) The militant loyalist of candidate no 2 also attacked the incumbent with hoax, propaganda, hate speech aiming at destroying his reputation and blocking him from winning in the election. (<https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4482841/jokowi-sebut-45-tahun-diserang-fitnah-fadli-zon-halusinasi>)

The political challenge impacted by the election system was coupled with security challenges in terms of terrorism, assassination threats and mass riots. The militant activists who could be associated supporters of candidate no 2 extended assassination threats to six political and the national leaders

which are close and supporters of candidate no 1 such as; Coordinating Minister of Politics, Law and security Gen (ret) Wiranto, coordinating Ministry of Maritime Gen (ret) Luhut B Panjaitan, Head of State Intelligent Agency, Gen (Pol) Budi Gunawan, Special Staff of the President, Commissioner Gen (ret pol) Gorys Mere, Special adviser to the Jokowi, Gen (ret) Hendro Priyono and Political commentator or analyst Yunarto Wijaya. (Polhukam, 2019) . The sharp polarization between the supporters of presidential candidates had stimulated militancy or radicalization of the supporters of candidate number 2. Such radicalization was fuelled by the claim of the supporter of Prabowo –Sandi that they won the election with 54% votes, defeating Jokowi Makruf who, they claimed, as collected 46% . (<https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/indonesia-48262744>).The result of vote calculation by the KPU was the other way around. Jokowi Makruf won with 55,50% while Prabowo lost with 45,50%. Because of this, the militant supporters of Prabowo-Sandi urged people to disqualify the Election supervisory body (Bawaslu), Joko Widodo and Makruf Amien and to inaugurate Prabowo-Sandi as the newly elected the president and its vice. Otherwise, they would attack KPU office and mobilize people power to topple Jokowi and Makruf Amien.

Such radicalization led to social chaos amidst the mass protest on the result of the election which they regard as unfair and not neutral. The chaos broke up in front of Election Commission (KPU) Office and Election supervisory Agency (Badan Pengawas Pemilu / Bawaslu) Office right after the end of peaceful demonstration . Rhetorically, the demonstration questioned the neutrality and impartiality of KPU and the government apparatus, though, in fact they did not accept the loss of their candidate. The street demonstration mostly involved loyal supporters of Candidate number 2. The riot took 9 people life and 447 others were detained by Police for further interrogation and investigation . The police then arrested number of social and political leaders, identified as supporter of Prabowo-Sandi such as Egy Sujana, Luis Suarisma , Kiflan Zen, Sunarko , Habil Marati, Tajudin and Kurniawan. They allegedly provoked people to topple Jokowi and Makruf Amien. Kivlan Zein was allegedly plotted to kill six national political leaders ; Wiranto, Hendro Prijono, Budhi Gunawan, Gorys Mere, Luhut B. Panjaitan and Yunarto Wijaya and caused chaos.

Conclusion

Indonesia is a democratic country. Since its establishment in 1945, Indonesia has experienced diverse election systems from representative, direct yet sporadic to concurrent elections. In 2019 Indonesia held concurrent election to directly vote local, central members of parliament, senators and president and vice president. Like that of implemented in other country, the concurrent election has run successfully and has resulted in the increasing people participation in electing President, vice president, local and central parliament and senator . 2019 concurrent election in Indonesia has also been taken part by 16 political parties. However, while concurrent election in other countries has also resulted in unexpected impacts in terms of side-lining micro issues, the decreasing opportunity for local politicians to manoeuvre and the need for political mobilization and the formulation of new regulation, the negative impact of concurrent election in Indonesia was more severe. In addition to problems with logistics and administrative issues, the unexpected political and security impact was more serious. The concurrent election was coloured by security challenges in terms social chaos, threat of terrorism, threat of political assassination, the spreading black campaign such as hoax, propaganda and hate speech.

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