Analysis of Indonesian Malay Cultural Assembly Participation in the 2018 Election of Regional Heads of Batubara Regency

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the participation of the Indonesian Malay cultural adat assembly in the regional head elections in Batubara district in 2018. This research uses a qualitative and descriptive research method, namely collecting descriptive data for further analysis from the case study. Data collection was carried out using interviews, document analysis, observation, and literature study. The results of the study show that the factors that influence the participation of the Indonesian Malay Cultural Council Organization in Batu Bara Regency include: First, the political awareness of the people regarding their rights and obligations in the 2018 Pilkada is only limited to understanding, without being accompanied by controlling the course of the 2018 Pilkada and exercising their right to vote. Second, the low level of public trust in the government and candidates, including a track record, vision, and mission, greatly affects the people not exercising their right to vote. Third, the social status and economic status of the upper middle and lower middle class do not prioritize voting due to the focus on the work of most fishermen and entrepreneurs.

Keywords: Political Participation; Malay Cultural Customary Council; Regional Head Election; Batubara District


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INTRODUCTION
The amendments to the 1945 Constitution have broad implications for the state administration system (Tiopan et al., 2023). One of them is regarding provisions concerning governance at the regional level, namely regarding regional head elections. This amendment to the 1945 Constitution resulted in a new formula that regulates regional government (Adiputra et al., 2018), especially regarding regional head elections. This formulation is contained in Article 18 paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution, namely: “Governors, Regents, and Mayors respectively as heads of Provincial, Regency, and City regional governments are democratically elected”. Article 18 paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution implies that elections must be carried out democratically, guaranteeing the principle of popular sovereignty and being directly elected by the people (Ginting, 2018).

The fall of the New Order opened opportunities for political reform and democratization in Indonesia (Fikri & Hasudungan, 2022). The breakthrough step taken in the democratization process was the amendment to the 1945 Constitution which was carried out by the MPR resulting from the 1999 elections in four stages over four years (1999-2002). The amendments to the 1945 Constitution also introduced general elections to elect the president and vice president directly (Pilpres).

The first Presidential election was held in 2004 after the general election for the legislature (Liddle & Mujani, 2007). The next democratization step is the general election to elect regional heads directly (Pilkada, Regional Head Election) which is regulated in Law No. 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government. This law required all regional heads throughout Indonesia to be elected through Pilkada starting in mid-2005. Pilkada aims to make local government more democratic by giving the people the right to determine regional heads (Assayayuti, 2022).

Political participation is an important aspect of a democratic state order, as well as a characteristic of political modernization (Ekman & Amnå, 2012). In general, in a traditional society where the nature of political leadership is determined more by a group of ruling elites, the involvement of citizens in participating in influencing decision-making and influencing the life of the nation is relatively very small. Citizens who only consist of simple people tend to be less reckoned with in political processes (Sastroatmojo, 1995). About democracy, political participation affects the legitimacy of society towards the running of a government. In an election, for example, political participation affects the legitimacy of society for the elected candidate pair. Every community has its interests and interests in determining their choices in elections (Hidayaturrahman et al., 2022). It can be said that the future of public officials who are elected in an election depends on the participation of the people as voters. Not only that, people’s political participation in elections can be seen as community control over a government.

The control given varies depending on the level of political participation of each. Apart from being the core of democracy, political participation is also closely related to the fulfillment of citizens’ political rights. The realization of the fulfillment of political rights is the freedom for every citizen to express opinions and assemble. As stated in Article 28 of the 1945 Constitution: “the freedom to associate and gather to express thoughts orally and in writing and so on is stipulated by law”.

Voter behavior places the people as the supreme judge in directly determining the candidates for president (Aspinall & Mietzner, 2019), vice president, regional head, and deputy regional head. Political behavior is related to the goals of a society, policies to achieve a goal, as well as a system of power that allows for an authority to regulate people’s lives in general and not the goals of individuals. Theoretical explanations about voting behavior are based on several models or approaches, namely, the Sociological Model also known as the Columbia School of Electoral Behavior. Adherents of the sociological model believe that a person chooses a particular party or legislative candidate because there are similarities between the sociological characteristics of voters and the characteristics of the party or candidate (Neto & Cox, 1997).

The second is a psychological approach. In United States scientific circles this model is referred to as the Michigan School (The Michigan Survey Research Center). This school is based more on a psychological state, namely feelings of closeness to, attitude of support or loyalty to, or identification with a particular political party (Saiful, 2010). Third, is the rational choice approach, according to this approach, a citizen behaves rationally. The use of a rational approach in explaining voting behavior by political scientists is adapted from
economics. They see an analogy between markets (economics) and voting behavior (politics). If economically the community is not able to act rationally, namely to reduce costs to the minimum to obtain the maximum profit, then even in voting behavior the community will be able to act rationally, namely to vote for parties or candidates for regional heads who are considered to emphasize the smallest losses and also choose the alternative that poses the smallest risk (Simamora, 2018).

Batubara Regency is one of the regencies located in North Sumatra. The capital is in Lima Puluh. Batubara Regency is one of the regions that holds regional head elections every five years. 2018 was the year the election of the Regent and Deputy Regent was held. The reasons behind the research took the theme of Regional Head Elections and Political Participation in the Case Study of the Indonesian Malay Cultural Customary Assembly organization in the Batu Bara Region, influenced, the population of Batubara Regency was dominated by Javanese ethnicity, and the second population was dominated by ethnic Malays. Javanese ethnicity known as Pujakesuma makes up 43% of the total population of Batubara. This indirectly proves that the two ethnic groups have influenced public opinion in Batu Bara Regency (BPS Kab. Batu Bara, 2018).

Table 1. Results of the 2018 Regional Head Election of Batubara Regency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Number of Votes (Voters)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RM. Harry Nugroho-Mhd. Safi’i</td>
<td>31,053</td>
<td>17.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darwis-Janmat Sembiring</td>
<td>61,514</td>
<td>35.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zahir-Oky Iqbal Frima</td>
<td>73,078</td>
<td>41.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khairil Anwar-Sofyan Alwi</td>
<td>9,195</td>
<td>5.26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Meanwhile, the political participation of the people of Batu Bara Regency in the 2018 Pilkada was 64%. The recapitulation results show that candidate pair number 3 Zahir-Oky Iqbal Friman was elected as Regent and Deputy Regent of Batu Bara Regency by obtaining 73,078 votes (41.80%). Furthermore, the Zahir Regent was appointed as Chair of the Mabmi Regional Board (Masyarakat Budaya Melayu Indonesia, North Sumatra Province for the period 2021-2025. This phenomenon indicates sufficiently that the Zahir Regent has an emotional and intellectual closeness to the Mabmi organization. Thus, it is important to conduct research in depth about the participation of Indonesian Malay Cultural Indigenous Peoples organizations in the 2018 Pilkada in Batu Bara Regency. Therefore, this study analyzes the participation of Indonesian Malay cultural customary councils in regional head elections in Batu Bara district in 2018.

**RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses a type of qualitative research with a descriptive method, namely collecting descriptive data for further analysis from the case study (Azian et al., 2021). Qualitative research according to Bogdan and Taylor is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior (Bogdan & Taylor, 1990). This approach is directed at the background and individual holistically (whole). In this case, it is not permissible to isolate individuals or organizations into variables or hypotheses, but...
it is necessary to view them as part of a whole (Stainback & Stainback, 1984).

Furthermore, this study uses descriptive research methods. The descriptive method is a method of examining the status of human groups, an object, a condition, a system of thought, or a class of events in the present. The purpose of this descriptive research is to make descriptive, systematic, factual, and accurate descriptions of the facts, characteristics, and relationships between the phenomena investigated. In this research, the researcher describes, interprets, and analyzes the Participation of Indonesian Malay Cultural Indigenous Community Organizations in the 2018 Pilkada in Batu Bara Regency.

The research location was conducted in Batu Bara Regency, North Sumatra Province. The researcher chose this location because this area is one of the areas dominated by the Malay ethnic community. In this study, the object of research was the Regional Management Organization of the Indonesian Malay Cultural Indigenous People in Batu Bara District.

Informants are people who are relevant to the issues to be researched and who will be interviewed face to face in-depth to be able to explore more about what factors influence the level of participation of indigenous peoples organizations in the 2018 regional elections in Batu Bara District. In determining informants to be interviewed and selecting data so that later it is managed and patterns. The researcher carried out a purposive sampling technique, in which the researcher deliberately selected informants according to predetermined requirements to answer accurate research objectives. Informants were selected based on Rush & Althoff’s theory of political participation hierarchy as many 5 people (Rush, 2014), along with the informants selected by the researcher, namely:

1. Election Organizing Body: KPUD of Batu Bara Regency
   a. Commissioner of the Election Commission for Batu Bara Regency, Division of Human Resources and Voter Participation
   a. PDIP Party (Chairman of the PDIP Party DPC Batu Bara Regency)
   b. Golkar Party (DPD Chairman of the Gokkar Party, Batu Bara Regency)
   c. Gerindra Party (Chairman of the Gerindra Party DPC, Batu Bara Regency)
3. Political Pseudo Organization: (Indonesian Malay Cultural Customary Council)
   a. Indonesian Malay Cultural Customary Council (Chairman of MABMI Batu Bara Regency)
4. Academics and Political Observers in Bara Regency:
   a. Fadli Mahsan (Academic)

In this study, data collection techniques were used with documentation and in-depth interviews (In-depth Interview). The Documentation Method for obtaining secondary data is used by searching and collecting documents on issues related to the problem being researched through the literature of books, newspapers, journals, and others (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). While the in-depth interview technique (In-depth Interview) to obtain primary data, was carried out by way of face-to-face interviews, providing generally unstructured and open-ended questions designed to elicit views and opinions from informants (Creswell, 2016). This study used the qualitative data analysis technique, the Miles and Huberman model. Furthermore, activities in qualitative data analysis are interactive and ongoing continuously until complete, so that the data is complete for analysis. These activities include data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The elaboration of each step is as follows (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Malay Cultural Customary Council

The Malay Cultural Customary Council is an organization or institution that aims to maintain, promote, and preserve Malay customs and culture (Samsudin & Malik, 2015). This assembly mainly focuses on the development and preservation of Malay cultural heritage, as well as safeguarding traditional values related to the life of the Malay community. The Malay Cultural Customary Council has an important role in maintaining Malay cultural unity and identity (Kennedy, 2002). They work with local communities, local governments, and other institutions to maintain the continuity of Malay customs and culture. This assembly also functions as a center for knowledge and information regarding Malay traditions, collects and stores various cultural artifacts,
and provides education to the younger generation about Malay cultural heritage. The Malay Cultural Customary Council organizes various activities and events to promote Malay culture (Sukenti, 2014). They organize traditional art performances such as dance, music, theater, and fine arts. In addition, they also hold seminars, workshops, and cultural exhibitions to further introduce Malay customs and traditions to the wider community. As a forum for the Malay community, the Malay Cultural Customary Council also plays a role in maintaining friendly relations between members of the Malay community. They encourage solidarity and collaboration between existing Malay ethnic groups, as well as organize social and humanitarian activities to help members of society in need (Lindsay, 1995).

The Malay Cultural Customary Council is often supported by the government, at both the regional and national levels, to maintain the country's cultural diversity (Zawawi, 2004). They play an important role in ensuring that Malay customary values and traditions are alive and relevant amidst the progress and developments of the times. Overall, the Malay Cultural Customary Council is an institution that aims to preserve and promote Malay customs and culture. They play an important role in maintaining Malay cultural identity and ensuring that traditional Malay values are passed on to future generations.

The Role of the Malay Cultural Customary Council

The Malay Cultural Customary Council has an important role in Malay society and its surroundings. Following are some of the main roles of the Malay Cultural Council:

Preservation of Malay Culture: One of the main roles of the Malay Cultural Customary Council is to maintain, maintain, and preserve Malay culture. They strive to keep Malay traditions, customs, arts, and cultural heritage from being forgotten or neglected over time.

Development and Promotion: The Malay Cultural Council has a role in developing and promoting Malay culture. They organize various activities such as art performances, cultural festivals, exhibitions, and seminars to increase public awareness and understanding of Malay cultural heritage.

Cultural Education: The Malay Cultural Customary Council provides education to the younger generation about Malay culture. They conduct formal and informal educational programs that involve learning about customs, language, music, dance, fine arts, and other knowledge related to Malay culture.

Maintenance of Cultural Artifacts: The Malay Cultural Customary Council is the custodian and custodian of Malay cultural artifacts. They collect, preserve, and guard historical objects, such as traditional clothing, traditional musical instruments, weapons, jewelry, and other objects related to Malay culture.

Malay Cultural Advocacy: The Malay Cultural Customary Council acts as an advocate or defender of Malay culture in public policy. They strive to fight for recognition, protection, and respect for Malay culture at the local, regional, and national levels.

Collaboration and Solidarity: The Malay Cultural Customary Assembly plays a role in strengthening solidarity and collaboration between the Malay community and other ethnic groups. They encourage intercultural dialogue and promote better understanding between different groups of people.

Community Welfare: In addition to preserving culture, the Malay Cultural Customary Council also plays a role in improving community welfare. They carry out social and humanitarian activities, provide assistance to members of society in need, and fight for social justice.

These roles make the Malay Cultural Customary Council a very important entity in maintaining the continuity of Malay culture, preserving it for future generations, and strengthening the cultural identity of the Malay people.

The Role of the Malay Cultural and Political Customary Council in the 2018 Regional Head Elections in Batubara Regency

The Malay Cultural Customary Council is related to practical politics in several ways. However, it should be remembered that political roles in the context of the Malay Cultural Council may vary by country or region. The following are some aspects of the relationship between the Malay Cultural Council and practical politics:

1. Political Representation and Influence

The Malay Cultural Customary Council can have political influence within the Malay community. Assembly members may have political connections or are political figures in their area. As a result, the Malay Cultural Customary Council can act as a forum for representing the political interests of the
Malay community and influencing policies related to Malay customs and culture.

2. Elections and Political Support
In some situations, the Malay Cultural Customary Council may engage in political elections by supporting certain candidates. Malay traditional and cultural assembly members or figures can be decisive in political elections at the local or regional level by mobilizing their base of support.

3. Drivers of Policy Change
Through its advocacy and lobbying, the Malay Cultural Customary Council can influence government policymaking related to the protection, maintenance, and development of Malay culture. They can act as consultants or partners in the formation of cultural and customary policies at the government level.

4. Connection with Political Parties
Some Malay Cultural Customary Councils may have links with certain political parties. This can happen for ideological, and strategic reasons, or to gain support in maintaining and developing Malay culture. However, it is important to remember that political associations of this kind can affect the independence and neutrality of the Malay Cultural Council in carrying out their roles and functions.

5. The Influence of Public Policy
Through participation in public policy processes, the Malay Cultural Customary Council can influence policy-making related to Malay cultural and customary interests. They can provide input, advocate for specific policies, and contribute to policy dialogue involving the protection and preservation of Malay cultural heritage.

It should be noted that the interrelationships between the Malay Cultural Council and practical politics may vary in each regional or country context. There is the Malay Cultural Customary Council which seeks to maintain its independence and political neutrality so that its focus remains on the preservation and promotion of Malay culture. However, there are also situations where interactions with practical politics can influence the dynamics and direction of the Malay Cultural Customary Assembly.

**Participation of Indonesian Malay Cultural Indigenous Community Organizations in the 2018 Regional Head Elections in Batubara Regency**

Public participation in elections is the most important indicator of the successful implementation of elections (Fung, 2015). This assumption illustrates that public participation in exercising voting rights is the heart of democracy. Because political participation will create a rotation of power to produce quality leaders (Bebbington et al., 2006). During the election process, the community has the right to determine a leader according to their criteria. The choice of one of the candidates aims to influence and control political decisions that will impact people's lives.

The intensity of the percentage of participation can be calculated by calculating the percentage of people who use their right to vote compared to citizens who have the right to vote as a whole (Lussier & Fish, 2012). The author sees that in 2018, the percentage of community participants who used their right to vote was 64%. This has increased compared to the election of the Regent and Deputy Regent in the previous year, namely in 2013 as stated in the document, where the percentage of community participation was only 62%. The final voter list in the 2018 Batu Bara District Election was 280,684 users of the right to vote out of 140,904 men and 139,780 women. This opinion is in line with the statement of the Pilkada organizer regarding the level of participation of the Batu Bara Regency community in the 2018 Pilkada, which was started by an informant from the Batu Bara Regency KPU Commissioner.

**Table 2. Forms - Forms of Political Participation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conventional</th>
<th>Non Conventional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>Petition submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political discussion</td>
<td>Demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign activity</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form and join interest groups</td>
<td>Strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual communication with</td>
<td>Acts of political violence against objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political and administrative officials</td>
<td>Guerrilla warfare and revolution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Almonds in Setyowati & Kartikasari (2016)
M. Amin Lubis states that:
"So far the level of voter turnout in the Pilkada of Batu Bara Regency has increased. It can be seen that in the 2013 Pilkada, the turnout rate reached 62% and after that, in the 2018 Pilkada the participation rate increased to 64%. There was an increase of 2% from the previous Pilkada, even though it had not reached the target from the central government, but the Batu Bara Regency Election Commission had worked optimally. In addition, the level of community participation in Batu Bara Regency, which is very multicultural, is divided into 2 categories; participatory and apathetic. First, participative, someone who exercises their right to vote based on their understanding of their rights and obligations in elections, they are also influenced by religious leaders and traditional leaders, especially Malay customs because Batu Bara Regency is Malay land. Second, one's emotionality results in one's pragmatism in choosing one of the candidates. This is caused by a person assessing that there is no benefit to him directly and this is experienced by someone with low education and high education."

The political participation of indigenous peoples in Batu Bara Regency in the 2018 Pilkada, if viewed from the hierarchical theory of political participation, falls into the category; of participation in voting and total apathy. Rush and Althof explain voting participation, is only minimal involvement of political participation and this activity will stop if voting is carried out (Rush, 2014). The majority of voters using their right to vote are influenced by their understanding of their rights and obligations in the election. However, it is not uncommon for voters in Batu Bara District to vote based on patronage of a belief based on religion or ethnicity. Community involvement in Pilkada only uses their voting rights, without any sustainable nature to control the course of programs offered by one candidate.

Furthermore, Rush and Althof's explanation of total apathy in political participation is caused by choices or factors beyond individual control. Situations or symptoms of apathy are described as having no interest or concern for other people (Rush, 2014). Total apathy behavior can be seen in the people of Batu Bara Regency who do not use their right to vote much as 36%. This factor is caused by the emotional nature of a person who tends to be pragmatism because someone sees how useful it is when someone has to choose one candidate. Pragmatism behavior is caused by the previous Regional Head not making changes that he felt directly.

The total apathy of the indigenous people of Batu Bara Regency is affected by the lack of public trust in the government and the candidates offered. This factor is caused by the Regional Heads in Batu Bara Regency having a bad reputation, such as the regent Oka Arya Zulkarnaen in 2 periods 2008-2013 and 2013-2018. Batu Bara Regency is still trapped in the problems of poverty, unemployment, and development. Therefore, this factor influences people's behavior not to vote in every Pilkada in Batu Bara Regency. This opinion is in line with Fadli Mahsan's statement as an academic at the Batu Bara College of Tarbiyah (STIT) North Sumatra and a political observer for Batu Bara Regency, with Fadli Mahsan's statement, namely:

"The 2013 Pilkada people really like Oka Arya because he often comes directly to see the condition of the Batu Bara people. However, along the way, there was a lack of trust in the government and candidates, because the previous regional head could not be trusted to be given a mandate. After all, Oka Arya was caught up in a corruption case which affected the public not to vote in the 2018 Pilkada in Batu Bara Regency."

Loss of public trust in candidates for Regional Head because political parties are unable to provide their best cadres. This savings can be proven from the time of reform until now, the election of the Batu Bara district has not been able to give birth to a qualified regional head. This resulted in the public being traumatized by the failures of regional heads who were unable to fulfill their political promises. The existence of a bad assessment of the Pilkada results influenced the community not to participate in every Pilkada in Batu Bara Regency. This behavior is a reward to the government, parties, and candidates to be able to restore public confidence in exercising their right to vote.

The results of the vote acquisition between the four Articles, namely; Section number 1 RM. Harry Nugroho-Mhd. Saf'i won 31,053 votes (17.76%), Article number 2 Darwis-Janmat Sembiring won 61,514 votes (35.18%), Article number 3 Zahir-Oky Iqbal Firma received 73,078 votes (41.80%) and Article number 4 Khairil Anwar- Sofyan Alwi won 9,195 votes (5.26%) from all sub-districts in Batu Bara Regency. Factors of the candidate pair Zahir-Oky Iqbal Firma as local people, were involved and involved traditional
organizations in their campaign, so that they also influenced their election. In short, Regent Zahir has been the Chairperson of the DPW GM PUJAKESUMA North Sumatra, 2016-2021, Deputy Chairperson of the PB Council of Malay Customs & Culture (MABMI) Indonesia, 2005-2010, and currently serves as Chairman of the PW Council of Indonesian Malay Culture Customs (Mabmi), North Sumatra Period 2021-2025. This opinion can be strengthened by academics from the Batu Bara High School of Tarbiyah (STIT) North Sumatra and political observers from Batu Bara Regency, with the statement Fadli Mahsan Said:

"When looking at Zahir's track record, we believe the majority of the people of Batu Bara Regency voted for him, this is influenced by both Javanese and Malay ethnicities dominating in Batu Bara Regency, with Zahir joining the Pujakesuma and Mabmi organizations, he certainly has an emotional closeness with the Javanese and Malay in Kab. Batubara. So that the Malay community, especially in Batu Bara, mostly choose Zahir."

The indigenous people of Batu Bara Regency are ethnic Malays. In each Pilkada in Batu Bara Regency, candidates are often of Malay ethnicity because as a form of appreciation, it is considered that Malay people uphold religious values and customs. Thus influencing the Malay community to exercise their right to vote based on religion and customs in the 2018 Batu Bara District Election. This statement is in line with M. Syafi'i as Chair of the MABMI (Indonesian Malay Cultural Customary Council) of Batu Bara Regency who stated:

"Quantitatively, the Malay people choose Zahir-Oky. Even though the officials of the Batu Bara Regency MABMI organization appealed to members to be neutral and vote according to their conscience, the Malay community at the grassroots chose Zahir-Oky, this was motivated by Zahir being an administrator at Mabmi and currently as Chair of North Sumatra PW, besides that Zahir-Oky as DPRD, we often stay in touch with us and we have the same ethnicity".

The participation of the Indonesian Malay Cultural Customary Council of Batu Bara Regency in voting activities was strongly influenced by the love for Religion and Culture. The Indonesian Malay Cultural Customary Council organization can be said to be a quasi-political organization. As Rush Althoff's statement, active/passive membership participation in a quasi-political organization is not much different from active/passive members in a political organization. The difference can be seen in that political organizations tend to be politically intact. Meanwhile, quasi-political organizations are only partially political and tend to try to promote and represent limited or unique attitudes. Furthermore, there is no sharp distinction between active and passive membership, and individuals may move from one to another according to circumstances. This explanation proves that the membership of the Indonesian Malay Cultural Customary Council in Batu Bara Regency is a quasi-political organization that is not political. This means that they are free to choose candidates for Regional Heads. However, in their participation, the emotional and cultural approach also influences them to exercise their right to vote.

**Factors Influencing the Participation of Indigenous Peoples Organizations in the 2018 Regional Head Elections in Batubara Regency**

**Political Awareness Factor**

Community political awareness is the most important indicator in increasing participation and creating quality local elections (Djuyandi et al., 2023). Political awareness can be seen from one's knowledge of rights and obligations as citizens in political activities. Community participation based on political awareness will produce regional heads who are by the aspirations of the community (Oktarina, 2022). Therefore, Regional Heads who are born from the choice of people with political awareness will make changes in the area such as: better infrastructure, health, and education. This is in line with Mr. M. Amin Lubis as the Commissioner of KPU, Batu Bara Regency, who stated that:

"The rights and obligations of citizens in elections are very important in maintaining democracy, moreover citizen participation is the key to successful elections, with high political awareness of the community, it will be in line with political development in Batu Bara Regency. Therefore, the Batu Bara KPU always tries to increase citizens' understanding of the importance of exercising their right to vote."

Meanwhile, the Indonesian Malay Cultural Customary Council organization was able to provide an understanding to the public about the rights and obligations in exercising
their right to vote. This assessment was seen by the majority of Mabmi members of Batu Bara Regency who said that voting is a right that must be made an obligation.

The lack of political awareness of the rights and obligations of the Malay community is only used as an understanding, without being accompanied by the right to vote in the 2018 Pilkada. Although Mabmi officials are still concerned with controlling the running of the regional elections and supervising and influencing policies, this participation is not supported by the level of participation in Pilkada 2018. This factor is influenced by a lack of trust in candidates. The community considers that the candidates offered do not have a good track record to be trusted. So the failure of political parties to provide their best cadres in each Pilkada contest has created boredom for the public not to participate in the 2018 Pilkada in Batu Bara Regency.

Trust Factor in Government

The trust factor in the government largely determines community participation in exercising their right to vote in regional elections (Jayasinghe et al., 2020). Mabmi members’ assessment of government performance in policy making and implementation of promised programs will give confidence to regional head candidates to be given the mandate. However, until now it is still very difficult for Mabmi members of Batu Bara Regency to give a positive assessment of the Batu Bara Regency Government which is considered to have failed to improve poverty, unemployment, and infrastructure development in Batu Bara Regency. Because of this, the problems in Batu Bara Regency which could not be fixed by the regional head resulted in the Malay community losing confidence in the candidates offered in the 2018 Pilkada. This assumption is supported by the statement of Mr. M. Syafi’i as Chairman of the MABMI of Batu Bara Regency:

"The people have lost their trust, because the previous Regent Ok Arya, as well as a Malay community figure, was caught in a corruption case, the great hope of the people with Ok Arya is through an independent route, which means that the community directly sent him, in the end, he was also caught in a corruption case so that some Mabmi members judge anyone those who later nominate themselves or candidates who are already in office will not be separated from collusion, corruption and nepotism".

Institutionally, the Mabmi organization allows members to vote for any candidate. Therefore, Mabmi members in exercising their right to vote in the 2018 Pilkada were influenced by their evaluation of the proposed regional head candidates. The good or bad assessment of the Malay community largely determines their choice ofPasalon, this assessment can be seen from the track record of achievements for the 2018 Pilkada Paslon. However, the lack of trust in the government affects the assessment of the Malay community of Batu Bara Regency regarding the track record of the four Pasalons who are considered unable to solve problems in Batu Bara District. Hanafi said that the evaluation of Mabmi members who used their right to vote against candidates stated:

"I'm not interested in seeing the candidates offered, because all the candidates offered are not good enough to solve the problems in Batu Bara Regency. My assumption is to see from the track record of prospective candidates before leaving to become candidates who do not have good enough achievements, meaning that there will be no promising empowerment or development for me to believe in candidates."

Social Factors and Economic Status

Based on the level of the factors that influence political participation, Ramlan Surbakti explains that political awareness and trust in the government (the dependent variable) are not independent factors, but the level of these two factors is influenced by other factors such as; social and economic status, parent’s political affiliation and organizational experience (independent variable). Therefore, social status can be seen from a person's position based on heredity, education, and work, while economic status is a person's position based on their income.

The Malay community in Batu Bara Regency also influenced the Pilkada results. This condition can be proven from the results of several interviews with the Chairperson and members of the Indonesian Malay Cultural Customary Council organization in Batubara Regency, making their choice based on the similarity of ethnic or social status. Opinion in line with the statement of M. Syafi’i as Chairman of the Mabmi of Batu Bara Regency said: "Malay people on a grassroots basis often make their choices based on ethnic similarities and social status, this is influenced by the culture of power that is built traditionally."
In addition, a similar opinion can be proven by a member of Mabmi, Batu Bara Regency, Hanafi who said: "I think every indigenous person has an emotional connection to candidates if they have the same culture, this also applies to Malay society."

Furthermore, the factor of a person's level of education influences their participation in Pilkada activities. Someone with higher education has a level of understanding of political developments and awareness in exercising their right to vote. Meanwhile, those with lower levels of education have little understanding and tend to have to be mobilized to exercise their right to vote. However, the uneven level of education of the Malay community in Batu Bara Regency has affected the low participation in the 2018 Pilkada. As stated by the Chairperson of the Mabmi Batu Bara Regency regarding the condition of the education level of the Batu Bara Regency community influencing a person to participate in the 2018 regional head election.

Factors of Parental Political Affiliation
Parents' political affiliation can affect a person's participation in exercising their right to vote in regional elections. Parents' political affiliation has an understanding and concern for politics, influenced by a love for a school based on political organizations and pseudo-politics. In practice, parents tend to be consistent in defending an idea they believe in and often become a reference for their environment. The opinion is in line with a community leader, namely M. Syafi'i, Chair of the Mabmi of Batu Bara Regency, who said:

"In principle, of course, this is unacceptable, because the principle of democracy is freedom. Households may have different choices. It comes back to principle. But apart from that, yes it could be. There are several influencing factors, such as being experienced in examining existing ideas, when parents have decided it is difficult to change their beliefs and parents usually defend these ideas.

The experience of parents' political affiliation tends to be consistent with a school, thus influencing their ideological, religious, and customary mindset. This opinion can be proven by Hanafi's statement as a member of the Mabmi of Batu Bara Regency saying: "Usually parents in Mabmi have ideological, religious and customary ideas, and tend to defend them, so it is not uncommon for parental affiliations in Mabmi to often influence relatives, family, etc in Batu Bara Regency."

Parents in the community are highly respected and are often used as community references in everyday life. These factors affect the political affiliation of parents in Mabmi who are responsible for carrying out political activities to encourage the Malay community to participate in exercising their right to vote in the 2018 Pilkada. This saving is in line with the statement of the people of Batu Bara Regency, namely M. Syafi'i, Chairman of the Mabmi of Batu Bara Regency said:

"Because our parents in Mabmi are often used as a reference in determining attitudes, resulting in parents having a moral responsibility in encouraging the community to participate in the 2018 regional elections."

The political affiliation of parents influences the Mabmi environment to participate because there are still many Malay people who find it difficult to determine their choice of candidates for Regional Heads. So based on experience in studying candidates, parents' political affiliations often provide input to people who do not have an orientation in exercising their voting rights in the 2018 regional head elections.

Organizational Experience Factor
Organizational experience influences a person to participate in Pilkada activities. This factor is influenced by one's organizational attachment which has a role in organizational achievement as well as the attitude of accountability in political situations that involve support. The behavior of one's organizational experience to exercise voting rights applies to pseudo-political organizations (Mabmi) as stated by an informant from the Batu Bara Regency KPU, namely Mr. M. Amin Lubis as the Batu Bara Regency KPU Commissioner: "Organizational experience influences a person's participation because someone who is involved in a quasi-political, ethnic and social organization has a patron in his group who is influential."

The organizational experience factor in participating in the 2018 Pilkada was influenced by a better understanding and attention to politics. Therefore, someone who has experience in organizing tries to contribute to the community environment by participating in every Pilkada. Therefore, Mabmi also influenced the participation of the Malay community in Batu Bara Regency in
exercising their right to vote. These savings are in line with the statement of M. Syafi’i as Chairman of the Mabmi of Batu Bara Regency who said:

"In principle, the community or people who are already involved in organizations, be it mass, customary, cultural or political organizations, want to show that they have a contribution to make in the contestation to succeed in any election by involving their mass support and the same is true with Mabmi."

Furthermore, the Mabmi organization in Batu Bara Regency encourages the community to form a forum for gathering, association, and expressing aspirations in preserving customs. Therefore, the experience of Mabmi organizations often use an ethnic approach in influencing the community to participate. This is influenced by the low trust in parties, government, and candidates, so people use ethnic organizations as an alternative in determining attitudes. Seeing that the majority of ethnic groups in the Batu Bara Regency community are Malay and Javanese, the Mabmi organization can greatly influence the community in participating in the 2018 Pilkada (Regional Head Election) of Batu Bara Regency. This can be proven from the results of the interviews as a whole, showing that the people of Batu Bara Regency in exercising their right to vote are strongly influenced by one’s experience in organizing.

CONCLUSION
Community participation in exercising their right to vote is a benchmark for the success of regional elections in Batu Bara Regency. However, the participation of the Malay community in Batu Bara Regency was only dominated by participation in voting and total apathy. In addition, the factors influencing the participation of the Indonesian Malay Cultural Customary Council Organization in Batu Bara Regency include: First, people’s political awareness of their rights and obligations in the 2018 Pilkada is only limited to understanding, without being accompanied by controlling the 2018 Pilkada and exercising their right to vote. Second, the low level of public trust in the government and candidates, including a track record, vision, and mission, greatly affects the people not exercising their right to vote. Third, the social status and economic status of the middle and lower middle class do not make voting a priority due to the focus on work, which is mostly fishermen and entrepreneurs. The low political awareness of the people and the lack of trust in the government shows that the participation of the people of Batu Bara Regency in the 2018 Pilkada was depressed – passive (apathy). After that, the factors that influenced Mabmi’s organizations to participate were: First, political affiliation of parents had a role in influencing first-time and ethnic voters, as well as people who did not have an orientation to exercise their right to vote. Second, organizational experience has a better understanding and concern for politics and tends to try to influence people to participate. Based on the description in the discussion and the conclusions obtained in this study, by looking at the low level of trust that the people of Batu Bara Regency have in candidates, it is hoped that in the upcoming Pilkada political parties will be able to provide their best cadres to restore public confidence in exercising their right to vote. In addition, the ineffective socialization carried out by the KPU of Batu Bara Regency is expected to provide invitations and outreach during holidays and rest hours. This is influenced by the majority of community work, namely fishermen and employees. Seeing that the people of Batu Bara Regency are heterogeneous, it is hoped that the Batu Bara Regency KPU will involve traditional organizations in Pilkada activities. This is intended so that traditional organizations can invite ethnic communities that dominate Bara Regency to participate in regional elections.

REFERENCES


