



LAPORAN HASIL PENELITIAN

Relationship Between Citizen's Political Participation and
Their Commitment to Democratic Norms/ Values

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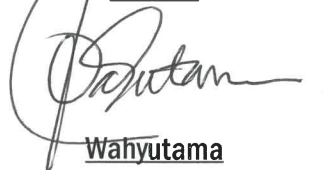
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Overview

This research investigates the relationship between citizen's political participation and their commitment toward democratic norms/ values. Theoretically, it is assumed that citizens' political participation as the expression of citizen's support toward democratic system should go hand in hand with their commitment toward democratic norms/ values. The data was collected using survey on adult citizens living in Central Java Province. The results show that citizens' political participation was not found significantly correlated with their commitment to democratic norms/ values such as political efficacy, political trust, social trust, political interest, civic duty, and political tolerance.

Background

What factor influenced citizen's political participation? This question has long been asked by many researchers. Yet, there are no fully satisfying answer. Political participation is a broad concept. It is therefore difficult to accurately predict what factors influenced it.

The form of political participation are ranging from one's participation in activity such as campaigning and voting, to activity such as protesting, boycotting, striking, and even writing letters to mass media. We categorize them as political participation, since all of them have real political impact.

In academic literature, generally there are two kinds of political participation. First, conventional political participation and second, unconventional political participation. Conventional political

participation refer to activities that are related to electoral process. Included in this category are voting, campaigning (for party or candidate), and participating in political party. Unconventional political participation, on the other hand, refer to activities that are beyond regular political action (outside institutional framework) such as demonstration, signing petition, boycotting, or even violence action (Barnes and Kaase in Watts, 1990: 311).

This paper is addressing the question what factors are influencing citizen's political participation. Acknowledging the two kind of political participation mentioned, thus this paper is also would like to investigate what kind of participation do these factors influence. Specifically, this paper is interested to investigate values as the determinant factor behind citizen's political participation. The central argument for this is there should be certain values behind citizen action in politics. The activeness or the passiveness of citizen in politics are expected to be relying on their values or orientation toward politics. More active citizen are expected to have higher level on participative and democratic values. Vice versa, more passive citizen are expected to have lower level on participative and democratic values.

As Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba says, that the functioning of stable and effective democratic government does not rely on its political and governance structure alone, but also on citizen orientation toward politics. They called this orientation as civic culture. Further, they noted that in the country where the democratic system is not supported by the civic culture, the opportunity for that system to succeed is weakening. As quoted in Muller and Selligson (1994: 635), "Countries with high levels of these civic culture attitudes are expected to be more likely to adopt and sustain democracy over time than countries with low levels, regardless of socioeconomic factors such as level of economic development."

Statement above showed us, that the functioning of stable democracy is likely to depend on high levels of civic culture adopted by its citizen. In turn, these values encourage them to participate in

political life. Then, what are the values of civic culture that we are discussing about? Quoting the work of Almond, Verba, and Inglehart (in Muller and Selligson, 1994: 635), they are attitudes such as belief in one's ability to influence political decisions (political efficacy), feelings of positive affect for the political system (political trust), and the belief that other citizens are basically trustworthy (social trust).

In addition to civic culture, this paper will also use the concept of democratic norms and values proposed by Michael Delli Carpini. According to Carpini, democratic norms and values are one of the dimension of citizen's engagement on democracy. In this light, we could treat Carpini's democratic norms and values as the elaboration of civic culture. The other 3 dimensions of democratic engagement are attitudes and beliefs; stable, consistent, and informed opinions; and political and civic behavior.

As Carpini says, "Democratic norms and values include internal and external efficacy, political and social trust, political interest, civic duty, and political tolerance. These orientations provide the emotional and cognitive underpinnings necessary for engagement in public life that balances conflict with consensus, self-interest with collective interests, and a healthy skepticism with faith in the institutions and processes of democratic governance" (Carpini, 2006: 396).

From his statement, for the purpose of this paper, we could summarize important norms and values which characterized citizen's democratic engagement are political efficacy, political trust, social trust, political interest, civic duty, and political tolerance. We will use these values as predictors of citizen political participation. This paper is expecting there is relationship between these values and citizen's political participation. The relationship between democratic norms/ values and political participation will lead us to conclude that citizen's participation in politics is encouraged by citizen's engagement on democratic values, as expected by civic culture theorist. But on the other hand, no relationship between democratic norms/ values and political participation will lead us to conclude that citizen's participation is encouraged (or discouraged) by other factors than democratic norms/ values. This will pose question on the nature of citizen political participation and its effect on the functioning of democracy in the

country.

This paper will also correlate citizen's political participation and their consumption of information, as this will also reflect the nature of citizen's political participation. It is expected, citizen's political participation will correlate significantly with their consumption of information.

Theoretical Background

Political Participation

In literature, political participation is mostly defined as process by which ordinary citizen participate in governance. As Verba et. al put it, "By political participation we refer to those legal acts by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions that they take" (in Ekman and Amna, 2012: 286). As we see, political participation is often linked to citizen's action in influencing government's policy process, and mostly to voting (selection of governmental personnel)

In this paper, however, we will use the two dimensions of political participation known as conventional and unconventional political participation. Conventional political participation refers to those modes that a dominant political culture recognizes as acceptable and that are related to institutionalized actions (Conway in Imbrasaite, 2010: 44). Meanwhile, unconventional political participation refers to those modes that fail short of laws and customary norms of a specific society and relate to non-institutionalized actions frequently directed against the system itself that at least aim at transforming its sociopolitical structure (Kaase and March in Imbrasaite 2010: 45).

By that definition, conventional political participation will include all citizen's activity within political system. It will range from voting, participating in political parties, and campaigning. This is kind of action that made available by government in democratic system to its citizen. But as we know, outside formal political system, there is another option of participation for citizen. This is

unconventional political participation.

Unconventional political participation, then, tend to be more critical to government and even to the system. It will include all citizen's activity to influence political process or output (policy, decision, etc) outside the formal political system. It will range from protest, boycott, demonstration, and also labor's strike.

Democratic Norms/ Values

As has already been discussed earlier, according to Carpini, democratic norms/ values is a part of citizen's engagement to democracy. Carpini defines democratic norms/ values as the cognitive and emotional conditions needed by citizen to participate in political and public life. It stresses on the willingness to reach consensus than to strive on conflict, uphold collective interest than individual, and being critical but hold optimistic view on democratic process.

Democratic norms/ values has several dimensions. First dimension is political efficacy, defined as, "the sense that one's participation can actually make a difference (internal efficacy) and that the political system would be responsive to this participation (external efficacy)" (Carpini, 2004: 398).

Second dimension is political trust, or the level of the citizen's trust on political institutions and system. It is the belief that political institutions such as government, parliament, political parties can be trusted. It is also the belief that democratic system such as election can be trusted to elicit positive outcome.

Third dimension is social trust. Carpini also used the term social capital to define this values. Citing Putnam, social capital is, "those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people: namely good will, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families who make up a social unit. . . . The community as a whole will benefit by cooperation of all its parts, while the individual will find in his associations the advantages of the help, sympathy, and fellowship of his neighbors" (2004: 402). We could extract this dimension into two important values, that is the level of

interpersonal trust (the belief that people in general has good intentions) and the level of social cooperation (the willingness of people to collaborate and cooperate with other on common interest).

Fourth dimension is political interest, or the the level of interest of citizen on politics. This is measured by how likely citizen involved in political discussion with their fellow or neighbor.

Fifth dimension is civic duty, defined as “the sense that one has a social obligation to participate in politics” (2004: 405). This is measured by asking the willingness of citizen to participate in civic activity such as attending community meeting, participate in community event, and so forth.

Sixth dimension is political tolerance, defined as the level of tolerance of citizen on other who has different ethnic, religion, and group affiliation.

Methodology

The methodology of the research is quantitative and use survey as its data collection method. The population of research is citizen (age more than 17 years) domiciled in Central Java province. Based on Central Statistic Agency (Badan Pusat Statistik) data, total population of central Java residence is around 32 millions people.

Sampling technique used for this research is multistage random sampling, or the combination of stratified and cluster random sampling. The criteria for stratification are sex (proportional men and women respondent) and living area (city and village). Total respondent for the research is 440 respondents. The data was gathered by the assistance of Lingkaran Survey Indonesia team, who was running public opinion poll on Central Java Governor's Election in 2008 (PILKADA Gubernur Jawa Tengah). Even though the data collection was conducted more than 10 years ago (from the date this article was written), there are some interesting results that worth further discussion and thought.

Results

The research found that in general, the level of citizen political participation are very low, both in term of conventional and unconventional political participation. This findings showed us that citizen's political participation in area other than voting (which is not included in this research report) such as campaigning, participating in political parties, joining demonstration, or signing petition is still very low.

The research also found the level of democratic norms and values hold by the citizen are quite low. The lowest score is political interest (mean 1,46 in scale 1 - 5). The highest score is civic duty (3,62 in scale 1-5). Interestingly, meanwhile the level of political interest is low, the level of citizen's consumption of political information is moderately high (mean 10,76 in scale 3-15). This findings showed us that respondents are quite attentive to politics (by consuming political information), but not likely to share their view on political issues to their fellows (talking about politics is used as indicators for political interest in this research).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
conventional political participation	440	2	10	2.23	1.082
unconventional political participation	440	2	10	2.09	.689
information consumption	440	3	15	10.76	2.701
political efficacy	440	2	10	6.23	2.762
political trust	440	2	10	5.74	2.421
social trust	440	2	10	5.46	1.966
Political Interest	440	1	5	1.40	1.019
Civic Duty	440	1	5	3.62	1.222
Political Tolerance	365	1	5	3.55	2.057
Valid N (listwise)	365				

The result of correlational statistics between variables are also found to be interesting. Conventional political participation only significantly correlate (at 0,01 level) with political interest. The strength of the correlation is moderately low (0,349). It showed us that people with high level of political interest (active participating in political discussion) are more likely to participate in conventional form of political participation such as campaigning or joining political parties events. The other values have no correlation with conventional political participation.

Table 2
Correlation of Conventional Political Participation and Democratic Norms/ Values
Correlations

		conventional political participation	political efficacy	political trust	social trust	Political Interest	Civic Duty	Political Tolerance
conventional political participation	Pearson Correlation	1	.046	-.026	-.043	.349**	.075	-.088
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.332	.593	.363	.000	.118	.094
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
political efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.046	1	.331**	.210**	.017	.002	.240**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.332		.000	.000	.720	.974	.000
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
political trust	Pearson Correlation	-.026	.331**	1	.157**	-.063	-.140**	.252**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.593	.000		.001	.188	.003	.000
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
social trust	Pearson Correlation	-.043	.210**	.157**	1	-.016	-.090	.369**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.363	.000	.001		.737	.059	.000
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
Political Interest	Pearson Correlation	.349**	.017	-.063	-.016	1	.065	-.163**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.720	.188	.737		.173	.002
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
Civic Duty	Pearson Correlation	.075	.002	-.140**	-.090	.065	1	-.133*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.118	.974	.003	.059	.173		.011
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
Political Tolerance	Pearson Correlation	-.088	.240**	.252**	.369**	-.163**	-.133*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.094	.000	.000	.000	.002	.011	
	N	365	365	365	365	365	365	365

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In term of unconventional political participation, research found no democratic norms/ values are correlated with it. This findings showed us that democratic norms/ values could not be used to predict citizen's unconventional political participation in Central Java. This also showed that citizen's unconventional political participation is not encouraged by their commitment to democratic norms/

values.

Table 3
Correlation of Unconventional Political Participation and Democratic Norms/ Values

		Correlations						
		unconvention al political participation	political efficacy	political trust	social trust	Political Interest	Civic Duty	Political Tolerance
unconventional political participation	Pearson Correlation	1	.011	-.044	.035	.038	.038	.027
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.825	.354	.470	.422	.422	.605
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
political efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.011	1	.331**	.210**	.017	.002	.240**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.825		.000	.000	.720	.974	.000
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
political trust	Pearson Correlation	-.044	.331**	1	.157**	-.063	-.140**	.252**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.354	.000		.001	.188	.003	.000
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
social trust	Pearson Correlation	.035	.210**	.157**	1	-.016	-.090	.369**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.470	.000	.001		.737	.059	.000
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
Political Interest	Pearson Correlation	.038	.017	-.063	-.016	1	.065	-.163**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.422	.720	.188	.737		.173	.002
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
Civic Duty	Pearson Correlation	.038	.002	-.140**	-.090	.065	1	-.133*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.422	.974	.003	.059	.173		.011
	N	440	440	440	440	440	440	365
Political Tolerance	Pearson Correlation	.027	.240**	.252**	.369**	-.163**	-.133*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.605	.000	.000	.000	.002	.011	
	N	365	365	365	365	365	365	365

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The research also found interesting findings in the correlation of information consumption and political participation. Information consumption was not found to be correlated with unconventional political participation, but it has significant yet negative correlation with conventional political participation. This findings showed us that citizen's consumption of information has no contribution to encourage citizen political participaiton. In fact, citizen's consumption of information is likely to discourage citizen's participation in conventional form of politics. They who consume higher political information are tend to have less motivation to participate in conventional form of political participation.

Table 4
Correlation of Information Consumption and
Unconventional/ Conventional Political Participation

		Correlations		
		information consumption	unconventional political participation	conventional political participation
information consumption	Pearson Correlation	1	-.008	-.146**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.871	.002
	N	440	440	440
unconventional political participation	Pearson Correlation	-.008	1	.082
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.871		.086
	N	440	440	440
conventional political participation	Pearson Correlation	-.146**	.082	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.086	
	N	440	440	440

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Conclusions

The research found no relationship between political participation (both conventional and unconventional) and democratic norms/ values. Exception is only on political interest which has significant correlation with conventional political participation. This result showed us that citizen's political participation (at least among respondents that are studied) are not encouraged by their adherence to democratic norms and values.

This findings should alarm us that the nature of citizen political participation has weak foundation. It also deny civic culture thesis postulated by Almond and Verba, that citizen's active participation in politics are supposedly to be supported by civic culture and attitudes they have. In other word, there is still discrepancy between democratic system and citizen's political culture (citizen's orientation and values toward politics).

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