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**Student Political Participation in the 2023 Medan State University
Elections (Study at Unimed PPKn Department)**

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia is a democratic country. One of the indicators in measuring the level of democracy is political participation. The implementation of political participation in society is in the election of people's representatives. The election process is known as elections. Elections do not only exist in the community, but in the scope of the campus there is also what is known as Pemira. Pemira (General Election) is the biggest democratic party at Medan State University. Just like a country that has a leader as a representative of the people, students also have a high official who acts as a representative of students at both the university and faculty levels. Based on data that suggests that student political participation is low in Pemira 2023, namely 65% of students do not use their voting rights. The purpose of this research is to find out how political participation and what obstacles students experience in Pemira 2023. This type of research is descriptive research with qualitative research methods. The informants in this study were students in the Civics department, the Pemira committee, and the Vice Dean 3 of FIS. The data used in this research are primary data and secondary data. Data collection techniques using interview techniques, with data collection instruments in the form of interview list sheets, books, journals, diaries, cameras, recording devices and so on. Data analysis used qualitative data analysis through 3 stages, including data reduction, data presentation, and verification/conclusion. The results showed that in Pemira 2023 the level of student political participation was low due to low student curiosity in Pemira and low student interest in becoming contestants in Pemira due to other tasks and student distrust of the organizations offered. The obstacles experienced by students in the 2023 Pemira were related to the low role of the committee in socializing information related to system improvements in the application used for elections, which caused many students to be unable to enter the Pemira application and did not exercise their voting rights.

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INTRODUCTION

Democracy can be interpreted as an institutional plan to achieve political decisions in which individuals gain the power to decide how to competitively struggle for the voice of the people (Sumanto, 2016). The competitive struggle for the people's voice to be able to play a role in deciding and gaining power is to carry out political participation. Political participation and democracy are two correlated terms.

Based on data from the Indonesian Democracy Index (IDI), one of the assessment indicators to measure the level of democracy is the aspect of citizens' political rights, namely the right to political participation (Poldagri, 2019). This is in line with the views of Adi Suryadi Culla, a lecturer at the Unhas Master of Political Science Program, who said that "without public participation democracy is meaningless" (Falcao, 2015). The implementation of democracy in Indonesia is the holding of general elections. Elections are a democratic process used to elect representatives directly by citizens (Dwi, 2023). In the elections, citizens have the right to determine their choice to elect candidates who will occupy positions as state officials, be it legislative institutions (DPR RI, Provincial DPRD, Regency / City DPRD and DPD) or executive institutions (President and Vice President) (KPU RI, 2023). Elections are carried out with the principles of election organizers, namely independent, honest, fair, legal certainty, orderly, open, proportional, professional, accountable, effective, and efficient (Agusta, 2023). Democracy can be carried out in various elements of community life, one example is democracy in the scope of the campus.

Campus is a formal institution as a place for teaching and learning activities and a vehicle for developing intellectuality in order to form intellectuals who have good morals. In addition, the campus is also a medium for finding a student's identity. Campus is illustrated as a miniature state because in it there is a system of freedom of opinion and expression, has a campus institutional government order that comes from student representatives who sit in government seats on campus both as a Student Representative Body (BPM), Student Senate (Sema) and others. (Rozi, 2022). In the election of students who will join the Student Senate (Sema) or Student Representative Body (BPM), the campus as a miniature state also uses a democratic system, namely during the general election of students or more commonly known as the General Election (Pemira).

Medan State University is one of the state campuses that applies a democratic system in determining the student senate and student representative body, namely in the form of elections (Pemira). On December 14, 2023, Medan State University held Pemira simultaneously online to elect student officials who

will occupy positions as the University Student Senate (Sema University), Faculty Student Senate (SemaF), and Faculty Student Representative Body (BPMF). The student organization (ormawa) is a mediator that bridges the aspirations between students and higher education leaders from the faculty to the university level. Every year the ormawa always undergoes management regeneration or change of management. One of the moments of management change is marked by the Pemira.

Pemira (Election) is an activity carried out by students as a form of democratic practice to elect candidates for student leaders (Fernandes, et al 2022). Pemira is held and held "from students by students and for students". Meanwhile, the bureaucracy or campus plays a role in financing and facilitating these activities. Students can learn to understand the real urgency of the importance of learning political participation on campus through Pemira activities.

The General Election (Pemira) is an event for students to exercise their political rights to elect someone who is considered appropriate and worthy as a representative to sit in the student senate at both the university and faculty levels. Every student has the freedom to determine and exercise their voting rights without fear of threats in any form.

Based on the implementation guidelines issued by the rectorate, it states that "Pemira (General Election) is held every 1 (one) year at the faculty and university levels. Pemira (General Election) is organized by the Pemira Organizing Committee in each Faculty". Pemira organizing committee is an organization that is responsible for the implementation of Pemira. The Pemira Organizing Committee is formed by student representatives who are coming in class or representatives who are elected based on the Committee election meeting Pemira organizer which is held two or three weeks before the Pemira is held.

Based on preliminary data submitted by the Pemira Organizing Committee, there was a decrease in student interest in using their voting rights in Pemira. A total of 1,650 students in 2022 used their voting rights or 62% of the total students at the Faculty of Social Sciences. And when compared to 2023, only 903 students or 35% of students who used their voting rights at Pemira.

With the General Election (Pemira), many things are highlighted, such as the start of Pemira means that the campus has implemented the principles of democracy in determining the next leadership regeneration. The existence of Pemira teaches the practice of democracy and student political participation in the Medan State University environment before students plunge into society and carry out actual political practices. In addition, with Pemira, it can assess how the role of students in facing a democratic party on campus is packaged in a political

contest to determine who will become representatives or leaders in the future. Based on the initial data, only 35% of FIS students used their voting rights in Pemira 2023. The Faculty of Social Sciences (FIS) has 4 departments, namely Geography Education, History Education, Anthropology Education, and Pancasila and Citizenship Education Department. This is very interesting because in the Faculty of Social Sciences (FIS) there is a Civics major.

This Civics Department is the only department at Medan State University that learns a lot related to politics at 30% of the civic education science family and the components of civic education identified consist of three components, namely Civic Knowledge, Civic Skills, and Civic Disposition (civic dispositions) (Setiawan, 2015). This is in line with G Almond's theory which states that one of the factors that influence political participation is education. Therefore, researchers want to dig deeper into the political participation of students majoring in Civics whether with the civic component, students are aware of using their rights to participate in Pemira or vice versa.

The title of this research is only to emphasize the training of democratic practices within the scope of the campus which is one of the practical political practices, in this study it can be said to be practical political practices, because in the implementation of Pemira 2023 at Medan State University, especially in the implementation of Pemira 2023 The Civics department has a role as a political party and a supporting party, in the Civics department itself is divided into 2 parts, namely the Imam Civics line (Muslim Student Association) which is part or comes from Muslims and Himakris (Christian Student Association) which is part or comes from Christian students. So it can be said to be like practical political practices commonly carried out in a country because both imams and himakris are political parties or vehicles to carry candidates to qualify for Pemira (Dwi, 2023).

From the description above, the researcher wants to explore and dig deeper into student participation and the obstacles experienced by students in the practice of democracy which is packaged through the momentum of Pemira (General Election). Precisely Pemira was held on December 14, 2023 yesterday. In addition, to analyze the participation of Civics students at Medan State University in the momentum of the Pemira democratic party.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this research is descriptive qualitative research. According to Noor (2021) descriptive research is research that seeks to describe/describe a symptom, event, event that occurs. Descriptive research focuses on actual problems as they are at the time of the research (Noor, 2021). In

this research location research was carried out at the Civics Department, Faculty of Social Sciences, State University of Medan. In this study, the informants are the vice dean for student affairs, and the Pemira organizing committee, level commissioners and students with selective sampling provisions. The types of data used are primary data and secondary data. Data analysis techniques are carried out to find the final results of the data that researchers have obtained using qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data analysis techniques are carried out through 3 stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and data verification.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research that the author has described regarding Student Political Participation in the 2023 Medan State University General Election, which is analyzed from the theory of conventional political participation which states that the forms of conventional political participation include voting and public discussion, as well as joining/forming individual communication with public officials.

Political participation based on indicators of voting and public discussion in Pemira 2023 there are two categories to find out how student political participation is. The first is seen based on the level of student participation to participate as contestants in Permira. The second is seen based on how student participation in using their voting rights.

Based on interviews that have been conducted, there are several things that cause low student interest in becoming contestants in Pemira. Among them are because they are not interested in the organizations offered, already have other duties and responsibilities and do not want to because they have not had the right time. As stated by Aprianta Tarigan that the factor of having a lot of college assignments and also already participating in the organization was the reason for the low contestants in Pemira.

Then based on the results of low student political participation by referring to the statement issued by the chairman of the Pemira Committee who said that the low political participation of students in using their voting rights was caused by low student interest and student apathy in pemira caused by online elections. When referring to research conducted by Sari Firmansyah who examined student political participation in the election of the president and vice president of BEM Rema IKIP PGRI Pontianak with research conducted offline with a presentation of 78.71% with a good category. Syarif Firmansyah also said that based on the results of his research, students who are still influenced by the impact of technology will change students to recognize less political participation

in the presidential and vice presidential elections held at IKIP PGRI Pontianak (Firmansyah, 2020).

This is very contrary to the political participation in Medan State University, especially in the Faculty of Social Sciences, where political participation only reached 35% with a total of 903 participants out of a total of 1650 students in Fis. This is reinforced by the data submitted by Mr. Eron who stated that the low level of political participation was not only felt by the Faculty of Social Sciences but there was Faculty X whose participation level was even much lower than Fis.

"Gabriell Almond states that the factors that influence political participation consist of the level of education, gender differences, socioeconomic status, mass media, and campaign activities." (Nofitra & Ishak, 2016).

Based on the theory put forward by G Almond that the factors that influence political participation at the level of education which illustrates that educated people have a high level of political participation. However, based on the data found that students who are seen as educated people are still many who do not participate or do not want to participate in the General Election (Pemira), regardless of the obstacles experienced, educated people should take part in political participation. Then for mass media and campaigns in influencing political participation based on the data obtained that the mass media is very influential in increasing political participation. This is in line with the facts in the field that based on Zahra's view that influence is very influential in increasing political participation, and to increase political participation it takes time not in a hurry. This is also supported by the argument conveyed by Saparudin Berutu that at the time of the election yesterday a system upgrade was carried out, but information related to the mechanism and tutorial was submitted H-2 of the activity.

Based on the decision of the circular letter issued by WR 3 in the field of student affairs chapter 1 article 1 which states that:

"Direct elections are carried out democratically and transparently, honestly and fairly with direct, general, free, and secret balloting." (Implementation Guidelines authorized by WR 3)

However, based on the facts in the field stated by the chairman of the Committee during the election, of course there was fraud committed by certain individuals. And based on this case, the committee could not provide sanctions or punishment due to the absence of written rules regarding the sanctions given and the committee testified that for all procedures it was returned to the bureaucratic leadership by hoping that the election to run smoothly must be done offline. Regarding fraud committed by certain accounts and reports from

students related to fraud, it cannot be processed due to the lack of adequate evidence from the victims.

CONCLUSION

Student political participation in the General Election at Medan State University in 2023 is divided into two aspects, namely participation before the election, namely becoming a contestant and during the election, namely exercising rights vote. At the time before Mr. Mira, students did not nominate as contestants because they had other activities and were not interested. Meanwhile, during the election, political participation to exercise their right to vote was very low with the acquisition of 35% data or only 903 people participating. The low political participation generated in Pemira 2023 was caused by obstacles felt by various parties. The obstacles felt by students are related to the system used in conducting elections, namely online and the upgrade of the system (upgrade) with the result that many students cannot log in and finally the students cannot use their voting rights. This is also motivated by student apathy and low student curiosity by not wanting to try to find out for themselves or even prepare in order to exercise their voting rights.

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