

Civil Engagement Versus Personal Preference in Election: A Mixed Methods Study in the Indigenous Community of Kampung Naga

Keterlibatan Sipil Versus Preferensi Pribadi dalam Pemilihan Umum: Mix Method pada Komunitas Adat Kampung Naga



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ARTICLE INFORMATION	
<p>Keywords <i>Indigenous Community; Civil Engagement; Voter;</i></p>	<p>ABSTRACT <i>This study aims to analyze the influence of civil engagement on the political preferences of the people in Kampung Naga during the 2024 regional head election process. Political preferences can reveal factors that influence a person's decision to participate in the regional head election. The study used a mixed method through the distribution of questionnaires and in-depth interviews with residents of Kampung Naga. The results showed that there was an influence between variables of 19%. This influence is very small. The researcher then studied it using a qualitative research approach. Some of the main reasons include traditional leaders who highly respect and give freedom to the community to choose, social changes in the form of modernization and changes in social values and access to various information such as social media. Factors such as personal preferences, family influences, and access to external information play a bigger role in shaping voter behavior. In the future, there needs to be further attention regarding social and cultural changes that can influence political behavior in traditional village communities. The recommendation in this study is to compare the implementation of elections in other indigenous communities in order to obtain comprehensive information regarding the influence of external culture and leadership on community behavior.</i></p>
<p>Kata Kunci <i>Masyarakat Adat; Civil Engagement; Perilaku Pemilih;</i></p>	<p>ABSTRAK Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh dari civil engagement terhadap preferensi politik masyarakat di Kampung Naga selama proses pemilihan kepala Daerah tahun 2024. Preferensi politik dapat mengungkap faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi keputusan seseorang dalam berpartisipasi dalam pemilihan kepala daerah. Penelitian menggunakan metode mixed method melalui penyebaran kuesioner dan wawancara mendalam dengan warga Kampung Naga. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat pengaruh antar variable sebesar 19%. Pengaruh tersebut sangat kecil. Peneliti kemudian mendalami dengan pendekatan penelitian kualitatif. Beberapa alasan utamanya diantaranya pimpinan adat sangat menghormati dan memberikan kebebasan kepada masyarakat dalam memilih, perubahan sosial berupa modernisasi dan perubahan nilai-nilai sosial dan akses informasi yang beragam seperti media sosial. Faktor-faktor seperti preferensi pribadi, pengaruh keluarga, dan akses informasi eksternal memainkan peran yang lebih besar dalam membentuk perilaku pemilih. Ke depannya, perlu ada perhatian lebih lanjut terkait perubahan sosial dan budaya yang dapat mempengaruhi perilaku politik di masyarakat kampung adat. Rekomendasi dalam penelitian ini adalah melakukan perbandingan pelaksanaan pemilu pada masyarakat adat lainnya agar mendapatkan informasi yang komprehensif terkait pengaruh budaya luar dan kepemimpinan terhadap perilaku masyarakat.</p>
<p>Article History Send 31th December 2024 Review 4th January 2024 Accepted 8th January 2024</p>	<p>Copyright ©2024 <i>Jurnal Aristo (Social, Politic, Humaniora)</i> This is an open access article under the CC-BY-NC-SA license. Akses artikel terbuka dengan model CC-BY-NC-SA sebagai lisensinya.</p>



Introduction

Voter behavior in the democratic process has a fairly high role, especially in this article we will discuss indigenous communities because they have a unique culture and social structure (Bevelander & Hutcheson, 2022; Holland-Lulewicz et al., 2022; Schroedel et al., 2020). Traditional villages can be said to be areas that maintain local wisdom and traditional values. In a democratic system, factors that influence voter behavior include social identity, inter-community relations, and cultural values (Assembe-Mvondo, 2013; Fanti et al., 2017; Fauzan et al., 2024; Gobbers, 2016). Civil engagement is a factor that can be associated with indigenous communities because it explains the social, political and cultural life of their communities. Civil engagement can take the form of community participation in discussion processes, community decision-making, and involvement in social and political activities. When viewed from the characteristics of indigenous communities, there is often a distinctive patron-client relationship. Civil Engagement can influence the political preferences of citizens because they still think that leaders can preserve culture and traditional values for the progress of the community (Duguid, 2020; Ekman & Amnå, 2012; Fennema & Tillie, 2001; Huyser et al., 2017; Schmitt, 2010; Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005).

Some of the benefits of civil engagement cohesion relationships are increasing inclusivity in decision-making, reducing democratic deficits by involving under-represented groups and fostering social capital (bonding and bridging social capital) that supports long-term participation (Head, 2007). However, along with the development of the era of modernization and globalization, the dynamics of civil engagement in traditional villages have changed. Some come from outside such as mass media, formal education and social interaction patterns. Therefore, this change makes researchers interested in analyzing the extent to which traditional civil engagement is still relevant and shapes voter behavior in the Naga traditional village.

Kampung Naga, located in Salawu District, Tasikmalaya Regency, West Java, is known as one of the traditional communities that still upholds ancestral traditions and values. The people of Kampung Naga harmoniously combine religion and culture in their daily lives, in harmony with nature. The local wisdom of the Kampung Naga community, as explained in previous studies, can function as conservation and preservation of natural resources, development of human resources, development of science and culture, beliefs, and have social, ethical, and moral meanings (Abas et al., 2022; Afifuddin, 2017; Davidson-Hunt & O'Flaherty, 2007; Erni Mulyanie & Muhamad Fauzi Efendi, 2023; Lee, 2022; Ratnasari et al., 2023; Syamsi, 2019). In this village, there is a habit of deliberation in decision-making which is

usually done by all traditional villages in Indonesia. This is what makes researchers interested in studying how the social relationship of indigenous peoples with the implementation of the 2024 regional elections (Anggita & Hatori, 2020; Huda & Fauzani, 2024). The principle of participation in local communities is often seen as part of strengthening democracy (Annahar et al., 2023; Murtiningsih et al., 2021). These forms of local wisdom have become the characteristics and identity of the Kampung Naga settlement, and have shaped the behavior and perspectives of its people in various aspects, including in the political field (Komara et al., 2019).

Unique and distinctive behavior is seen from the implementation of regional head elections in Kampung Naga. They carry out elections while still prioritizing the principles of local wisdom and customs in determining political choices (Murtiningsih et al., 2021; Setiawan et al., 2023). The community does not only consider their choices based on their vision and mission, but also sees how candidates respect the noble customs that have long been upheld by the community. Many studies have revealed that traditional leaders have a significant influence on the political behavior of residents. This is one of the challenges for researchers to reveal whether this is also relevant in Kampung Naga. However, what is interesting about the Kampung Naga indigenous community is that in the political choices of the Kampung Naga indigenous community who have met the requirements to vote have the freedom to choose regional head candidates according to their respective considerations, without having to obey the directions of traditional figures or informal leaders.

This study uses the theory of voting behavior and the concept of Indigenous Peoples voting behavior as part of political activities that are influenced by factors such as social background, economic conditions, cultural identity, and psychological aspects both at the individual level and society as a whole. Huntington dan Nelson (Li et al., 2024) define political behavior as citizen activities aimed at influencing government decision-making. Meanwhile, for voting behavior, Huntington and Nelson convey it as Electoral Activity, including voting, campaign assistance, working in an election, or other activities planned to influence the general election process.

This research will help readers and political observers in seeing the political behavior of indigenous peoples today, especially if we compare it with the traditional view that always assumes that indigenous figures have the opportunity to influence the election of candidates. This practice can be studied in depth in the phenomenon of regional head elections. In a local sense, voter behavior can be associated with socio-cultural factors, religion or community values. Therefore, the implementation in Kampung Naga regarding how to do politics and its

behavior can be a reference in the study of politics and indigenous peoples. Moreover, this village really prioritizes local values amidst the flow of modernization.

This study will provide a deeper understanding of the political behavior of the indigenous people of Kampung Naga in the 2024 Tasikmalaya Regency Regional Head Election, especially in the context of voter behavior based on their local wisdom and cultural values. Regional head elections (Pilkada) are one of the real manifestations of democracy in Indonesia. In the local context, voting behavior is often influenced by cultural factors, religion, and community values. Kampung Naga, as one of the indigenous communities in Tasikmalaya Regency, offers a unique perspective in understanding voter behavior. This village maintains ancestral traditions and values that are in line with local wisdom, even though it is in the midst of modernization. This article aims to explore how the indigenous people of Kampung Naga make political decisions, especially in the 2024 Pilkada.

This study aims to examine the relationship between civil engagement and the behavior of voters in traditional villages. The democratic process that takes place in traditional villages is certainly influenced by social structures and values. This study can contribute to theory and practice in strengthening inclusive political participation and local wisdom. It is important to examine the extent to which civil engagement influences voter behavior, especially in the context of traditional village communities that still prioritize traditional values. This understanding will provide deeper insight into how traditional village communities respond to modernity and social change in determining their political choices.

The mixed method approach was chosen because it provides the advantage of combining two complementary types of data, quantitative and qualitative data, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Quantitative methods are used to measure the extent to which involvement in civil engagement and other factors (such as the influence of traditional leaders and outside information) are related to voter behavior. Quantitative data allows researchers to statistically identify patterns and trends, such as the correlation between the level of social engagement and individual political choices. Qualitative methods are used to explore the perspectives and experiences of traditional village communities in more depth regarding their political decision-making process. In-depth interviews and participant observation will provide insight into the social, cultural, and psychological factors that influence voter choices beyond numerical data. Thus, this approach provides a more holistic and in-depth picture of the influence of civil engagement on voter behavior. This study has the following hypotheses:

H₀: There is no significant influence between social and political engagement (civil engagement) on voter behavior in traditional villages.

H₁: There is a significant influence between social and political engagement (civil engagement) on voter behavior in traditional villages.

This study also has several research questions, namely:

1. To what extent does involvement in social and political activities (civil engagement) influence voter decisions in traditional villages?
2. Do traditional village communities choose candidate leaders based on the influence of traditional leaders or based on their personal preferences?
3. How do information outside the traditional village and personal discussions influence voter behavior in traditional villages?
4. To what extent does the election process in traditional villages provide individuals with the freedom to determine their choices?

Method

This study uses a mixed method research method by combining quantitative and qualitative research. The aim is to provide an understanding of statistical data and conduct in-depth interviews with the Kampung Naga community. The quantitative study was conducted to see the influence of civil engagement on the voting behavior of the Kampung Naga indigenous community in the 2024 simultaneous regional elections. The data collection technique in this study used a questionnaire by giving a set of written questions to respondents to answer. The population in this study were all the Kampung Naga indigenous people living in Kampung Naga who exercised their right to vote in the 2024 simultaneous regional elections, totaling 288 voters registered on the DPT TPS 02, Neglasari Village, Salawu District. The sample size used the Slovin formula calculation of 74 people using the purposive sampling technique. The data analysis technique used descriptive statistics. Then the data quality testing was carried out using validation tests, reliability tests, and then hypothesis tests (simple correlations). In the next stage, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews to examine the factors that influence social behavior related to political engagement. The questionnaire was distributed using a Likert scale with variable X (Civil engagement) and Variable Y (Political Behavioral). While the interview was conducted semi-structured with selected respondents ranging from traditional leaders to communities actively involved in village activities. Before the data processing was carried out, the researcher had conducted validity and reliability tests. Here is the questionnaire from the study:

Table 1 Variable and Questionnaire

Variable	Questionnaire
Variable X (Civil Engagement)	I regularly attend customary meetings held in my village.
	I actively participate in social activities, such as mutual cooperation or customary events.
	I often discuss problems in the village with customary leaders.
	I feel that customary activities, such as meetings, are very important to maintain community harmony.
	My opinion is always respected in customary meetings or other social activities.
Variable Y (Political Behavioral)	I choose a candidate for leader based on my personal assessment of the vision, mission, and work program.
	I often discuss with family or friends about candidate leaders before making a decision.
	I feel free to choose without pressure from other parties, including traditional leaders.
	Directions or recommendations from traditional leaders influence my decision in choosing.
	Media or information from outside the traditional village helps me determine my political choice.

Table 2 Validity and Reliability Test

	Variable	R-Hitung	R-table	
	X1	0,765	0,632	Valid
	X2	0,635		Valid
	X3	0,659		Valid
	X4	0,653		Valid
	Y1	0,679		Valid
	Y2	0,781		Valid
	Y3	0,745		Valid
	Y4	0,670		Valid
	Y5	0,746		Valid

Based on the table above, if R count > and R Table, then it can be said that all questionnaires in the study are valid. R count > 0.632.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,692	10

Data is reliable if it has a value > 0.6. In the distribution of questionnaires and data processing carried out, if > 0.6 is obtained, then the data is called reliable and can be used for subsequent testing.

Results and Discussion

F-test

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11,878	1	11,878	2,722	,003 ^b
	Residual	314,176	72	4,364		
	Total	326,054	73			

a. Dependent Variable: Y

b. Predictors: (Constant), X

Based on the data above, the f test has a Sig. 0.003 < 0.005, so it can be said that there is an influence between the independent variable (Civil Engagement) and Variable Y (Political Behavior).

Regression Test

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,191 ^a	,136	,023		2,08891

a. Predictors: (Constant), X

There is an influence of 19.1% civil engagement on political behavior. While political behavior is influenced by other factors. The influence is very small when associated with the results of interviews with traditional leaders who stated that the residents of Kampung Naga were not given specific directions or interventions to choose one of the regent candidates. Kampung Naga prioritizes the principle of openness and freedom in the practice of democracy. Although Kampung Naga does not have electricity, we found several people using cell phones for social media. This is one of the factors that the residents of Kampung Naga are already open to the flow of information. Residents also assume that every choice given in the general election is usually a personal choice.

Residents often engage in social activities or meetings with traditional leaders, but very rarely discuss politics or even intervene in the choices. Some residents only ask for advice from traditional leaders regarding candidates who have a vision and mission in accordance with the

interests of the traditional village community. So it is very relevant to the results of the questionnaire that only around 19.1% feel that civil engagement can influence their political preferences. Based on the results of the study, the solidarity of the Naga village is very high, namely in routine deliberation activities and social activities. However, it has been confirmed that the decision to elect a candidate for regent did not come from the direction of the traditional leader. Respondents stated that some motivations for electing a candidate for leader can be seen from the vision and mission, visits to pay attention to the aspirations of the traditional village, and the experience of the candidates for Regent. In-depth interviews revealed that traditional leaders are highly respected because they can solve community problems and maintain traditional values. However, they do not have a big influence in determining the choice of citizens in politics. Almost all respondents who were met said that political decisions are a personal and not collective realm.

Another interesting finding is that people access social media even with limited access. People try to get information from outside and social media. From there, many people get information about politics (Kertzer, 2022). Many citizens get more knowledge about how to vote from the KPU, compared to political education from political parties. It is very rare for political parties to be present to provide political information. Limited information about politics also causes them to have very limited political choices and only candidates who are truly well-known will be chosen (Djatkiko et al., 2021; Harashani, 2018; Lau & Redlawsk, 2001). Of course, in the context of the election of a regent with very few candidates, it makes it easier for citizens to remember the candidates. However, if we compare it to the legislative election, it is very difficult for citizens to have much about the candidates.

Harmonious social relations are found in this study even though residents have different choices of candidates. This proves that high civil engagement does not mean homogeneity in political choices. Indigenous communities have their own traditional customs which in national and state life are often not recognized by the government, especially in the pre-reform era, because they are considered to be in conflict with modern law (Malik et al., 2021; Ronsumbre & Sri K, 2020; Zazili, 2016). Diversity in choices must be respected by all residents of Kampung Naga. The results of previous studies showed that although the community was involved in social activities held by community administrators, the decision to choose a candidate was still adjusted to personal preferences or beliefs. (Beck et al., 2002; Caprara & Schwartz, 2006; Leeper & Slothuus, 2014; Pantazi et al., 2022; Sullivan & Transue, 1999).

Conclusion

The regional head election process prioritizes the principle of clean democracy in accordance with the personal preferences of the community. This is supported by the Naga village community who revealed that there was only a 19% influence. People tend to choose candidates who they consider to have a good reputation. This finding challenges or contradicts many studies that say that the dominance of traditional leaders can influence local politics. This traditional view does not occur in Naga Village. Although traditional leaders have an important role in the social life of the community, their influence on the decision to choose a candidate for leader is relatively limited. Only a small part of the community still obeys the collective decisions or instructions of traditional leaders in terms of choosing leaders. Most people have started to make independent election decisions based on other factors, including personal values or a desire for change.

The results of this study indicate that although civil engagement is important in the socio-political life of indigenous communities, its influence on voter behavior is smaller than previously thought. This suggests that voter behavior in indigenous villages is increasingly diverse and driven by broader factors, including external information and personal preferences influenced by modernization values. 19% of the influence of civil engagement on voter behavior illustrates that social and cultural changes occurring in indigenous village communities can affect political dynamics, although traditional and cultural values still have a strong place. Therefore, although involvement in socio-political activities remains relevant, individual political decisions are now more driven by more complex external and personal factors. Further research needs to be done to compare with other indigenous communities. Especially analyzing indigenous communities inside and outside. This is to find out how much influence the environment has on voter behavior.

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