

HASTO WARDOYO'S POPULISM

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Abstract : *This paper will discuss how Hasto Wardoyo exercised government power during his first leadership from 2011-2016. Using populism as an analytical tool, this paper argues that Hasto Wardoyo used two ways in exercising government power. Firstly, using populist programs. Secondly, doing direct interaction with people.*

Keywords : *Populism, Hasto Wardoyo, Populist Programs, Direct Interaction*

Abstrak : Tulisan ini akan membahas bagaimana Hasto Wardoyo menjalankan kekuasaan pemerintahan pada masa kepemimpinan pertamanya dari tahun 2011-2016. Menggunakan populisme sebagai alat analisis, tulisan ini berpendapat bahwa Hasto Wardoyo menggunakan dua cara dalam menjalankan kekuasaan pemerintahan. Pertama, menggunakan program populis. Kedua, melakukan interaksi langsung dengan masyarakat.

Kata Kunci : Populisme, Hasto Wardoyo, Program Populis, Interaksi Langsung

INTRODUCTION

Not many local leaders in Indonesia are re-elected with good impressions, strong support, and high votes. Hasto Wardoyo (Hasto), a head of Kulon Progo district, Yogyakarta Special Region, was one of the local leaders in Indonesia who got it in the 2017 Kulon Progo election. Hasto got more than 85% of the vote (Wicaksono, 2017) and the people participation rate was 79.2% exceeding the national target, of 77.5% (Sutarmi, 2017).

At the same time, some news shows that Hasto is a leader who is close to the people, using programs related to the public interest such as health insurance, house-upgrading subsidy, etc. This paper will discuss how Hasto Wardoyo exercised government power during his first leadership in 2011-2016. Based on that, I will use populism as a conceptual framework.

METHODS

Populism is still an ambiguous and contested concept. Political scientists often debate whether populism is a style, belief, political strategy, trade trick, or a combination of all these components (Kazin, 2016). The concept of populism is ambiguous because populism presents itself differently, depending on the context of place and time (Taggart, 2003).

Populism comes from the Latin "populus" which means the people (Bryder, 2009). Noam Gidron and Bart Bonikowski (n.d) state that there are at least three approaches to defining populism. Firstly, populism as an ideology. This approach is widely discussed by Mudde in the study of populism in Europe, especially in the European right-wing populist party. As an ideology, Mudde (2004) defined it as a subtle centralized ideology that divides society into two parts: "homogeneous and antagonistic groups", and "ordinary people versus corrupt elites". In addition, Mudde also stressed that politics should express the will of the people.

Secondly, populism is a discursive style. In this approach, populism is understood as a political style that uses rhetoric to attract the people. Populism is a minimal programmatic policy but has strong symbols such as tax, ethnics, elites, and other issues (Hastings, 2013).

The third approach used in this paper is populism as a political strategy. Populism is understood as a political strategy in which personal leaders use a direct and non-mediating way of seeking or exercising power. In addition, these personal leaders usually seek to build a closer relationship with the people or the constituents through programs based on public aspiration (Weyland, 2001).

To get the data, I applied two main strategies commonly used in qualitative case methods, namely interview and documentary study. For the interview, I visited Kulon Progo and talked with the member community. In addition, I got interviews with Hasto Wardoyo (the Head of Kulon Progo District), and Sutedjo (Vice of Hasto Wardoyo). For the documentary, I used an online newspaper and Kulon Progo's government website.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To understand Hasto's success, we have to investigate his background. Hasto was first elected as the head of Kulon Progo district paired with Sutedjo as his vice through the regional head election directly in 2011. Hasto was not a party politician but he was a famous gynecologist in the province of Yogyakarta. Then, Sutedjo was an experienced bureaucrat. Hasto and Sutedjo were supported by a coalition of three political parties, namely the Struggle Indonesian Democratic Party, the National Mandate Party, and the United Development Party. The Hasto-Sutedjo couple got 46.29% of the votes defeating three other candidates (Wikipedia, 2017).

After being elected, Hasto certainly had to finish the main problem of Kulon Progo, poverty. At that time, Kulon Progo was known as a poor and backward district. The poverty level was 23,60% and the poorest district in the province of Yogyakarta Special Region (BPS, 2018). At the beginning of the 100-day running of the government he led, Hasto vowed not to eat rice while poor families were in Kulon Progo. The vows were given the title of Tri Tedha (Three food) whose contents were as follows (Gune, 2011).

1. Would not eat rice during there were poor families in Kulon Progo.

2. As long as there were still poor families in Kulon Progo, he would not drink sweet drinks except the sugar of Kulon Progo.
3. Would not consume imported fruits.

Not long after being elected, Hasto prioritized welfare issues by making populist programs including health insurance and economic empowerment program called *Bela dan Beli Kulon Progo* (Defend and Buy Kulon Progo). Health insurance was open to all of the district's residents. Regardless of their social and economic status, all residents of Kulon Progo were entitled to coverage. To access services in any local government health facility, residents did not need to pay premiums, and they merely have to show an identity card indicating that they are a resident of Kulon Progo (Teristi, 2017).

Bela dan Beli Kulon Progo program was a defense shown by all communities, leaders, and governments for the interests of Kulon Progo to grow the economy concretely in everyday action. The spirit of *Bela dan Beli Kulon Progo* was to liberate people from the capitalists. It was also to evoke the spirit of Kulon Progo's citizens to prioritize their products rather than foreign products.

The program of *Bela dan Beli Kulon Progo*'s consisted of various policies. The first was the policy of using batik uniform namely "*batik geblek renteng*" as a local batik design produced by craftsmen of Kulon Progo. The obligation to wear the uniforms was addressed to school students and local civil servants in Kulon Progo for using it once a week. With the number of 8000 local civil servants and 80.000 school students, the uniform policy was able to increase the local batik industry. The number of batik craftsmen also increased significantly. Kulon Progo residents who initially worked as batik employees outside came back and worked as batik craftsmen (Wardoyo, 2018).

The second was the obligation to buy rice. Hasto facilitated the establishment of farmer groups. In these groups, the farmers were not only trained to sell their harvest in grain form but also trained to process and pack it to be the rice. In addition, Hasto gave grinding machines, funds, and management training. After that, Hasto obliged local civil servants of Kulon Progo to buy the rice from the farmers. Each local civil servant had to buy at least 10 kilograms per month (Kurniawan, 2015).

The third was the obligation to buy mineral water. Hasto asked Regional Water Company to produce bottled mineral water with the brand "*AirKu or My Water (Water of Kulon Progo)*". *AirKu* was consumed at government meetings and wedding parties. Even, all activities in the government and schools of Kulon Progo were obliged to use it (Munawar, 2017).

By using populist programs, Hasto can get sympathy automatically from the people. Health services can be got well. Then, the *Bela dan Beli Kulon Progo* program can teach people about the importance of self-reliance and loving local products. These populist programs can build the closeness between Hasto and his people. This confirms Wayland's argument that populism arises when political actors seek to build closer relationships with citizens or their constituents through programs that are based on public aspiration (Weyland, 2001).

Besides populist programs, Hasto often performed activities that were in touch and visible to the public. Every week, Hasto often participated to help poor people by giving house-upgrading subsidies. The house renovation program was carried out through cooperation, without using the regional budget. It cost from the donations of the organizations or companies. The workers worked together including Hasto (Maharani, 2016).

Hasto also wanted to communicate with the people directly. The open house was one way to communicate directly with the people. This was done by opening his official residence for the people every Thursday morning starting at 6:30 am to 9:00 am. For 3,5 hours, the people who came could express anything freely not only through public services but also through family problems (Media Center, 2011).

Populist leaders always use direct and personal ways of interacting with people. This is done by listening to people's problems directly. Wayland (2001) stated that in populism, personal leaders use direct and non-intermediate ways to exercise their power.

Populist programs created by Hasto make the people proud of him. Hasto is regarded as a responsible and populist person. Nevertheless, the poverty reduction rate is not significant in Kulon

Progo (BPS, 2018). Even recently, Kulon Progo is still the poorest district in the province of Yogyakarta Special Region (Sutedjo, 2018). It shows that Hasto prioritizes his popularity rather than solving the poverty problem. On one hand, his direct interaction makes the closer relationship between Hasto and his people. On the other hand, it will also make people only believe Hasto is a populist leader. The people will ignore the role of political parties and the House representative as their representative.

Populist programs and direct interaction were finally only a political strategy for Hasto. By using it, the people will admire him as a good leader. This can be used by Hasto as capital to maintain his power. Wayland (2001) argued that populism is used by personal leaders as a political strategy to seek or exercise power through direct/non-mediation ways and populist programs.

In the 2017 Kulon Progo election, Hasto was elected again. He got more than 85% of the vote and a participation rate of 79,2% exceeding the national target, of 77,5%. In 2011, Hasto could only get 46.29%. This shows that Hasto was successful to use populism as a political strategy in maintaining power.

CONCLUSION

Populism is only used as a leader's strategy in maintaining their power with welfare issues as strategic issues by using a direct approach and populist programs. This is done by various political leaders when the other political ways are no longer effective.

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