Politicians among Santri Examining the Understanding of Political Power among PKB Elites in Kediri City

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Abstract: The reviews of power consist of several categories including: reviews of political elites as elaborated by Mills Reviews of military elites as suggested by Eksterowitz reviews of executive politics and its dichotomous character as pioneered by Elgie reviews of power transfer as proposed by RV. Raehn and reviews of power focusing on political parties in public election system as described by Cusack. The review discussed in this research remains within category of power reviews of political parties. Research problems are how is the understanding of political power among the PKB elites in Kediri City? What are sources of power these elites have and what category of political elites is produced from the possible differences between individual PKB elites the approach to review is constructivist paradigm. The object of research is PKB in Kediri City. Data are collected through interview, observation and secondary data analysis. The format of data includes expressions, daily experiences, structures, sign configurations and less organized manners of speech. Research also involves data reduction, data presentation and conclusion. It is concluded that: there are two poles of understanding among the PKB elites in Kediri City when they must understand political power. One pole is ideological understanding and other is practical understanding in both poles or contexts, the PKB elites in Kediri City are identified as having and using the sources of influence or power such as money, strictness, religious symbols, structural and cultural legitimacy and cemetery pilgrimage and the categorization represents the fragmentation of the PKB elites in Kediri City based on their understanding of political power and their possession of sources of power which these elites are classified into ideological, pragmatists and situational elites.

Key words: Political elites, power, sources of power, pragmatists and situational elites, constructivist paradigm

INTRODUCTION

Power and power elites are usually reviewed into some categories. First category is the reviews of political elites corroborated by Mills (1958). He says that in United States, national power remains in hand of the elites who collaborate with some interest parties such as military elites, bureaucrats and entrepreneurs. What Mills reviews, however is contested by Mills (1971) quoted in Lipset who asks a question whether the parties reviewed by Mills are power elites or veto group. A similar question is also lifted by Paul M. Sweezy who inquires whether the reviewed parties are power elites or ruling class. Second category is the reviews of military elites as suggested by Eksterowitz. This category considers the military as the prominent elites to control the practice of exercising power. Third category is the reviews of executive politics and its dichotomous character as pioneered by Elgie and Machin (1991). Fourth category is the reviews of power transfer as proposed by Raehn (1989) who states that conversion from traditional conservatism into neo-conservatism is indicated by change from strict loyalty upon America as a country and/or the proud of peoples to their cultural and scientific achievement, into a more liberal thought of economic issues. Fifth category is the reviews of power focusing on political parties in public election system. It is described by Cusack et al. (2010) by reviewing political representation in public election.

The current research attempts to do a review of political parties power. A political party as the object of research is Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB) in Kediri City. Resources used by PKB and how the PKB elites to understand political power are reviewed. PKB is a political wing declared by a religion-based organization, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). The lack of reliable arrangement to produce a synergy effect to relation between PKB and NU has led both organizations to have different perception about similar political issues.

At glance, it seems that both are opposing to each other. It is not surprised if PKB, a party based on Islam has lost the identity of Islam itself (Hamayotsu, 2011).

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Kediri City is a selected setting for research because the city in period of research has been brightly ornamented for election campaign. All legislative candidates from PKB exploit their proximity to central figures of Islam, called Kyai, who usually are the respected principal of Islam Boarding School. The interest of the elites of NU in organization branch office is understated if compared to that of Kyai. It brings forward an odd premise: Why the PKB elites as a political wing of NU, remain more considerate to exploit their proximity to Kyai rather than to do importantly necessary lobbies with boards of NU? It is possible to attribute this question to this motto, "the occupant of a chair of power in PKB must be acknowledged by Kyai and religious elders". The researcher presumes that this fact has triggered different understanding about the political power among the PKB elites.

Problems of research: A frame of thought used in the research is that power possessed by PKB elites shall be exercised not only based on position of elites as the member of political community but also as the member of religious community because PKB has been declared as a political wing of NU. Therefore, problems determined in this research are how is the understanding of political power among the PKB elites in Kediri City? What are sources of power these elites have and what category of political elites is produced from the possible differences between individual PKB elites?

The objectives of research: It is expected the research findings will be easily understood by interested individuals or other researchers of local politic. The government may take benefit from this research by using it as a reference in designing a local politic policy. Therefore, the objectives of research are to obtain a descriptive (interpretative) illustration about the understanding of political power among local PKB elites; to identify the resources possessed by local political PKB elites in their political leadership and to find out an illustration about the identity category of local PKB elites based on phenomenon of local politicians.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research paradigm: A paradigm is used to obtain description about the understanding among the PKB elites about political power. This paradigm is social construction perspective. Theory of constructionist is suggested by Berger and Luckmann (1990) and this opens the initial path for a comprehensive understanding of a reality. Bergerian perspective is then considered as the most reliable view to analyze the understanding of political power among elites. Few reasons arise. First, a social reality that will be understood through participative observation and depth interview is the social actions that local PKB elites do in their daily life including their political and religious activities. Second, this review emphasizes on understanding about the cause (noumena)of actions, especially related to political activities of the PKB elites in Kediri City.

PKB in Kediri City as research setting: PKB in Kediri City is selected as a research site due to some reasons. The most prominent reason is the Party declared from the spirit NU. Similar cultural background must not put PKB in great contrast from NU. The relationship between Kyai and PKB elites is quite exploited. Therefore, elites remain in intersection between the party elites as the member of political community and also as the member of religious community with paternalistic culture. Forward and backward tensions in this position lead the PKB elites to have different understanding about political power from other elites.

Information collection: Research duration is quite long from May 2003 to August 2005. The researcher has spent most research times in field because the researchers is domiciled in Kediri City. Data are collected through interview, observation and secondary data analysis. Interview is directly conducted on site such as during board assembly or political campaign. The location of interview may include mosque, house or office. The observation is done by participating into assemblies, campaigns and informal meetings. The author goes with subjects of research (the PKB elites in Kediri City) to do several activities such as having an appointment with government officers having a meeting at PKB Secretariat or at NU Secretariat and even doing a pilgrimage in cemeteries. The engagement of the author into these activities is aimed to obtain information related to research problems. This method is quite effective to reveal the views of the research subjects, especially those related to political power and also to avoid from accepting less substantive formalistic answers.

Analysis technique: Information collected is analyzed during and after the collection. Data format includes expressions, daily experiences, structures, sign configurations and less organized manners of speech. Research also involves data reduction, data presentation and conclusion. Data reduction means to simplify the data through classification. Data may be grouped into data of campaign, data of branch conference or data of other

supports for political interest. Data presentation is to present the reduced data in organized way. This presentation is followed by conclusion which contains of several findings. To stimulate the reading of findings as a something new, a comparison is made between recent theories, concepts and propositions with those previously existed. However, as a consequence from qualitative research, the conclusion must be transferred into other locus or locality with similar character to locus of current research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result of research
Understanding of research subjects about political power:
Each of research subjects has different understanding about political power despite their agreement that power is a necessary resource to exercise the influence. One subject considers power as prophetic while other regards power as pragmatic. Another subject proposes for the combine of two. In prophetic term, power is related to supernatural issues while pragmatic view correlates power with materialistic or objective (measurable) things based on logic of short-term result with sacrifice.

In addition to these three categories of understanding, there is a remote variant that is difficult to classify into one of these categories. This variant is the understanding of research subjects to consider Kyai as a referral figure for their political actions. They presume that political power they have possessed is the will of Kyai. Indeed, Kyai is a source of political authorities. Any political decisions and actualization of these decisions into political actions will be the manifestation of Kyai's will and therefore, any decision-makings always put Kyai as a single reference.

Despite subject's understanding about political power, it cannot escape from the resource from which the influence and power emanate. Influence rate of the subjects in exercising their political power may be different due to their potential or resource.

Source of influence: The researcher sorts the collected information by assuming the resource that is used to facilitate the PKB elites in Kediri City in acquiring and exercising their power. If power is assumed as a process to influence others, then elites will do so when they have resource to make possible that others will accept their influence. As shown by observation over or statement by, the subjects or informants, the author faces great diversity of the data. Various data may help the researcher to identify some sources that may be the sources of power for the PKB elites in Kediri City.

Results of observation and interview have provided interesting findings about legislative candidates in legislative election. Resources of influence used to win election may include money, strictness, religious symbols, structural and cultural legitimacy and cemetery pilgrimage.

Money: Political face of Indonesia around 2014 General Election is threatened by money politic practice (Stphen, 2014). Money politic issue has been widely disseminated by crowd during the election of Kediri Mayor on Thursday, 29 August, 2013 and during legislative general election on 9 April, 2014. PKB is not the only party affected with this issue but sways the principle of PKB. Money politic is indeed contrasted with PKB's political doctrines, including akhlakulkarimah(good deed based on Quran and Hadist) and rahmatanlilalamin (maintaining the peace).

Within legislative election context, the legislative candidates of PKB have boldly revealed that money is needed to ensure the win. Not only money will be extended over the electorates but self-publication to promote themselves onto electorates also needs large amount of money. This political mechanism is almost identical to free-market mechanism in economical study of pricing. Supply and demand aspect and also the strict competition between legislative candidates will influence the amount of money that must be distributed into electorates. Money is just one package because the candidates are also giving another package, usually staple. Toward the election date on 9 April, 2014, the donation rate is increased or even accelerated. The candidates between political parties or even from similar party including those from PKB, work hard to act generous to win race of election.

In election of mayor, the PKB elites and their successive team have spent a lot of monies for self-publication and other facility, especially for fundraising event. One difference distinguishing local election from legislative election is the provider of the fund. Any expenses for legislative election are incurred by candidates themselves but the fund for mayor election is contributed by political party.

Money is so influential to both contexts of election. Candidates are quite ambitious to win election and thus money is a pragmatic way to win vote. Results of observation and interview in Kediri City have shown that power of money is very dominant in these two elections. As reported by a subject, the candidate may spread money in range between 100,000 and 150,000 rupiahs. Not different from the elections in other cities, peoples in Kediri City are relatively pragmatic. It means that electorates have bravely shouted that they will give their

vote to legislative candidate or mayor candidate who gives the greatest offer. It is an ironic fact but the factor of money is not negligible if a candidate insists on winning from the strict competition.

The occurrence of money politic is an implication from political patronage and also from open proportional system (Ahmad, 2014). In this system, the candidates merely attempt to promote their personal appeal in their political party. The candidates are relying self-promotion more on their individual network than using machines of their political party. Several modes are used such as giving souvenirs, providing public goods and conferring pork barrel projects to electorates.

Strictness: A phenomenon that is usually shown is that PKB elites in Kediri City exploit many sources for their legitimacy. Several actions by elites in many political events in Kediri City have provided the information about the exploitation many sources to contribute the pursuit and achievement of power. One source to obtain and to defend the power is by strictness. The use of strictness in various political events involving the PKB elites has been easily identified.

Strictness is apparently found during the campaign for legislative election. It takes a place by forcing other group to support the interest of certain group. Physical collision between constituents of each legislative candidate of PKB can be avoided but anarchic posture is still apparent in some demonstrations. An example of strictness may be removing the picture of a PKB candidate or other candidate. Such removal by force is a matter of showing muscle strength and physical threat. In political context of Indonesia, this trend is caused by several backgrounds such as population pressure within-group dynamic and horizontal inequity (Berger *et al.*, 1992; Ostby *et al.*, 2011).

In psychological dimension, strictness is considered as lying, indoctrination, threat or pressure that aims to decelerate mental and brain capacities of the victim. In context of Mayor Election, a number of pamphlets are posted on strategic places containing of information about corruption affair involving one candidate of Kediri Mayor. It proves that psychological strictness is a resource of influence that is used by some elites of political party to overthrow their opposite mayor candidates. The target of pamphlet is a mayor candidate carried not by PKB.

The use of religious symbols: Other resource that also provides legitimacy is religion. All the PKB elites in Kediri City have used religious symbols to acquire and to exercise their power. To acquire the power, they introduce religion symbols such as Kyai, religious properties and icons and connection with religious institutions. Religious symbols are becoming the source of power to PKB elites when these symbols are communicated and expressed to public realm.

The subjects of research are never forgotten to bring along sajadah (a special mat for prayer) and tasbih (chained-beads for praise recitation) in their cars. Calligraphy and Ka'bah sketches and several pictures of mosques in Makkah and Madinah are put on living room of their house. These materials are indicating their religiosity. They realize that they are Moslem or Santri (students at Pesantren) who shall not separate from Pesantren (a place where Santri studies Islam). Even, small sized Al Qur'an is always kept in dashboard of the car. This miniature of Islam Holy Book can also be found in office of Political Party and desk of fraction room at House of Representative in Kediri City. As stated by one subject the use of religious materials is by some reasons.

Islam symbols are enclosed into private or official vehicles to underscore the background of religiosity when the candidates must present in public space. Indeed, these symbols are functional them. During a trip to Surabaya by car with one subject, the researcher discovers tasbihhanged on rear mirror that will be used for praise recitation. When dzuhur pray comes, the subject asks the driver to stop by nearby mosque.

All the PKB elites have used religious symbols to empower their political influence. The use of religious symbols and terms in politic is easily found in context of election. It is called as symbolical politic. In Indonesia, religious symbols are the inspiration for democratization discourse (Liddle, 1996). The PKB elites seem enjoying themselves using religious terms to persuade peoples into opinion that they still "respect" the religion despite their controversial political path. Often, the electorates of 2014 General Election are persuaded by a Campaign Spokesperson or by a PKB candidate through mentioning a name of great Kyai or telling the story when the candidate studies at certain Pesantren as santri. It needs to be done to show the religiosity of candidate.

Structural and cultural legitimacy: Legitimacy is very important because the elites need legitimacy to be recognized that they have authority (Borras and Conzelmann, 2007). The real fact shows that PKB elites acquire the power by using the legitimacy they have in their position in organization or through their pesantren background. PKB is declared by PBNU and thus, the cultural and political bases of PKB are the traditions adhered by NU. After the founding, PKB is managed by NU throughout the lowest level, the

subsidiary. Therefore, PKB, NU and Pesantren are interdependent and this provides a distinctive legitimacy to each institution. As other PKB elites, the PKB elites in Kediri City also come from the elites of NU and Pesantren. It is not surprising if the source of their legitimacy is coming not only from PKB structure but also from NU structure and Pesantren culture.

Pride being the Board of PKB in Kediri City is a phenomenon captured from actions and speeches of research subjects. All of them feel that being the Board of DPC PKB in Kediri City, their position in party at branch level is increased or respectable because they are surrounded by PKB cadres who can be utilized for their interest. The rank in PKB has facilitated the subjects to exercise the power based on formal authority. The scope of power as the elites at branch level is wider if compared to membership of dewansyuro at branch subsidiary level. Being the board member of dewantanfidziyah may help the subjects to control over the implementation of party policies at lowest level.

All the PKB elites in Kediri City represent peoples who are born from the family with NU tradition. In this tradition, core family (dzuriah) is the owner and determinant of NU movement. Such cultural hierarchy has put Kyai and direct descendants into highest stratum. Therefore, the dominance of Kyai is an important variable in NU political tradition. However, not all research subjects have hereditary bloodline from Kyai. Those with direct bloodline to Kyai will deserve different treatment from those who are not Kyai descendants. It indicates that resource of influence owned by PKB elites is not only obtained from their structural position at PKB in Kediri City but also their structural position at Pesantren. In this context, the elites only obtain their legitimacy through connection, attention and appearance (Yao and Liang, 2014).

Cemetery pilgrimage: A character of Islam politic in Indonesia is the revival of religious teaching (Hafez, 1997). One manifestation is through cemetery pilgrimage. To some peoples, cemetery is not a merely place to store the corpse but it is also a place where sacred persons are laid. It is believed that body of sacred persons is not easily decayed because a magical power has kept their body intact. Their soul can visit their grave when the pilgrims come and pray. Being the adherent of Allah teaching, pilgrims shall only use this sacred grave as the mediator to accelerate God blessing. However, not all pilgrims have "right" intention. Some of them only ask the soul of the deceased to grant their wishes. Some even take away certain materials from the cemetery for their own keepings. These materials may be

water, soil or wood that they use as "the charm" or something with invisible power for the safety of self and family. Pursuant to local history sources in Kediri City, two cemeteries are believed as sacred. One is setonogedong cemetery while other is bakalan cemetery.

In general, all research subjects have revealed similar motive when they do pilgrimage to both cemeteries. Both cemeteries are the figures who disseminate Islam in Kediri regions and they are called as waliyyulloh because of their sublime soul before God. The visit to these cemeteries means to respect to what has been taught by Waliyyulloh and to consider their teaching as important legacy for the next generations, including the pilgrims.

The visit to cemetery by PKB elites may include other reason. As noted by reseacher, most research subjects admit that they do a pilgrimage to both Waliyyulloh cemeteries because they believe that soul of the sacred will protect them from the danger or from any disturbances against their political power. Therefore, research subjects explain that pilgrimage makes them cautious because in politic, good person beside them may be the enemy who can suddenly grab political power from them. Cemetery pilgrimage is a medium to bring the elites toward their popularity and to create specific culture based on this habit (Ahmad, 2014).

The discussion above starts with classification based on similarity and difference in subject's understanding about power. Classification reflects the orientation, action and discourse developed by elites in dealing with problems in research context. If elites speak about community problems and give suggestion for the solution, it needs to be seen whether the solution is useful for short-term or long-term. In addition to solution, the question may rise about what principles are used to underlie the solution, whether it is practical resolution which is ready to use or normative resolution that involves ideal abstract with future aspiration.

By examining the characteristic and pattern of relationship between PKB and pesantren as different institutions and cultures, there is a sociological thought that may be referred from berger analysis. It is consistent to use of this analysis as the analytical frame work to this research.

Externalization, objectification and internalization: Externalization is an early process for the emergence of social construction. Conceptually, the externalization is closely related to social construction brought by politicians of PKB which is elaborated as follows.

Sacred texts are adopted. The expression of sacred texts (Al Qur'an and Hadist) is used as the stepped stone

to provide the legitimacy whether a political action is "right" or "wrong". It becomes a moral standard that requires a person to think and to act for the interest of peoples and collectivity. It is a noble teaching since the age of Prophet Muhammad SAW.

Pesantren world is often understood as separate world from practical politic. This is a world with walls where inside the wall, Pesantren only concerns with teaching of Islam religion. If Kyai and other components of Pesantren attempt to enter political word, great adjustment must to be made. The adjustment is important to smooth the political duties. Therefore, the logics of democracy and of politic always need electoral process (Lipjphart, 2004; Horowitz, 2000). Ethics of assembly, manners of association and other things that patterned long time will be useful as the reference of action to some peoples with Pesantren background when they enter political world.

In a moment of objectification, the social reality seems apparent as if it is beyond human. It becomes objective reality. The reality of self is subjective, while that out of self is objective. Both realities make up the inter-subjective interaction network through organization or institutionalization. Objectification process may be elaborated as follows. Kyai, Santri and lay persons are three different entities. The politicians of PKB, Pesantren as their cultural background and their supportive constituent are different. From the perspective of politicians, Pesantren and constituent are the entities the politicians shall face in objectification process. Pesantren and constituent are the social world or also the reality. Inter-subjective dialog between the politicians and reality beyond them may produce new meanings. Moreover, new meanings produced from the dialog between two realities will be the integration of various meanings given by each reality, usually advocated by opposing institutions.

The behavior of politicians shall be based on Pesantren tradition. This tradition is always in opposite with political interest. However, it underestimates the fact that Pesantren and not-Pesantren are made by human who processes themselves "into" something through social construction stage.

Internalization is a process where individuals do self-identification in their socio-cultural world. Internalization represents a moment of embedding social reality into self or that of converting social reality into subjective reality.

Historically, the PKB elites have not so much different background from the formal elites of NU. PKB is declared by NU and surely, the pillar is supported by base strength of the elites of NU. Therefore, the source for recruiting the PKB elites is from NU. In term of structure and culture, NU is a place for the birth of the PKB elites. The prospect of this Party is to become a place for channeling the aspiration of Islam adherent (Kadir, 1999).

Democracy is facilitated in PKB. Although, Kyai is the primary reference for the power behavior of local PKB elites, egalitarianism seedlings are still possible to be spread to open the cross-border access of cultural hierarchy for nahdliyin. Kyai and Santri are two different realities but they live within social reality of nahdliyin.

In local politic, the collision of Santri against politicians may trigger the fragmentation of the local PKB elites. Santri behavior is framed based on their understanding of political power. By understanding the power of the local PKB elites, it enriches previous findings. The evolution of power understanding has been started from Weber anderson to Yukl but all of them do not explain behavior of specific communities, especially those with paternalistic culture, like nahdliyin.

CONCLUSION

Two poles of understanding are developed among the PKB elites in Kediri City for their understanding about political power. Ideological understanding has perceived political power as a potential influence adhered in political rank that will be useful to influence peoples toward social order based on morality, Islam doctrine and principle of ahl al sunnahwa al jama'ah.

Within two contexts of research, the PKB elites in Kediri City are identified as having and using the resource of influence or power, such as money, strictness, religious symbols, structural and cultural legitimacy and cemetery pilgrimage.

The categorization reflects fragmentation among the PKB elites in Kediri City and it is made based on understanding of elites about political power and sources of power. It involves ideological elites, pragmatists and situational elites.

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