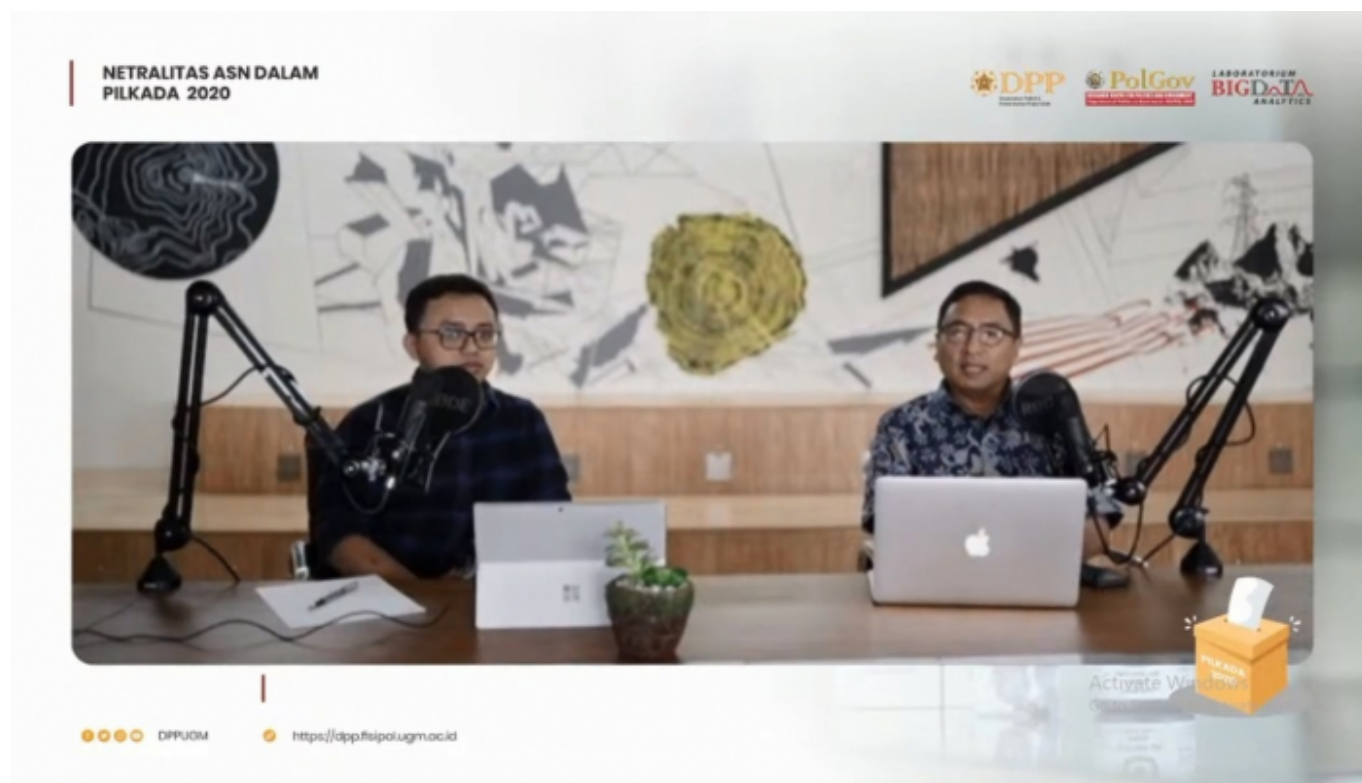


Assessing Neutrality Issue of State Civil Apparatus in the 2020 Regional Election

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In the middle of the 2020 Regional Election Application, there appeared an issue of the non-neutrality of the state civil apparatus (ASN). It happened both during the nomination and determination of candidates and the campaign period. Nevertheless, the key aspects of the neutrality of ASN are infrequently discussed.

UGM Research Center for Politics and Government (PolGov), Department of Politics and Government (DPP), conducted big data analysis on the 2020 Regional Election state civil apparatus neutrality through the Big Data Analytics Laboratory. They collected the data from tracking online media portals that span seven months from April 4 to November 6, 2020.

Wegik Prasetyo, as a PolGov researcher, reported the analysis results in a webinar entitled "Neutrality of ASN in the 2020 Regional Election" on Monday (16/11) last afternoon. This webinar was broadcast live through the Youtube channel of the Department of Politic and Government - Universitas Gadjah Mada.

Based on the analysis results, Wegik revealed that state civil apparatus neutrality earned extensive



media coverage. There were a total of 8,662 articles collected from 189 online media portals. He also added that the public has great concern regarding this issue.

Wegik also explained that the data shows that state civil apparatus with a particular territorial control might have a big opportunity to violate the principle of neutrality. This fact is relevant to data from the Agency of State Civil Apparatus (BKN), which revealed that the territorial governor (camat/lurah) had committed many infringements (apart from functional officials, high-ranking positions, administrators, and executives). Additionally, districts/cities are in the most publicity on a regional basis than provinces that are in line by the fact that regents/mayors are somehow greater than the governors.


Wegik found another analysis. It was the number of neutrality violations on state civil apparatus' social media. He said that this neutrality was revealed by evidence of state civil apparatus who liked, shared, and even made candidate campaign posts.

The last finding from Wegik's analysis is that there is a transformation in neutrality during the registration and campaign period. There was sometimes association neutrality with candidacy relations in the middle of the registration period, whether state civil apparatus approached political parties or vice versa. Meanwhile, during the campaign period, neutrality is sometimes connected to taking one candidate's side.

Concerning media coverage, Dr. Abdul Gaffar Karim, as a lecturer at UGM DPP and attended the event as a speaker, responded that it also depends on each region's value. He added that the media tends to have exposure purely. Meanwhile, for more underdeveloped areas, some executives may manage control there.

Then, Sutrisno Wati, a member of the DIY Agency of General Elections Supervisory, who also attended as a speaker, said the analysis results from PolGov were relevant to her current research as Agency of General Elections Supervisory. Therefore, she also has a similar finding. So far, the most complaints related to ASN neutrality are the prerequisite of support through social media, namely 218 suspected cases. Another significant complaint related to neutrality is that many state civil apparatuses attend the gathering, socialization, and social service for candidate pairs or political parties.

Lastly, Prof. Agus Pramusinto, as the Head Commission of the state civil apparatus, said that from his experience meeting state civil apparatus and politicians, he reckoned that the issue of neutrality seemed ambiguous. The state civil apparatuses always say that they have no choice because politicians always drag them along when there is an election. Meanwhile, politicians defend themselves that this was not their fault. This condition is because the state civil apparatus usually offers support when the politician joins the election.



"The concept is, at any rate, they should first have a name and credibility. If it is successful, one day, you can get a position. Or at least, they think that they have a connection to make their career pathway easier," he explained.

Agus also expressed his perspective regarding relinquishing voting rights for state civil apparatus as a solution to this neutrality. He represented the state civil apparatus against the idea because the candidates were chasing for votes and resources owned by the state civil.

"Furthermore, when we think about the voters' quality, the state civil apparatus is still recognized as well-educated people. If they are divested of their voting rights, the politician will become helpless because the rest of the lower class groups are more easily controlled. Consequently, we decided that the state civil apparatus still can choose the politician candidates, but only in voting booths. They cannot hold a campaign on social media. If you have become a judge and have a political party membership card, we advise you to resign," he concluded.

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