

# Political Dynasty and Its Implications for People's Welfare

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The political dynasties that have developed in several regions have undeniably had a direct impact on the people and the government bureaucracy in those regions. There is the existence of several regional heads who place family members or close relatives in strategic positions in the government or participate in the nomination of regional heads in the next period. This often ends with the occurrence of KKN criminal acts committed by these parties. Of course, this disturbs the stability of the government bureaucracy, which, in terms of the implementation of licensing or some other government-related matters, will run ineffectively and inefficiently and have a direct impact on the welfare of its people. In this case, the principle of Good Governance should be implemented properly and wisely by the government for the realisation of people's welfare. This paper aims to investigate the political influence of Indonesian dynasties on its system of government, based on the principle of decentralization in the regions; and to understand the efforts to overcome nepotism, like that of the political dynasties that have developed in Indonesia.

**Key words:** *Dynasty, Politics, Bureaucracy, Good Governance.*

## Introduction

As stated in the 1945 Constitution Article 1, paragraph (3), "The State of Indonesia is a state of law." So as such, it can be clearly stated that Indonesia is a state of law, not a *Machtsstaat* state based on mere power. According to Stahl, the concept of the rule of law, called the *rechtstaat*, includes four important elements, namely (Jimly, 2004):

1. Protection of human rights.
2. Sharing of power.
3. The Government is carried out based on the Law.
4. State Administrative Court (PTUN).

Laws are built and enforced according to democratic principles. Laws should not be made, fixed, interpreted and enforced with an iron fist based on mere power (Machtsstaat). On the contrary, democracy must be regulated based on law (Jimly, 2011). If the power of the state is too dominant, then democracy will not grow because it is always dictated and controlled by a country, resulting in the development of authoritarianism (Jimly, 2011).

However, according to the author in Indonesia, the concept of the rule of law, as enshrined in the constitution, has not proceeded properly, and the existence of a political dynasty in the government bureaucracy has had a direct impact on the implementation of governance and the level of people's welfare.

It is different from what was aspired to by the founding fathers, as stated in the constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. The existence of a political dynasty that is enabled by government bureaucrats can, of course, cause harm to the community because the governance and policies or legal products produced (public services) will not side with the general public; instead, they are more likely to benefit the interests of the authorities and those who support it for the perpetuation of power.

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The change in the concept of the rule of law from a "night watch state" (nachtwakkersstaat) to the concept of a "welfare state" (welvaarsstaat) dictates that the government be responsive and actively support the community. Regarding its presence in the midst of the community, the government, as the recipient of the people's sovereignty, are demanded to provide assistance to and accommodate the needs of the community through policy, implementation of policy, and assistance with regard to policies that have been made.

Peoples all over the world view a government that is run through bureaucratic machinery as the best way to handle the authorisation and regulation of the rules that bind all parties. Government bureaucracy plays a political role in solving conflicts that arise between people and groups of people (Miftah, 2009).

There are three main elements in the concept of bureaucracy. The three elements are: first, that bureaucracy is a technical instrument; second, that bureaucracy is seen as an independent force in society, as long as the bureaucracy has an inherent interest (inherent tendency) in defining its function as a technical instrument; and third, that the development of this attitude is predicated on the bureaucrats not being able to behave according to their interests as a certain group of people. Thus the bureaucracy can stray from its proper function because its members need a date from that particular social class (Miftah, 2009).

An emphasis of the second and third elements of bureaucracy informs an understanding of how the bureaucracy that is discussed by Weber relates to the current practical government bureaucracy in Indonesia.

Following the transition from the New Order regime to reform, the government bureaucracy was not yet fully in ideal condition. Bureaucrats can prioritize the interests of the general public for the welfare of society rather than the interests of certain individuals or groups. This is reflected in several phenomena, particularly at the regional government level. This phenomenon of leadership succession or political dynasty is clearly seen in the leadership successions of several regional heads in Indonesia.

Notable examples of this include those in Riau Province, such as the nomination of Septina Primawati Rusli and the governor of Riau, Governor Rusli Zinal, in the 2003-2008 and 2008-2013 periods; the election of the Mayor of Pekanbaru in the 2011-2016 period; and in the placement of several close relatives of the Riau Governor in the 2014-2019 period. Annas Maamun conducted strategic positioning of the Riau provincial government, including the appointment of Annas Maamun's daughter, Fitriana, as the Head of the Riau Regional Civil Service and Mutation Section Head; the appointment of Winda Desrina, Maamun's ninth daughter, as the Head of the Reception Unit of the UPTD Regional Revenue Service of Riau; the appointment of Noor Charis Putra Putera Annas Maamun as the Head of the Road and Bridge Section of the Public Works Office; the appointment of the daughter-in-law and brother-in-law of Annas Maamun, Dwi Agus Sumarno, as Head of the Riau Provincial Government Education Office; the appointment Syaifuddin as Head of the Administrative Sub-Division of the Regional Treasury Bureau of the Riau Province; and the appointment of the Regional Secretariat, Maman Supriadi, as the new manager of Riau PSPS.

The phenomena above show that political dynasties in the reform era have increasingly prospered. Political dynasties are considered normal by government bureaucrats. The succession of regional heads became a means to build dynastic power in their territory, and the placement of several close relatives was done openly.

According to Agustino (2010), the local political level in Indonesia is still held captive by the influence of local strongmen and roving bandits. Even though political transformation has been in effect for more than a decade, democracy at the local level is still imprisoned by the interests of the local political elite. Furthermore, Agustino added that people's lives have become very grim. Within five years in office, the regional head must return the loan funds with interest (which has been determined previously). Not only that, the desire of regional heads to enrich themselves (themselves) becomes another motivation that can certainly mean more misery for the people. The steps that are often taken include: (i) intensification and extensification of taxes

and levies; (ii) manipulation of project budgets; (iii) sale of regional assets; and (iv) sale of the natural resources of the regions and the state. (Bathoro, 2011)

According to Karyudi Sutajah Putra, political dynasties spread due to 3 (three) factors, namely: (i) the strength of financial capital; (ii) network strength; and (iii) position in the party. Leo Agustino identified the reality of political dynasties as political patronage. He asserted that the political transformation that was taking place in Indonesia, where the regional head was directly elected by the people, had its own negative impact on the process of democratisation. This is because the Pemilukada has directly opened space for deeper patronage (the logic of the exchange of interests). The elected regional heads try to use their position to play the role of owner of the main source. This role is not a difficult thing for regional heads to carry out. Through their position, these political leaders have many opportunities to use public institutions as their domain of power and exchange public resources under their control to further certain agendas. The successful team soon turned into political brokers because they were considered to have second-order resources. (Hady, 2018)

The existence of the phenomenon of political dynasties received attention from the community. The impact of the dynasties' existence was felt directly by the community, especially in the lack of improvement and effectiveness of performance implementation for the purpose of public welfare.

Efforts to limit the existence of political dynasties were carried out by issuing Law Number 8 Year 2015 concerning Amendments to Law No. 1 of 2015 concerning Establishment of PERPPU No. 1 of 2014 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents and Mayors, especially in Article 7, letter r, which states that "having no conflict of interest with incumbent" includes not having blood relations, marriage ties, and/or lineage with incumbent. This includes all single-separation vertical or lateral relations, namely father, mother, father-in-law, uncle, aunt, brother, sister, brother-in-law, child, or son-in-law, unless they have passed the gap once in office. This article reinforces the prohibition of conflicts of interest with incumbents in the succession of Regional Heads. This is surely an effort to minimize the existence of political dynasties.

However, the Constitutional Court, in the Constitutional Court Decision No. 33 / PUU-XIII / 2015, cancels the existence of Article 7, letter r of Law No. 8 of 2015. The Constitutional Court overturned the provisions of Article 7, letter r of Law No. 8 of 2015 with consideration to the Human Rights of each citizen, referring to the provisions of the 1945 Constitution. This will surely eradicate efforts to limit the existence of political dynasties in the Indonesian government.

Surya Thandra said that the emergence of political dynasties was caused by the failure of social movements, especially those carried out by NGO activists and civil society forces, because we were far from society. Meanwhile, what is seen and felt by the community in dealing with life's problems is mainly related to the success of the incumbent in developing their region without the explanation and meaningful political learning from the power of civil society. Political opposition is needed so that the space for the creativity and innovation of the community is not lost. This is also due to the tendency of pro-democracy activists to focus too much on building people's networks without trying to enter the official structure of power and struggle from within power (Hady, 2018)

The saying that blood is thicker than the water is increasingly manifesting itself in politics in Indonesia. The politics of kinship and dynasty, or family politics, appear to be increasingly strengthening. This is inseparable from the poor process of political recruitment carried out by political parties in elections, especially post-conflict local elections. Kinship politics is synonymous with the concentration of power in certain family or political relatives. The strengthening of kinship politics like this is, of course, very worrying. If this trend is increasingly widespread, it is not impossible that in the near future, Indonesian politics will be akin to those of the Philippines, where territorial-based bossism control politics. The country is run by a handful of elites from several powerful families, clans, or political dynasties in certain regions, and therefore it is very difficult to expect an expansion of access to power and a healthy and substantial democratic process. This reality is increasingly symptomatic in our local democracy areas that have built political dynasties but have not been able to guarantee welfare for their people (Hady, 2018)

Theoretically, the practice of political dynasties raises various problematic threats in political life at the local level. Within the framework of consolidating local democracy, the practice of political dynasties narrows the space for public participation and negates one of the basic principles of democracy, namely political equality. In addition, political dynasties will only strengthen oligarchic phenomena in regions that have the potential to weaken the mechanism of checks and balances because political offices are controlled by one family. In the view of Amich Alhumami (2016), social researchers at the University of Sussex UK, political kinship or political dynasty are not in accordance with the principle of meritocracy because the recruitment process is based on family sentiment, not competence. According to him, if it continues, this phenomenon can be counterproductive to efforts to build a modern democratic system. The domination of power by such a group of local elites or families will ultimately lead to vulnerability to various forms of abuse (corruption) of political and economic power (Suryani, 2011)

The existence of political dynasties in the current Indonesian government has not yet had a positive impact on society. Local strongmen or political dynasties tend to end in an abuse of



power (abuse of power). This can be seen from a number of cases that have emerged. Public officials at the local level who were entangled in KKN crimes came from several autonomous regions whose political dynasties were deeply rooted. For example, Banten (Banten Governor Ratu Atut Chosiyah), Riau (Riau Governor Rusli Zainal and Annas Maamun), Kendari (Mayor Adriatma Dwi Putra and Asrun), Kutai Kertanegara (Regent Rita Widyasari and Syaokani Hassan Rais), and several other areas.

Public officials whose regions have political dynasties entangled in KKN have a detrimental impact on the local community in their area. The level of community welfare was mortgaged for the existence of this political dynasty. Communities are harmed or even ignored, and the priorities of development and regional development are diverted for the benefit of individuals or groups.

### **Conclusions**

The existence of political dynasties in Indonesia at this time cannot be said to have a positive impact, both in the sphere of governance (public services) and people's welfare. With many Regional Heads of "dynasties" still involved in KKN crime, these hierarchies become an important study of the existence of a political dynasty in Indonesia, especially at the local level. The political maturity and professionalism of a public official who prioritises the interests of the local community is still low. The importance of maintaining the existence of political dynasties in the region is still so strong that the application of the concept (welfare state) in Indonesia will be increasingly difficult.

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