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5 Effects of educational performance, political competition, and regional financial capacity on incumbents' votes in Indonesian local elections (a hierarchical regression analysis)

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ABSTRACT: This research examined the influence of educational performance, political competition, and regional financial capacity on incumbent votes. Data were obtained from 212 people from various districts/cities throughout Indonesia and analyzed using the hierarchical regression method. The results showed that the educational performance, political competition, and financial capacity of the local government influence incumbents' votes in Indonesian local elections.

Keywords: educational performance, incumbents' votes, financial capacity, political competition

1. INTRODUCTION

According to previous studies, educational performance, political competition, and regional financial capacity influence the performance of incumbent votes (Boyne et al., 2009; Brender, 2003; Ferraz and Finan, 2011; Happy, 1992; Ingram and Copeland, 1981; James and John, 2006). According to Boyne and colleagues (2009), incumbents' votes in the United Kingdom's local governments are affected by public services. However, few studies have been conducted to examine the effect of government performance on regional heads in Indonesia.

Education is a compulsory basic service, a key performance indicator, and a critical issue in local election campaigns in Gianyar Regency, Bali Province, Indonesia (Sedana, 2014). Brender (2003) states that it influences the victory of the incumbent mayor in local elections in Israel.

It is necessary to examine the community's response. Therefore, Indonesian politicians need to realize that people tend to appreciate performing leaders and punish those with poor performance in public management activities through budget expenditures (James and John, 2006).

Besides performance, other factors also increase incumbents' votes, such as the political contestation between candidates that leads to competition. In local elections, each candidate offers their best programs for the people, which voters compare (Ferejohn, 1986).

Local governments' financial capacity to implement development programs is also likely to influence the votes associated with the regional head. Financial capacity is the ability of a region's budget to finance the development process.

The higher the government's financial capacity, the greater the number of projects executed by the regional head for the people's welfare. In the United States, mayors have financial difficulties resulting in lower spending of public funds, which can lead to a defeat in the general election (Ingram and Copeland, 1981). When the regional financial capacity is high, a variety of alternative programs other than education is offered. Therefore, the regional financial capacity influences the incumbent votes in local elections. This study examined the effect of government education on service performance as variables that influence incumbents' votes.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

2.1 Educational performance of local governments and incumbents' votes

In Israel, educational performance is related to the victory of the incumbent mayor, and it is an essential requirement for Indonesian politicians (Brender, 2003). Communities expect the provision of adequate and excessive educational services; therefore, education is important in local election campaigns. Education is also a campaign issue in elections conducted in Gianyar and Bangli Regencies, Bali Province (Gelgel, 2012; Sedana, 2014). When there is an increase in regional heads' performance level, people tend to consider them as working in their interests. Based on retrospective voting theory, politicians who perform properly while governing are reelected. This research has argued that educational performance is an essential issue for the community; therefore, the inability of regional heads to provide this service tends to have negative impacts. However, when regional heads provide educational services that exceed the standards set by the community and increase the average time spent in school, it means they are performing adequately and they are reelected. Based on this description, the hypothesis proposed is as follows: H1: Educational performance positively affects incumbents' votes in Indonesian local elections.

2.2 Political competition and incumbent's votes

Elections are political contests between candidates to acquire votes. Candidates mobilize their resources to win people's votes through political networks, popularity, or spending money. Voters tend to choose candidates based on these platforms (Ferejohn, 1986). These candidates are required to offer a program or campaign to account for their performance. This research has argued that in local elections, candidates offer programs and provide various short-term benefits for voters. According to the retrospective voting theory, people tend to choose incumbent candidates because the community has enjoyed their leadership performance. Therefore, high political competition with educational performance has the ability to increase incumbents' votes in local elections. Based on this description, the hypothesis proposed is as follows: H2: Political competition with educational performance increases incumbents' votes.

2.3 Local financial capacity and incumbents' votes

Local financial capacity is the ability of regions to finance development with a district/city budget after conducting mandatory expenditure. The higher the financial capacity, the easier it is to allocate budget to various functions, which is the obligation and choice of the regional government. In the United States, municipal mayors who experience an increase in debt and a decrease in healthcare and road budgets lose during local elections (Ingram and Copeland, 1981). Researchers have stated that the higher the local financial capacity, the greater the variety of programs and activities regional heads undertake during their term in office and vice versa. Regional financial capacity, together with education at a high level of political competition, tends to increase incumbents' votes. Based on this description, the hypothesis proposed is as follows: H3: Regional financial capacity, educational performance, and political competition increase incumbents' votes in Indonesian local elections.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses and the dependent/independent variables. It was carried out in two/three-step analysis to determine whether the significant variable X2 in the second step is seen based on the change in R2.

$$i - \text{Vote}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_{1a}\text{Edu}_i \quad (1a)$$

$$i - \text{Vote}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_{1a}\text{Edu}_i + \beta_2\text{Comp}_i \quad (2a)$$

$$i - \text{Vote}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_{1a}\text{Edu}_i + \beta_2\text{Comp}_i$$

$$\text{PS}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_{4a}\text{Didik}_i + \beta_4\text{Komp}_i + \beta_5\text{KKD}_i \quad (4a)$$

4. RESULTS

Table 1. Hierarchical regression analysis.

Model	R2	R2 change	Sig F change	F-stat	Sig F-stat	Hypotheses
First step						
C Edu	0.017	0.017	0.057	3.658	0.057	H1 supported
Second Step						
C Edu Comp	0.353	0.342	0.00**	58.514	0.000	H2 supported
Third Step						
C Edu Comp LFC	0.380	0.363	0.00	42.551	0.00	H3 supported
Description: Dependent: i-Vote Independent variables: Edu: education performance; comp: political competition LFC: Local government financial capacity						

The data in Table 1 show the following:

- The effect of educational performance on incumbents' votes has R2 at 0.017 with a sig. F change of 0.057 less than alpha 0.1. The significance of $F < 0.1$ indicates that H1 is supported.
- The effect of educational performance, along with political competition, on incumbents' votes, has R2 at 0.353, with a significant value of 0.342 and sig. F change 0.000 less than alpha 0.05. R2 in the second model is higher than in the first; therefore, H2 is supported.
- The effect of joint educational performance, political competition, and regional financial capacity on incumbents' votes increased R2 to 0.380, and the R-square change showed a significant value of 0.363 and sig. F change 0.00 less than alpha 0.05. R2 in the second model is higher than in the first; therefore, H3 is supported.

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