Enroute to Good Governance: Society-based Government in Sulawesi

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study aims to describe a society-based government as a manifestation of political communication and democracy at Muna District, Southeast Sulawesi Province. The aim is to achieve good governance which is a manifestation of political communication. It is a process where government and society must continue interacting to create a society-oriented government. The society-based government as a manifestation of democracy has been carried out but it does not include all regions in Muna district. This is due to several factors, namely; (1) Inadequate land and sea transportation facilities due to the government's transportation policy; (2) economic inequality; (3) insufficient job opportunities; and (4) education. The study concludes Muna district embodies democratic principles of governance based on populist principles (from the people, by the people, and for the people).

Keywords: Democracy, government, political communication, society

INTRODUCTION

The concept of community-based governance is almost similar to the concept of good governance, a government whose policies are always directed or based on the interests of the people. A community-based governance as a benchmark in the implementation of clean and accountable governance encompasses the central government and the local governments.

In Indonesia, good governance acknowledges and involves the people. Policies are made based on the interests of the people. Clean government is free from corruption and other illegal or dishonest practices. Meanwhile, good governance is a government that can be respected and appreciated by the people, by the nation, and other countries. Those concepts are known as good governance. Thus, the concept of government based on community is the manifestation of good governance and democracy. Indonesia as a democracy is ruled on the principles of community-based government and democracy. It means that all state affairs are from the people, by the people, and for the people. Therefore, all government policies are based on the people's interests.

Besides Indonesia, a country that tries to develop the concept of good governance is the United States. It proposes the concept of *works better and costs less* which means performance is considered better and has lower costs in its system. Therefore, the country should guarantee people's welfare. This concept has been implemented in the process of policy making and governance. In the Indonesian context, this concept is similar to "talk less do more". However, this concept is difficult to be applied in the government.

The spirit of good governance as applied throughout the country aims at boosting development. It improves services delivered to the community and encourage the growth and development of democratic principles. These principles support the author's perspective regarding the concept of society–based government, that all powers, authority, and policies are aligned with the people's interests.

The central government and local governments cooperate to ensure smooth good governance. The president, governors, mayors, and regents have the authority to regulate and manage society to protect people's interests and aspirations which are covered by the legislation supported by stakeholders including the House of Representative, Regional House of Representative, and Government Structures. However, it can be argued this is still inadequate based on the statistical data where poverty rate is still high even though the percentage has decreased (BPS, 2017).

The focus of the study is not questioning the excess or the lack of government's performance since the old order, new order, and the reform era were based on a set of rules or laws. The study focuses on how government meets the desire of its people, which is according to their expectations seen in the development policies of the government. The public faces hardship during an economic downturn and austerity measures of the government further ads to the burden of its people. Hence, the concept of good governance which is society-based is proposed in this study. Based on the needs of the people, the government has to advance the welfare of all Indonesians. It is important to conduct a critical study on society-based government as the manifestation of political communication and democracy. Thus, the research aims to

explain the phenomenon of society-based government as the manifestation of political communication and democracy in order to realise good governance in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Government and Its System

According to Kansil and Christine (2008), the term 'government' can be defined both in a broad sense and in a narrow sense. The government in a broad sense refers to the entire nation's organs, including the House of Representatives. The popular form of government is kingdom or monarchy and republic. Monarchy is a rule by a king, an emperor, or a shah, for example, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and Thailand. A republic is a country ruled by the people who elect their president manage the country for a specified period, for example, the United States and Indonesia whose president rule for four years and five years respectively. According to Winarno (2007), government is a set of policy making and policy implementing structures with binding authorities over a particular population in a particular territory. Government agencies are multifunctional. Executive agents make policies as well as strengthen them and make decisions; legislative agents participate in the implementation of the policies as well as in policy making (Winarno, 2007).

A country has either one of the systems (1) presidential, (2) parliamentary, (3) communist, (4) liberal democracy, (5) liberal, and (6) capital. Arifin (2014) stated that the government is an organisation of people who manage a state. Additionally, the government is in charge of managing the country and ensure the interests and welfare of the people.

Parliamentary Government System.

The parliamentary system of government is where the parliament has the most important role. The parliament has the authority to appoint the prime minister and also overthrow governments by pushing no-confidence motion (Great Publisher, 2009). According to Budiardjo (2010), in the parliamentary system, the executive body and legislative body depend on each other. The cabinet as a part of the executive body is expected to reflect the political power inside the legislature that supports it. The cabinet depends on the support of the legislative body (the principle of ministerial responsibility).

Presidential Government System.

Presidential system is a government system of a republic in which the executive power is in the hands of the people and separated from the legislative power. According to Rod Hague (in Great Publisher, 2009), a presidential system consists of three elements: (1) the president is elected to lead the government and appoints government officials; (2) the president and the legislature have a fixed term; they cannot overthrow each other; and (3) there is no overlap between the executive and the legislative.

Communist Government System. The concept of communist system of government was first proposed by Karl Marx. It is a one-party policy which means there is only one party declaring its loyalty to the communist. Furthermore, this system is only a tool to take control of power against the capital on behalf of individuals (Yunus, Sari, & Patriana, 2016). Thus, the means of production have to be controlled by the state for the prosperity of its people. However, in reality, the benefits are exploited by political parties (Bimbingan, n.d.).

Dictatorship Government System. Dictatorship or authoritarian system is where a government is ruled by a few people or a particular group. In this system, the power of the state covers all aspects of the state and society. Therefore, the public does not have the authority to regulate their life. The political system is related to the principles of authoritarian or totalitarian (Haezer, 2015).

Liberal Government System. This system could also be called an ideology, philosophical view, or political tradition based on the understanding that freedom and equality are the primary political values. In modern society, liberalism will develop into a democratic system. This is because both the democratic system and liberalism are based on the freedom of the majority (Haezer, 2015).

Political Communication Concept

Prior to discussing political communication, it is necessary to address politics. According to Kaid (2004), politics is a drama taking place in an assumed and reported world that evokes threats and hopes, a world people do not directly observe or touch. This statement explains that politics is a drama in which there is the actors' hopes and also possible threats. However, the ultimate goal is to have a better performance. Similarly, political communication becomes the means of communication or bridge between people's interests and political organisations (legislative, executive, and political party) in encouraging people's interest and welfare. Political communication is the process of human relationships as citizens deliver or receive verbal and nonverbal messages of political nature with the aim of achieving a better political life (Aras, 2015).

Therefore, according to Dan Nimmo, political communication is political based on its consequences (actual and potential) which regulate human conduct under conditions of conflict. Dan Nimmo's view explains that politics can be seen based on its consequence. The consequence is the result of communication activities by individuals or groups that regulate their behavior in social conflict conditions (Harun & Sumarno, 2006). The Aras's view (Aras, 2015) is in line with Dan Nimmo's view that political communication is an interaction of political activities to achieve a particular goal, and every political action has a possibility of conflicts, both actual and potential. According to Aras (2015) , there

are two kinds of conflicts which are manifest conflict and latent conflict. Manifest conflict is a conflict or problem that can be observed and seen directly by people or groups. On the other hand, latent conflict is a potential conflict and or problem that is invisible because it is closed and can only be felt. Thus, the conflicts can be understood through non-verbal communication of communicator and communicant involved in political interactions. So, communication can minimise or resolve conflicts (Aras, 2014). Nimmo (1999) stated that political communication was an interpretive process of personal preparation of a citizen by considering some potential impacts on the possibility of responses to political communication, social, and socialisation influence (colleague, family, friends, other important persons in someone's life, the tendency of belief arrangement, value plan, and psychology, and law and constitutional factors).

Democracy Concept

Democracy is a system of government in which the right to make political decisions is guaranteed for every citizen; it is actualised through the majority procedure, or direct democracy. The principles of direct democracy come from the Athenian. In direct democracy, all citizens take part in political decision-making (Maran, 2007). Democracy is also described as a form of government in which citizens use the same rights. However, the rights are indirect, through the representatives in the House of Parliament. The representatives are elected by the people and are responsible to the citizen. This is called representative democracy. Budiardjo (2010) stated that there were various common terms of democracy, including constitutional democracy, parliamentary democracy, guided democracy, Pancasila democracy, People's democracy, Soviet democracy, national democracy, and others. The concept of democracy was first introduced by Pericles in his speech in front of the Athens in Classical Greek BC. The development of thousand years led to at least 550 definitions of democracy (Collier & Levitsky, 1997). The term of democracy is complex and multifaceted, having various meanings. There are various definitions and understanding of democracy (Arifin, 2014).

Democracy is a system of government founded on people's sovereignty. One of the pillars of democracy is the principle of triad politics that has three branches of governance: executive, legislative, and judicial that have equal independent positions. Thus, these three institutions can monitor and control each other based on the principle of checks and balances. The concept of democracy becomes an important key word in political science because it is an indicator of a country's political development (Great Publisher, 2009).

Indonesia implements a specific type of democracy, which is Pancasila democracy. As it is still in the early stage of development, there are various interpretations regarding its nature and characteristics. However, it is undeniable that some principles of the Pancasila democracy are incorporated in the 1945 Act which has not been amended.

Further, the constitution explicitly mentions two principles that animate the text and are included in the explanation of the Act of 1945 regarding the system of government of the Republic of Indonesia (Budiardjo, 2010).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The objective of the research is to critically discuss society-based government as the manifestation of communication and democracy to realise good governance in Muna District, Southeast Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. This research is based on qualitative approach. Some characteristics that can be analysed in qualitative research are: (1) the study was conducted on natural objects, objects developed as they were not manipulated by the researcher; further, the researcher's presence did not affect the dynamic of the objects; (2) the instrument of qualitative research was the individual, that is the researcher; and (3) the data collection method employed triangulation, combining various data collection methods. The data analysis was inductive based on facts that were identified in field and then constructed into hypotheses or theories (Sugiyono, 2015).

The research method used was case study. In case study analysis, the main activity of the researcher is to seek and explore information about the research object, in this case, populist-based government as a manifestation of political communication and democracy. The observations and interviews are at the core of this research. The case study method, is

a limitation of this study, making it easier for researchers in collecting data. Case studies can involve individuals, groups, organisations, movements and events. According to Neumann (2000), a case study is basically a comprehensive description and explanation of various aspects of an individual, a group, an organisation (community), an event, or a social situation. In addition, through case studies, certain social situations will get a very detailed explanation (Neumann, 2000).

Through case studies, researchers can learn as much as possible to research objects so as to provide a complete and deep picture of the reality under study. Some of the advantages or features of the case study are, Mulyana (2003) mentioned: (1) thorough description; (2) its ability to describe a clear relationship between the researcher and the respondent; (3) a high level of trustworthiness (trustworthiness); and (4) opening up wide opportunities for assessment because of the diverse elements of the context. There are two common case study designs: single case and multi-cases; each of which has a holistic type (single unit of analysis) and a multi-unit analysis. Single case study focuses on one case, whereas multi-cases or multiple case studies deal with more than one or many cases.

Based on the context of this research, the case study method used is the single case type. It is because the research focuses on one local government, that is Muna Regency which has many factors or units to be analysed (multi-unit analysis), that are elements of government. So, by itself, this

study cannot use multi-case research design or holistic single case. Single case studies have advantages or strengths, as noted by Lipset, Trow and Coleman in their 'Union Democracy (1956). According to Robert (2005), a case study concerns politics that includes several units of analysis and the main unit of analysis is the organisation as a whole, and the smallest unit is individual members, and some important intermediate units.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Society-Based Government as the Manifestation of Political Communication

Political communication is a bridge that links the people's interests with the government. Communication as used in this research is a process of political messages conveyed by the government to the people (as a form of socialisation) and the people to the government (as a form of aspiration) with the purpose of complaining or delivering political purposes related to the policy. Political communication often faces challenge due to the following reasons:

Political communicator. The government as a message source is likely to be slow and not smooth in conveying messages to the society. This aspect is important considering the fact that all information related to policies must be communicated by the local and central government to ensure societal meets are met.

Political message. Political message is contained in the socialisation of government programmes, vision and missions. Many Indonesians especially in Muna Regency of Southeast Sulawesi Province are not familiar with the programmes implemented by the government, especially related rules, policies, and laws which are not optimally delivered. So many people do not know when they violate a rule. It is caused by the messages related to the policies done by the government.

Political media. Political media in this research refers to mass media. The power of mass media cannot be denied. Mass media are used to communicate the interests of the government and political parties. They are an effective channel in disseminating the government's policies and programmes because of the distance, space, and unlimited time to provide access to information to the public. Every government and political party have a level of dependency on the mass media to disseminate information and act as bridge between the people and the government. Political communication, as already noted, is largely mediated communication, transmitted through the print and electronic media. The media alter the message, in their roles as reporters of commentators on it (McNair, 2003).

Communicant as recipient of the message is the society or people as a whole. An obstacle in delivering the government's political message as well as the socialisation of program and government's future goals is the Indonesian human resources who have little education or never received an

education (elementary, secondary, or high school). This problem happened because of several factors such as laziness, low level of public awareness and willingness, and financial problems (cost of education). Those also can become obstacles in the process of political communication between the government and its people. So, people's feedback is generally not received.

However, Indonesians, especially those in Muna District Southeast Sulawesi Province, are very respectful of the culture that has been transmitted by their ancestors.

Culture. Culture is human ability to think that was concretely and abstractly created. Thus, culture is divided into two: physical and non-physical cultures. Physical culture can include traditional house, building, and technology while non-physical culture includes values, norms (ethics), customs, and beliefs. Culture that makes people appreciate the government includes values, norms (ethics), and customs passed down from ancestors who had been taught manners, and moral ethics embedded in the Indonesian's hearts. Similarly, the political culture that came from basic values of cultural root is difficult to change. If it can be changed, it will require a process of discussion, dialogue, and argumentation which are relatively long.

Ideology. In general, ideology is used to reflect a way of life or a mental behaviour. In particular, ideology is a collection of ideas as well as attitudes and values or a thought about people and society. A pattern of belief can come from ideology, religion, and values of a tradition. Differences in patterns of belief as an ideology, in turn, will be the limiting factor to the process of political communication. Ideology is dogma that does not have an alternative. The Indonesian society, especially in Muna District Southeast Sulawesi Province, still respect their ideology. It means they still retain the belief that society chooses and appreciate their government with the reason or consideration that the ideology of the country comprises local wisdoms and religions to guide their life.

Society-Based Government as a Manifestation of Democracy

Society-based government system is absolute. Society-based government is a concept that adheres to the principle and system of democracy, such as Indonesia and other countries that implement democratic system. In a democracy, people become the pillar and the focus of attention of the government in formulating the policy and state guidelines. Democratic government system from people, by people, and for people is ideal at the concept level, but it is difficult to be implemented. As a democratic country, Indonesia should be able to make it happen, either at the level of policy and government action to empower people in all areas of life, which include health, economic needs, education, security, and others that are important to the society. In the economic area, many people still live in poverty, for example in the eastern regions of Indonesia (Sulawesi, Maluku, Ambon, Irian Jaya, the

border areas of Borneo, as well as the islands of Sumatra shores, and many more). The rate of poverty is still high (the total of poor people/poverty rates (in million) in City + rural area in 2013 was 28.55 million), or 22.94% (BPS, 2017).

The author's research observation related to society-based government is also supported by the concept of democracy that is a system where the implementation of government affairs is based on the interests and welfare of the people. All aspects of society's life is included, such as social, economy, politics, culture, education, and other aspects that support the society such as health and safety. These areas of life, if they are related to the concept of democracy, should be based on people's interests.

Each government policy regarding these areas should be based on the interests of the people. However, the problem is in embracing the concept and principle of democracy, it does not necessarily lead to strict practices of democracy. For example, the economic policy is not based on people's interest. A democracy ceases to function if there is high cost of basic needs triggered by the increase of fuel prices followed by other price increases. This indicates that the government has not been able to improve the economy. Similarly, in other areas, the government has not formulated and implemented policies based on the needs and interests of the people.

Based on the observation, concepts, and critical thinking of issues related to society-based government, the references or main characteristics of democratic government is the government in which all policies made by the government are based on the people's: 1) A platform as a reference for government in making decisions on behalf of the people; 2) Involving the society or the people in decision-making process and for the people's interests through the House of Representative; 3) Protecting the citizens' right such as the right to live without fear and comfortably, the right to get education and teaching, the right to get health care, and the right to get fair treatment before the law; 4) The freedom to have views or opinions; 5) Respecting other races, ethnicities, and religions; 6) The guarantee of the rights of religion or beliefs of each citizen; 7) The guarantee of the right to receive and impart information; 8) The right to vote and to be elected as a leader in the community, including public office or political office.

Therefore, the nation will be free from poverty, be self-reliant, productive, innovative, and able to compete with other countries. The results of observations related to the governance system in Muna District Southeast Sulawesi Province, which is society-based government as a manifestation of democracy, has been good, but not maximal and evenly distributed in all regions in Muna district. This is caused by several factors, among others: (1) land and sea transportation policy, because this area is one of the islands in the central part of Indonesia, that is not adequate; (2)

economic inequality; (3) insufficient job opportunities; and (4) education. All of these factors are indicators of the implementation of democratic principles of government that is government based on populist principles (from the people, by the people, and for the people).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that: (1) the society-based government as a manifestation of political communication is a process where the government at Muna District Southeast Sulawesi Province and the society must continue to interact to ensure aggregation and articulation of political interests that benefit society. This can be a source of political messages, political media, society/people as recipients of the message, as well as cultural factors and people's political ideology that has been adopted since a long time ago; and (2) society-based government as the manifestation of democracy is a necessity; it should be done by the government in the interest and welfare of the people of Indonesia. Democracy includes all aspects of society, such as social, economic, political, cultural, and educational, health and other areas that support the community life. Therefore, a government should be ruled by the people, of the people, and for the people).

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