

# The High Political Costs in Local Head Election (Case Study in Indonesia)

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**Abstract:** *The most crucial issue of money politics in the election is the high cost of contestation borne by candidates in the election process. The study's objective is to analyze the causes of high political costs in regional head elections in Indonesia and the steps to reform the regional election system in the future. The study used a qualitative-descriptive method with a desk study technique, namely examining data sourced from literature and regulations and those related to the elections. The study found that political costs are high in regional head elections because, first, oligarchs control political parties because of the party's power to recruit candidates. In practice, recruiting candidates by political parties and coalitions of political parties are closed, elitist, and undemocratic. Party elites or oligarchs have the power to select and determine candidate pairs to fight in the regional elections. The nomination of candidates is not an arena for contesting capacities and capabilities, but rather an arena for capital struggle, popularity, and closeness to oligarchs or political party elites. Second, there are loopholes in regulations that open up space for high-cost politics, namely (1) a centralized nominating system; (2) Requirements for nomination at the political party level are too high and (3) The requirements for nomination by independent candidates are too stringent. The steps to improve the election system are to enhance the legal framework of the elections, namely institutionalizing the pre-election process, decentralizing the authority of political parties' management, reducing the parliamentary threshold for both parties and independent candidates.*

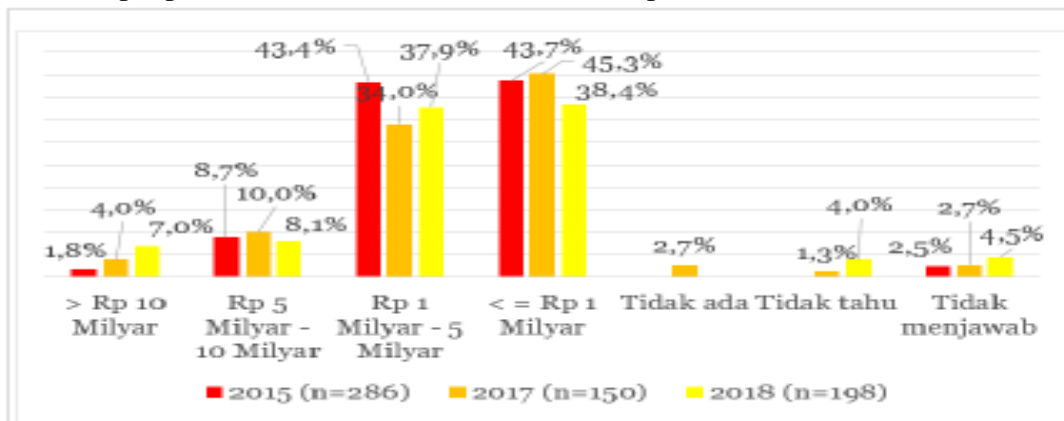
## 1. PRELIMINARY

Local government reform mandates strengthening democracy and enhancing justice and the welfare of local communities. One of the tools for improving local democracy is through the implementation of regional elections. Through the election, a regional leadership circulation occurs periodically every five years. Therefore, Smith (1985) [1] Political education provides leadership, political stability, local government equality, local government responsiveness, and local government accountability.

Even though the reform process has been going on for more than two decades, the ideal selection, as stated by Smith above, is just a dream so far. According to Samsuddin Haris (2014), the direct election, which was initially expected to break the chain of political parties' oligarchy, is not the case. The process of nominating regional heads and representatives in Indonesia in political parties tends to be colored by primordial factors such as religion, blood relations, regional equality, and aspects of loyalty and closeness to top party leaders. Conditions where recruitment is dominated by a strong party, family, dynasty, or AMPI models (children, sons-in-law, uncles, and wives). Filling strategic positions in political parties and government positions cannot be separated from the influence of personification and dynasty (family).

The implication is, it is not surprising that the election should be deployed to support the realization of decentralization and regional autonomy goals. What happens is the irony of regional governance, including the strengthening of conflicts between regional heads and deputy regional heads, political dynasties, rampant shadow state, and informal economy practices; and a bureaucracy that is not neutral, as well as money politics.

The most crucial issue of money politics is the high cost of contestation borne by candidate pairs in the election process. Political fees or high contestation costs arise when teams of candidates (passion) pay considerable costs to advance in the election. Based on a limited survey by the KPK in 2018, the average cost incurred by a candidate for head/deputy regional head reaches billions of rupiah. There are even candidate pairs who spend more than 10 billion rupiahs [2], as seen in Figure 1. Haris (2019) [3] writes that the political costs paid by candidate pairs of regents and mayors range from Twenty billion to thirty billion rupiahs, while the price of a candidate pair of Governors ranges Twenty billion to 100 billion rupiahs. Even though the average assets of the election candidate pairs are only around six point seven billion rupiahs, there are even four election candidates whose assets are zero rupiahs. At the same time, two people have minus assets (below) zero rupiah.



**Image 1. The range of private funds issued by the Regional Head Election Candidate Pairs**

**Source: Research and Development KPK, 2018**

Various parties, including political parties, government, and academia, have realized that high political costs harm the democratic process and regional development. The severe impact of high-cost election politics is the formation of a corrupt government. Candidate pairs, whose financial resources are limited, end up trapped in a corruption case because they have to pay back political costs, including dowries to investors or entrepreneurs who finance them. This is not only the case for regional head candidate pairs but also members of the legislature, as shown in Table 1. Research and development.

**Table 1 Corruption Crimes That Entail Regional Heads and DPR / DPRD Period  
 2004-2020**

No	Position	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	Total	
		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
		4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
1	<b>Governor</b>	1	-	2	1	1	2	1	-	-	2	3	3	1	0	0	0	17	
2	<b>Mayor/Regent and Vice-Regent</b>	-	-	3	6	6	5	4	3	3	3	1	4	9	2	0	9	72	
3.	<b>Staff DPR and DPRD</b>	-	-	-	2	7	8	2	5	1	8	9	1	2	5	6	8	21	
								7	6			9	3		1		7		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>
						<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	

Source: <https://www.kpk.go.id/id/>, access 28 October 2020.

Based on the KPK data above, until October 2020, as many as 91 regional heads were caught in corruption cases, 17 people were governors, and 72 people were regents and mayors / This condition, of course, is very worrying for the future of democratic development in Indonesia in particular and the future of governance. Governance, in general. Therefore, to avoid this trend from occurring, concrete and measured steps should be taken immediately to end electoral politics' high costs.

Many studies in Indonesia have examined the implementation of direct elections from various perspectives, including the process of holding elections (Hikmat, 2014) [4], electoral legal arrangements (Nugroho, 2016) [5], elections and political parties (Asmuni, 2017) [6], incumbent behavior (Tjenreng, 2016) [7], election financing (Ministry of Home Affairs BPP Team, 2017) [8], money politics in elections (Sjafrina, 2019) [10], and an asymmetric electoral system (Nuriyanti, 2015) [9]. A study on money politics in elections conducted by Ferza and Fikri (2018) [11] examines the practice of dowry politics in the 2018 Election, which involves political party actors, regional head candidates, and the electoral system. Political dowry can lead to regional head corruption, so the implication of the policy is to improve regulations, including Election Law, Political Party Law, and Election Law.

In contrast to previous studies, the study aims to analyze the causes of the very high political costs in regional head elections in Indonesia and formulate future remedial steps to eliminate high-cost politics in elections.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 The Concept of Decentralization: Definition and Objectives of Decentralization

To explain the relationship between elections and decentralization, we start with the concepts of decentralization and regional autonomy.

The definition of decentralization is categorized into two main perspectives, namely political decentralization perspective and administrative decentralization perspective (Mawhood, 1987: 12 []; Hidayat 2004: 17-19) [12]. In a political philosophy (political decentralization perspective), Parson (1961) defines decentralization as "... sharing of the governmental power by a central ruling group with other groups, each having authority within a specific area of the state. Referring to Parson's definition of decentralization, Mawhood (1987: 9) says that decentralization is "... devolution of power from central to local governments". In line with this opinion, Smith (1985) defines decentralization as "... the transfer of power, from the top level to lower level, in a territorial hierarchy, which could be one of government within a state or offices within a large organization."

It can be concluded that Parson (1961), Mawhood (1987), and Smith (1985) put the idea of sharing the governmental power and transfer of power as the main essence of the concept of decentralization.

On the other hand, the perspective of administrative decentralization, Rondinelli, and Cheema (1983: 18) in their book entitled *Decentralization and Development: Policy Implementation in Developing Countries*, formulate the definition of decentralization as ... *the transfer of planning, decision-making, or administrative authority from central government to its field organisations, local administrative units, semi autonomous and parastatal organisations, local government, or non-government organisations.* (“... delegation of authority, planning, decision-making and / or administrative authorities from the central government to regional governments, vertical central government organizations in the regions (field organizations), administrative units in the regions; semi-organizations. Autonomous and / or non-governmental organizations”).

Slatter (1990: 504) criticizes Rondinelli by saying that "What is remarkable about Rondinelli's project is the absence of any theoretical grounding for analysis of state power." dimension of state power." More specifically, the main weakness of Rondinelli's conception is that it tends not to include aspects of the transfer of power from the central government to the regions (the transfer of power from central to the peripheral state) as the spirit of the definition of decentralization. Conyers (1986: 88) also argued that the main weakness of the decentralization definition presented by Rondinelli and Cheema lies in the tendency to underestimate the meaning of the transfer of power from central to the peripheral state.

What are the goals of decentralization? Smith (1985) formulated the objectives of devolution based on national interests (central government), which are interpreted as strengthening democratization and political stability, and local government interests, which are interpreted as efforts to develop local capacity.

Decentralization aims from the central government's interest to strengthen democracy and political stability through political education, provide leadership training, and create political stability.

**First**, realizing political education, meaning that through decentralization, community members can elect and be elected; The community has a healthy political understanding for the community, especially about the state administration mechanism. Healthy political awareness will encourage local people to learn to recognize and understand the various social, economic and political problems they face, avoid or even refuse to elect legislative candidates who do not have the expected political ability qualifications, and learn to criticize various government policies.

**Second**, to provide training in leadership means that the decentralization policy is a training tool for politicians and bureaucrats in the regions before they occupy various important positions at the national level. Therefore, the decentralization policy is expected to motivate and produce reliable leadership candidates to compete at the national level.

**Third**, to create political stability, the implementation of decentralization and regional autonomy policies and increasing community participation at the local level is also a means of political education for local government administrators to increase responsibility.

According to Smith, the purpose of decentralization in local government interests is to mature local communities, namely, to help realize political equality, accountability, and responsiveness.

It realizes political equality, namely the more open opportunities for the community to participate in various political activities at the local level. In this case, according to Smith, people in the regions can elegantly practice forms of political participation, for example, becoming members of political parties and interest groups, besides also having the freedom to express interests and be active in the policymaking process. It is believed that the

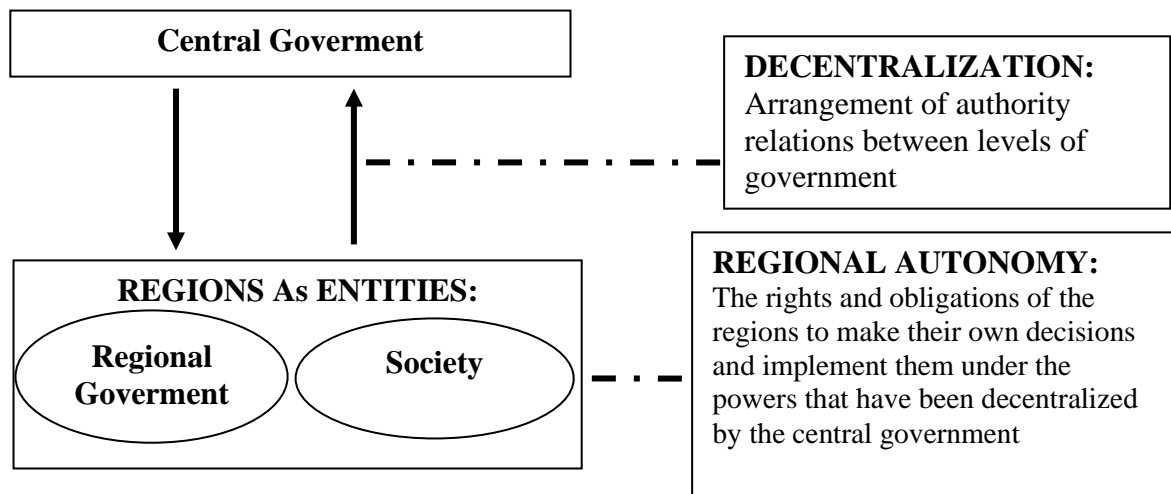
decentralization policy will accelerate the realization of political equality, which in turn will bring the idea of democracy to a more realistic level.

Realizing local accountability, decentralization means increasing the responsibility of local governments in dealing with the community. The basic idea of local accountability comes from liberty, where, through the implementation of devolution, local governments can pay attention to their communities' rights (Smith, 1985: 26). Ruland (1992: 3) further operationalizes the term local accountability in the context of socio-economic development by stating: "The responsibility of local governments is still needed in the process of socio-economic development. Through the proximity of local decision-makers to their constituencies, the distribution of territorial powers is seen as an additional guarantee that requests will be heard and that public services are therefore provided according to community needs. Besides, the spread of political power through the division of areas and healthy independence to local governments will guarantee the rest of the social development pattern based on the principle of diversity in unity. (The accountability of local government remains necessary in the process of social-economic development. Through the proximity of local decision-makers to their constituency, the areal division of power is considered an additional assurance when demand will be heard and, accordingly, public services provided in line with people's needs. Moreover, the dispersal of political power through areal division and the existence of healthy self-reliance to local governments would thus guarantee a social development pattern the rest on the principle of diversity in unity)

It realizes local responsiveness, meaning that decentralization increases local governments' ability to understand their communities' various problems. At the same time, increasing the ability to serve the community's needs also encourages accelerated social and economic development in the regions.

## **2.2. The Concept of Regional Autonomy and Its Relationship with the Concept of Decentralization**

Mawhood (1987) defines regional autonomy as freedom assumed by a local government and its community in both makings and implementing its own decisions. In line with Mawhood, Robert Dhal (1989) said the need for decentralization and regional autonomy from the start was not based on technical considerations but resulted from a tug of war or political conflict between the regions and the center so that regional autonomy became a solution. The distribution of power between government levels and the choice of institutions (an association (a group of people) who are of the same level, same opinion, and in agreement) for decentralization results from a political process that begins with group decisions that often have a territorial identity. The political dimension of the formation of autonomous regions or decentralization is localized government as part of a foundation for recognizing a community group as a political entity. Moving on from the definitions of regional autonomy from Mawhood and Dhal, it can be argued that the essence of regional autonomy is determined by the determining actors, namely the Regional Government and the community, in the process of making and implementing decisions in the regions.



**Image 2. The Relationship between Decentralization and Regional Autonomy**

Source: Syarif Hidayat, 2020

Then, what is the relationship between decentralization and regional autonomy? According to Syarif Hidayat (2004: 29), there is a linear interconnection between decentralization and regional autonomy. Decentralization is two sides of a coin that give meaning to one another. Specifically, it can be said, whether regional autonomy exists or not is determined mainly by the extent to which the central government has decentralized authority to provincial governments. In this case, decentralization is a relationship of authority arrangements between government levels (shown by a two-way arrow in Figure 1). Regional autonomy is the right and obligation of the regions to make their own decisions and implement policies under the central government's decentralized authority, shown by the relationship model, as shown in Figure 1. What is meant by "region" is an entity consisting of the Regional Government and the community.

### **2.3 The Urgency of Regional Head Elections (Elections) in Decentralization and Regional Autonomy**

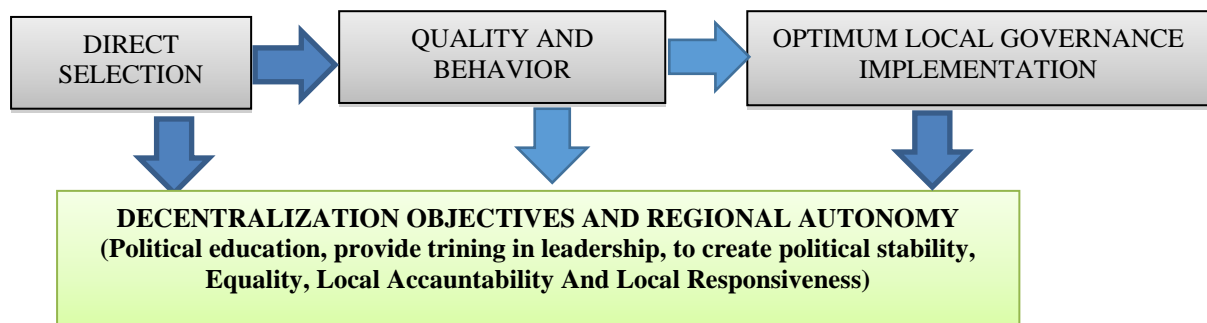
Suppose elections are an essential instrument to create a democratic regional government (Wasistiono, 2013) [13]. The goal of decentralization can be achieved through elections as an instrument of a healthy democracy in the regions. Therefore, according to Smith (1985), the urgency of regional head elections is an instrument for realizing the democratization and stabilization of local politics, which is achieved through political education, leadership training (Political Education), and political stabilization (Political Stability). The election also serves as an instrument for the political maturation of local communities, which is achieved through strengthening community opportunities to influence policies (political equality), increasing responsibility to the Government to the community (local government accountability) as well as increasing the responsiveness of Local Government to community needs (local government responsiveness) ).

Direct elections have urgency towards efforts to improve the quality of democratic life. According to Syamsuddin Haris (2014), the speed of direct elections is needed to break the chain of party oligarchy, which must be admitted, which tends to color parties' lives in the DPRD. This means that direct elections are needed to break the chain of politicization of public aspirations, which parties and party politicians tend to do. Second, direct elections are necessary to improve local political elites' quality of accountability, including regional heads. Before direct elections, the provincial authority tended to create dependence on the DPRD to

be more accountable to the DPRD than to the people. Third, direct elections are needed to create political and governance stability at the local level. Dismissal or dismissal in the middle of a term of office often results in local political turmoil. It is hoped that with direct elections, those elected can serve for five years. Fourth, direct elections for regional heads will strengthen and improve national leadership selection quality because there are more opportunities for national leaders to emerge from below or from the regions. Fifth, direct elections can further improve representativeness because the community can determine who will be the leader at the local level.

Previous studies have linked the process of selecting leaders with the quality of governance, including Besley (2005) [14]. Besley wrote that the candidate selection process would affect the credibility of the policies to be made (policy credibility) and the elected politicians' quality. Besley also measures the quality of leaders from two things, namely competence and honesty. In this case, political parties play an essential role in determining the quality of the candidates to be elected: whether the party will choose the right candidate or a wrong candidate. A very elitist and closed nomination process will increase the likelihood of an unsuitable candidate being elected in the candidacy.

Based on the description above, the relationship between elections and the quality of regional heads and the local government's optimization can be described. This description illustrates that quality elections will result in regional authorities having a high capacity to lead their regions. These high capacity regional heads can mobilize resources in the provincial government to accelerate the realization of decentralization and regional autonomy, as described in Figure 3.



**Image 3. Election Relationship and the Goals of Decentralization and Regional Autonomy**

Source: Adopt from Wasitiono, 2013

## 2.4 The Electoral System in the Regional Government Law

Apart from Law No. 23/2014, there have been eight laws on regional government that regulate the mechanism for regional head elections, meaning that regulations on aspects of regional governance include holding regional head elections (Table 2).

**Table 2. Law on Local Government and Electoral Mechanisms in Indonesia**

<b>Regional Law</b>	<b>Government Regulation</b>	<b>Electoral System</b>	<b>Penerapan Desentralisasi</b>
1.	Law No. 1 of 1945	Appointed / Appointed by a Higher Official Above him	Principles of Decentralization in the Republic of Indonesia (This is guaranteed in Article 1, Paragraph (1) that Indonesia is a unitary state that adheres to the principle of decentralization. The center gives authority to regional heads to regulate and manage their households in an autonomous region)
2.	UU No 22 1948	Appointed / Appointed by a Higher Official Above him	
3.	Law Number 44 of 1950 concerning Regional Government of East Indonesia	Appointed / Appointed by a Higher Official Above him	
4.	Law No. 1 of 1957 Presidential Decree No. 6 of 1959 in conjunction with Presidential Decree No. 5 of 1960.	Appointed / Appointed by a Higher Official Above him	
5.	UU No 18 1965	Appointed by a higher official above him	
6.	UU No 5 1974	Proposed by the DPRD through the Minister of Home Affairs for approval by the President	Principles of Decentralization in the Republic of Indonesia. <i>Fused Model dalam integrated prefectoral system</i>
7.	UU No 22 1999	Elected by the DPRD	
8.	UU No 32 2004	Elected directly by the public	

Source: Kurniawati Hastuti Dewi (2015), An asymmetric election in the Perspective of the Republic of Indonesia

Publisher: LIPI and Tri Suhendra Arbani (2018)

"Juridical Analysis of Filling the Position of Deputy Regional Head in Regional Government Administration" Journal of Legal Discourse, 24

Syamsuddin Harris (2019) wrote that the electoral arrangement in the Regional Government Law since the reform was written by Syamsuddin Harris (2019) as writing since the reformation began and the fall of President Suharto in 1998, the legal framework governing the electoral system and the electoral process has been amended several times and replaced with new regulations. First, the enactment of Law No. 22 of 1999 on regional governance is the legal framework for regional head elections, both provincial and district/city. Elections through DPRD lasted until 2005. Second, the period of enactment of Law No. 32 of 2004 on regional governance is the legal framework for implementing direct elections by the people. This law has been revised several times, namely through Law No. 8 of 2005 and Law No. 12 of 2008. Significant changes occurred through Law No. 12 of 2008, implementing the decision of the Constitutional Court in 2007, which allowed individual or independent candidates to compete to become election candidates in addition to candidates promoted by political parties. Third, the issuance of Law No. 22/2014 as a legal and official law, but ironically it did not have time to become effective because Susilo B. Yudhoyono's government issued Perppu No. 1/2014 on replacing the law that was agreed upon with the DPR. Fourth, the enactment of Peru No. 1 of 2014 on the election of governors, regents, and mayors into Law No. 1 of 2015 on elections by the government and DPRD under the new



administration of Joko Widodo. Fifth, the Election Law No. 1 of 2015 also has not had the chance to become useful as a legal umbrella for organizing elections, but it has been replaced by Law No. 8 of 2015. The sixth Law No. 8 of 2015, which was in effect and became the legal framework for simultaneous implementation of 2015, was revised back to Law No. 10 of the year. 2016.

## **2.5 Political Parties and Political Party Recruitment Patterns**

There are variations in the definition of political parties. Still, in this study, the author refers to political parties' purpose, according to Mark N Hagopian (in Syamsuddin Haris et al., 2016). According to him, a political party is a group that proposes candidates for political office to be elected by the people so that they can control and influence government actions).

Budiardjo (2008) writes about the function of political parties in a democratic country. First, as a means of political communication, the role of political parties is as a bridge between "those who rule" (the rulers) and those who are ruled (the ruled). Second, political parties also function to articulate interests and aggregate interests. The articulation of interests is carried out by political parties towards various opinions and attitudes, which are processed and formulated to the Government and decision-makers in demands and general policy proposals (public policy). Furthermore, the different groups' perspectives and orders that are more or less related to the same thing are combined into one called "interest combination" or interest aggregation. The articulation of interests and the assembly of parts in a political system are inputs conveyed to agencies authorized to make binding decisions, in this case, both the DPR and the Government to be processed and converted into output in the form of binding regulations such as laws, public policies, and regulations. Other. Third, institutions also have a function as a means of political socialization, and political socialization is the process by which a person obtains views, orientation and values from the society in which they are located, this process also includes the process by which people pass on norms and values from one generation to another. the next generation. The method of political socialization has started since childhood and is organized through various institutions such as formal and informal education and the mass media. Fourth, political institutions also carry out a political recruitment function. Political recruitment is the process through which institutions seek new members and invite talented people to participate in the political process. Political recruitment guarantees the continuity and sustainability of the institution as well as a way of selecting future leaders.

In the recruitment process, Pippa Norris (2006) states the classic function of political parties as gatekeepers in candidacy for all positions at all government levels. Political recruitment, for Norris, is not only a matter of nominating elected representatives at the local, regional, national levels but also filling various public positions. The recruitment process for widely selected places and appointed is considered one of the essential residual functions for political parties with consequences for the potential for intra-party conflict, the composition of parliament and government, and the accountability of elected members. The main factors affecting the recruitment process of political parties for nomination in the elections are divided into three schemes, namely: certification, nomination, and election. Certification includes, among other things, electoral law rules, party rules, and informal social norms that define the criteria for candidates who can be nominated in elections. A nomination is the availability of candidates to be selected and how the candidates' selectors determine who will be assigned in the election. Elections are the last step in which a candidate wins public office.

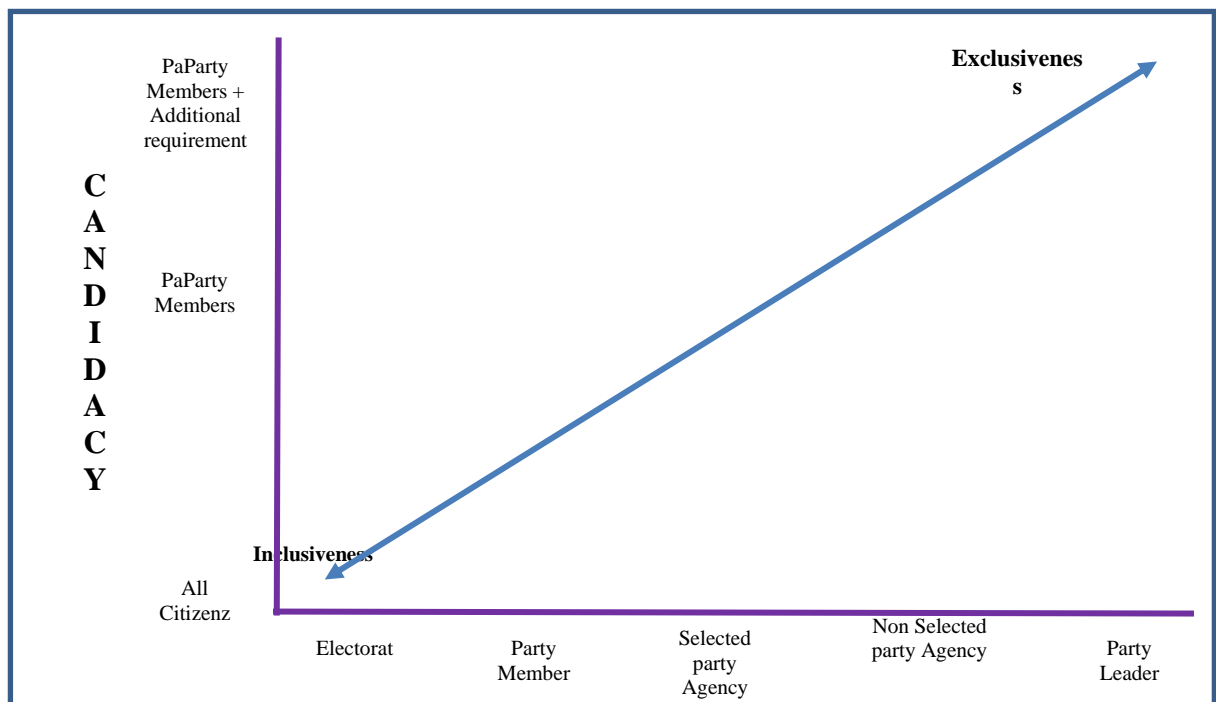
**Table 3 Schematic Model of Political Party Recruitment Model Pippa Norris**

Certification Stage	Nomination Stage	Election Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General requirements that are most often regulated in the Election Law or internal party regulations are age, nationality, residential (domicile), deposit funds, and prohibition of nominations with certain conditions.</li> <li>• Specific requirements that arise in several laws and party regulations include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Place of birth of the candidate</li> <li>- Citizenship status due to naturalization</li> <li>- Minimum period as a party member to ensure loyalty and understand the party's vision and mission of policies.</li> <li>- Quota for certain groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Conditions are governing the prohibition of nominations under certain conditions, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Civil servants, judicial judges, officials in public institutions</li> <li>- People who are involved in lawlessness and serious criminal acts</li> <li>- The person who went into financial bankruptcy.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There are specific criteria that often appear to be informal norms that are not written down in society but have an effect on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Candidates have experience following training on parliamentary work functions, training on legal drafting, and other related training</li> <li>- Candidates have experience working in parliamentary institutions at a lower regional level</li> </ul>               The candidate has experience working in think tanks on political policy, the media, or local government agencies             </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political parties in this nomination process have several roles:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nominating candidates in the election process</li> <li>- Provide a social network (constituents and other supporting elements)</li> <li>- Training and capacity building training</li> <li>- Experience of the party organizations that increase capacity in policymaking and others</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Three essential things in the nomination process are               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The degree of party decentralization, namely whether candidate nominations are carried out in stages starting from the party elite at the central level (top-down) to the lower level, or from the elite at the regional level to the upper level (bottom-up)</li> <li>- Depth of participation, namely whether the process of determining candidates is carried out by a few elites or many party elites</li> <li>- The number of people to be nominated, namely whether there is only one single candidate, several or many candidates to be elected as election candidates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election system as game rules in the final stage of recruitment of public officials and members of parliament               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Majoritarian</li> <li>- Proportional</li> <li>- Mixed</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other electoral policies related to recruitment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seat reversal policy</li> <li>- Quota policy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

The determination of candidates has usually related to what criteria the party wants or what needs the party wants and specific contexts the constituents or the public want. Generally, in theory, the recruitment process requirements are related to cadre ideology, loyalty, electability (political support), political ability, and track records of candidates (background,

socioeconomic, education, etc.) and their relationship with constituents or voters. These needs reflect the needs of parties on the one hand and, on the other hand, the need for party responsibility to encourage the emergence of representatives of the people and officials with integrity, honesty, accountability, and non-corruption.

The recruitment stage is also determined by who selects, how to select, how the selection should be made (selection method), and how to decide. The recruitment process is an essential part of political parties' function because the results will have a significant political impact, for example: (1) it can affect the internal dynamics of political parties, including creating internal party conflicts; 2. Can influence the composition of members in the executive and legislative bodies; and (3) the accountability of elected members in the executive and legislative bodies. According to Norris and Lovenduski (2007), recruitment patterns are formed by the relationship between the availability of candidates seeking political careers and the selection process set by political parties. There are two recruitment patterns, namely a vertical way, namely party recruitment, is carried out hierarchically with a structural pathway in the party organization. Second, the lateral way, in which recruitment is opened to all individuals, both inside and outside the party.



**Image 4. Candidation Process: Party Legitimacy and Selectorate Legitimacy**

Figure 2 illustrates the legitimacy that results from the candidate process. The resulting legitimacy can come from party legitimacy and voter legitimacy (selectorate legitimacy). The candidacy process, which is open and closed, also has a relationship with political party cohesion. On the one hand, open-ended candidacy reduces party cohesion. In some instances, the secure process of candidacy, such as political parties in Indonesia, actually increases party oligarchy. Still, on the other hand, it also creates the phenomenon of personification of political parties due to the considerable power of party leadership in determining the process of candidacy. Closed candidacy is closely related to the appointment model (not election). It means that the political elite is given full rights to determine who will be nominated as members of the legislature and executor. This designation model ignores the need for internal party democracy in the candidacy process. A party is an important organization and an example in applying democratic principles to be practiced in real life.

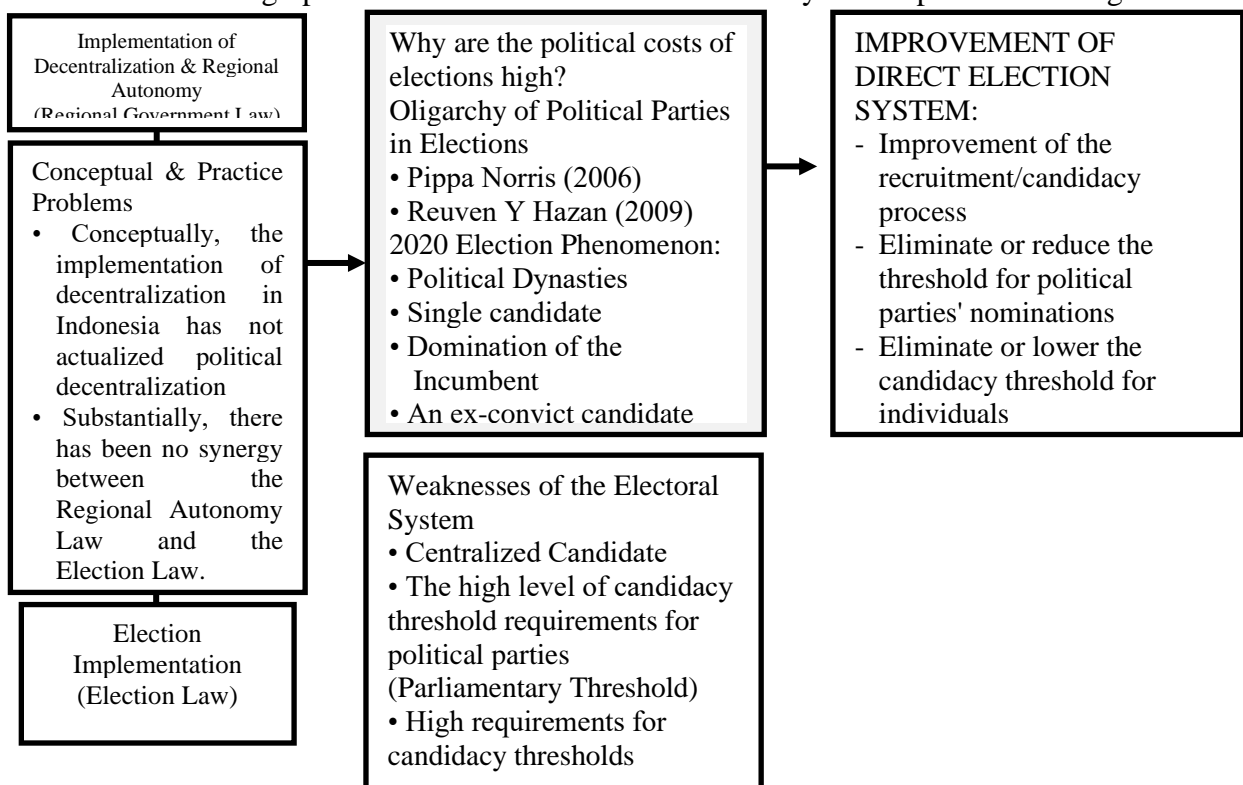
The candidacy process is closed. The process is carried out by voters, party members, elected party agents, non-elected party agents, and party leaders (Reuven Y Hazan, 2010). Actually, from a closed candidate pattern, it is also not oligarchic. It only involves party elites because, in principle, it is still carried out by some people with different categories.

What is the recruitment pattern with the oligarchy phenomenon in elections? According to Winter (2011: 13) [15], the oligarchy has occurred in Indonesian politics dynamics until now. The government of Indonesia, both central and regional, is still controlled by oligarchs (elites) with power interests. After the New Order era until entering the reform era, there was no fundamental change in the system of government where interest-based power was still cultured and maintained among political figures. Even though the New Order era had collapsed, the New Order's transition to the reform era was only in "wraps". The interests of the oligarchs still control the government system in it.

Party oligarchy raises phenomena such as the so-called cartel party [16] [17], personalization of political parties [18], party presidentialization [19], or parties experiencing personalization. This phenomenon indicates that political parties are in the shadow of their top leaders and cronies. In this regard, a concept is quite impressive, which fundamentally appeals to parties today, namely the post-democracy party. Crouch [20] argued that the post-democracy of the party had five characteristics, namely, 1) exclusively in forming an inner circle of power that depends on the founders of the party rather than the process of regeneration in general, 2) relying on the role of founders and corporations they have in meeting financial needs, rather than contributions. Members or other assistance, 3) prioritizing electoral enabling rather than democracy empowerment, primarily through a populist approach, 4) in formulating elitist and top-down party policies and agendas, and 5) it is challenging to maintain ideological loyalty and create artificial participation [20].

## 2.5 Framework

The framework for high political costs in Indonesia's electoral system is presented in Figure 3.



**Image 5. The Framework for the Study of High Political Costs in Elections**

### 3. METHODS

#### 3.1 Study Design

The study used a qualitative design with descriptive methods (Creswell, 2013) [21]. Qualitative descriptive research method because the researcher analyzes the concept of decentralization, regional autonomy, political parties, especially regarding recruitment patterns and analyzes why there are high political costs in elections.

#### 3.2 Approach

This study uses two main approaches, namely the public administration approach and the political approach. The public administration approach was chosen because it was considered the most relevant to be used to understand and explain the existence of decentralization and regional autonomy and their relationship to elections. Meanwhile, the political approach was chosen because it is believed to be very relevant in understanding and explaining the concept and empirical reality of political parties and their recruitment patterns, transactional politics, and elections. The public administration approach will be widely used to understand, analyze, and interpret the results of studies related to:

1. The essence of the concepts of decentralization and regional autonomy.
2. The importance of elections from the perspective of decentralization.
3. The urgency of the Election to achieve the goals of decentralization and regional autonomy.

Meanwhile, more political approaches will be applied to understand, dissect, and interpret studies, mainly related to political parties' function in elections.

The data collection method used in this study is a desk study. The desk study method collects data and information through examination and analysis of data and information sourced from literature and regulations relating to the topics discussed. Processing and data analysis used for qualitative data is a qualitative data analysis method, namely inductive data analysis through 4 (four) stages of an investigation, namely: (1) collecting data, (2) reducing data, (3) presenting data, and (4) draw conclusions.

#### 3.3 Study Dimensions

By referring to the three formulations of the main study questions as stated in the introductory chapter, and the construction of the framework in the literature review chapter, there are at least three main dimensions related to the question "Why the high political costs in elections". The two sizes referred to are a) Political party oligarchy b) Direct election system problems.

**Table 4. Table Dimensions of Study and Data Collection Techniques**

Study Dimension	Required Data	
	Primary Data	Field Data
1. Oligarchy of Political Parties in Election Candidacy	Literature Review: • Books • Journal • Other documents	Nothing
2. Problem Direct election system	Literature Review: • Political Party Law • Election Law • Local Government Law	Nothing

### **3.4 Study Output**

Based on the study results, recommendations will be formulated to improve the direct election system and electoral arrangement in the Regional Government Law, the Election Law, and the Political Party Law to enhance the quality of local democracy.

## **4. DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Why Are Election Costs Expensive?**

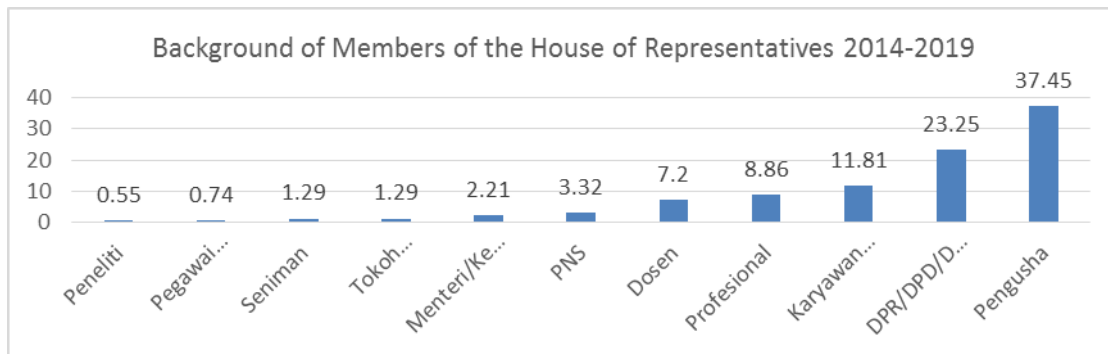
To answer the question of why the cost of election politics is expensive, the authors focus on two factors, namely first, the oligarchy of political parties has made the recruitment process of candidate pairs undemocratic, elite and closed; second, the weakness of the direct election system that is regulated in election regulations and political parties.

### **4.2 Oligarchy of Political Parties in Elections**

Political oligarchy is the concentration of power over material based on enforcing claims or rights to property and property (Jeffrey A. Winter, 2011). The oligarchy of political parties in Indonesia is a reality that can be seen in the direct view of oligarchs or elites who have large bases of material and financial resources to open up opportunities to control parties. In Indonesia, several business people who own the party include Abu Rizal Bakri in the Golkar Party, Surya Paloh in the Democratic National Party, Prabowo Subiyanto in Gerindra, including several business people who expanded their power by leading political parties and becoming members of the DPR / DPRD.

Elections that should be a pillar of democracy are marked by elites' power or the oligarchs of political parties. The political oligarchy that grips political parties contributes to elections' failure to produce clean regional leaders with adequate capacity (Firman Noor, 2018: 179-196). In his study in four provinces in Indonesia (Banten, DKI Jakarta, Central Java, and East Java), it was found that the symptom of political oligarchy pervades political parties, where parties experience personalization, namely parties are under the shadow of their top leaders and cronies. Parties that capitalize on their parties with sufficiently large funds without adequate capacity to lead organizations are suspected of setting a bad precedent for Indonesian politics. The oligarchy of political parties can threaten Indonesia's democracy because parties that should accommodate the people's aspirations and interests are instead used by the interests of specific individuals or groups.

The assumption that political parties carry out the recruitment function does not occur. Political parties are also considered to have failed to carry out the political party regeneration system's institutional part. This can be observed from the track records or backgrounds of politicians in the DPR in Indonesia 2014-2019, dominated by businessmen. Figure 5 shows that 37.45 percent of DPR RI members are entrepreneurs, 11.81 percent are private employees, 1.29 percent are artists, 1.29 percent are religious leaders.



**Image 6 Background of Members DPR 2014-2019**

Source: DPR RI Profile Data Team 2014-2019

#### Election Candidate Recruitment and Closed Selection

The party in full power in recruiting candidates for the regional head is regulated in Article 39 letter (a) of Law no. 10 of 2016. This article states that the election participants are pairs of candidates proposed by political parties or coalitions of political parties, meaning that political parties have large and strategic authority to nominate candidates' teams. Political parties are the only institutions that can carry out the recruitment process, starting from selecting, selecting, assigning, and registering candidates for the regional head.

In the recruitment process for election candidates, the political party will determine who will be elected as the candidate for regional head and deputy regional head. Then the people will vote in the election. However, political parties' role in the political recruitment function in elections has not been fully realized (Syamsuddin Haris, 2016: 39-40). The reality that happens is that the oligarchs who control the political parties can choose and determine candidates for the election. The selection mechanism for regional head candidates by several parties by selecting regional head candidates is carried out in ways that are far from democratic values. The netting system tends to be closed, not transparent, and not possible to be monitored by the public, which raises the reality of "dowry politics" (Samsuddin Haris, 2018).

An elitist and closed recruitment system colors the electoral nomination process that has been going on in political parties so far. Syamsuddin Haris (2018) states that the recruitment process for candidate pairs in the election has ignored public access urgency. Because in general, the people in the electoral districts do not know how the actual candidate selection process by a party or coalition of political parties. In his notes, several community leaders in several regions do not even know why a particular party chooses to nominate specific figures as regional heads or deputy regional heads. The practice of assigning through political parties is often distorted by political ways, which do not accommodate public aspirations in determining candidates and aspiration manipulation in the name of money politics. Nomination through political parties is no longer an arena for the contestation of capacities and capabilities, but rather an arena for capital/capital battles. With this kind of recruitment model, it is challenging to expect political parties to accommodate potential community figures, especially if they do not have sufficient social and capital.

Furthermore, t Article 29 paragraph (2) of Law no. 2 of 2008 concerning Political Parties confirms that the recruitment of prospective Regional Head Candidates is carried out democratically and openly under the statutes and regulations in force. However, until now, there is no precise legal instrument how the procedures and procedures are carried out at the political party level in accepting prospective candidates, the registration process at political parties, the selection procedure, the selection committee and the scoring system or the criteria used at the political party level to accept or reject candidates. Candidate. In other words, the autonomy granted to political parties in recruiting regional head candidates is not followed by clear legal rules.

The political party law also does not describe in detail and clearly the meaning of democracy and openness in the recruitment process and only entirely leaves it to the party's internal mechanism. In the absence of clear legal rules on how political parties recruit Balonkada, causing political parties to interpret them according to their interests, most of them are carried out privately, are not aspirational, non-accommodative, not selective, and can freely nominate candidates for the regional head.

Different interpretations between political parties can be seen from the nomination system for candidate election candidates, as presented in Table 5. For example, for candidates' nomination for election, each political party applies a nomination model according to their respective internal policies, such as conducting public opinion surveys and combined opinion surveys. General with the establishment of a selection at the national level, the gradual selection at the regional level as presented in Table 3.

**Table 5. Nomination Model in Recruitment of Election Candidates**

No	Nomination Model	Institution	Information
1	Public opinion survey.	The first time the Golkar was conducted in 2006, the survey model was followed by other institutions in 2015, 2017, and 2018 simultaneous elections. Nasdem hired several national survey agencies to screen pairs of candidates in simultaneous elections.	Candidates nominated by the institution based on the survey results have a high level of popularity and a high electability level.
2	Combined public opinion survey and selection at the national level.	Nasdem (Team 7) PKB (Team 9) PKS (Shura Council Team)	
3.	Network gradually at the regional level.	PKS	The selection of candidates for election participants starts from the district level to the province. At the provincial level, the special team to win the DPW Election proposes two names to be determined by the Institutional Supreme Leadership Council (DPTP), an institution consisting of 17 members of the Shura Council.
4	Model Convention.	PSI applies the model convention for the 2020 elections in two regions that have fractional power in South Tangerang and Surabaya	Each candidate is tested by three panelists involving external parties (two from an independent and one from an internal political institution).

Source: CSIS (2020)

The nomination process for regional heads and representatives in Indonesia tends to be colored by primordial factors such as religion, blood relations, regional equality, and loyalty



and closeness elements to top institutional leaders. Condition, where the recruitment is dominated by healthy people from the institution, family, dynasty, or AMPI model (children, son-in-law, uncle, and wife). Filling strategic positions in political institutions and government positions cannot be separated from the influence of personification, dynasty (family), and wealthy people (businessmen).

What is described above is continuing today. It can be seen from the phenomena that emerged in the 2020 election, including the strengthening of dynastic politics in the candidate recruitment process, the emergence of single candidates, nominations dominated by incumbents, including the emergence of candidate pairs who are ex-convicts.

**First, dynastic politics in the election recruitment process.** Dynastic political symptoms are increasingly coloring the current regional government. For example, Ratu Atut's family's power in Banten Province has clearly shown a political dynasty in the ranks of regional government (Sutisna and Akbar, 2018). Ratu Atut's family is spread across the provincial and district/city government segments in Banten. The Mayor of Serang is held by the younger brother of the Governor of Banten, Hairil Zaman; Mayor of South Tangerang, Airin Rahmi is a brother-in-law; The Deputy Regent of Serang was served by Ratu Atut's younger brother named Ratu Atut Chasanah and their stepmother served as the Deputy Regent of Pandeglang. Position controlled by the family of the Governor of Banten in the Legislative, namely the husband of Ratu Atut, Hikmat Comet, who is a member of the DPR RI; biological son, Andika Hazrumi became a member of the DPD RI, Adik Airin (wife of Ratu Atut's younger brother), Aden Abdul Halik, became a member of the Banten Provincial DPRD.

**Table 6: Family Politics Dynasty in Banten Governor Election 2017**

No	Regency / City	Head / Deputy Regional Head	Family Relationship
1	Serang City	Tb. Khaerul Jaman (Mayor)	Brother
2	South Tangerang City	Airin Rachmi Diani (Mayor)	Younger brother-in-law
3.	Serang District	Tatu Chasanah (Regent)	Brother
4	Pandeglang District	Tanto W. Arban (Vice-Regent)	Son-in-law

Source: Sutisna and Akbar 2018

Meanwhile, the political existence of dynasties is getting more decisive in the 2020 Election. The number of relatives of power circles who are advancing in the 2020 Election, as shown in the following table:

**Table 7 Candidates for Election Participants with Family Relationships with Power**

Name	Candidates for Election Participants	Family Relationship
Gibran Rakabuming Raka	Mayor Candidates Solo	The President's eldest son of Joko Widodo
Bobby Nasution	Mayor Candidates Medan	Son-in-law of the President of Joko Widodo
Siti Nur Azizah	Mayor Candidates Tangerang South	The Vice President's daughter of Ma'ruf Amin
Hanindito Himawan Pramono	Mayor Candidates Kediri	Son of the Cabinet Secretary of Pramono Anung
Saraswati Djojohadikusumo	Vice-Mayor Candidates South Tangerang City	The Minister of Defense's nephew of Prabowo Subianto
Irman Yasin Limpo	Mayor Candidates Makassar	The younger brother of the Minister of Agriculture of Syahrul

		Yasin Limpo
Titik Mas'udah	Deputy Regent Candidate Mojokerto	The younger brother of the Minister of Manpower of Ida Fauziah

Source: Dimas Jarot Bayu  
<https://katadata.co.id/agungjatmiko/berita/5f2185c360492/oligarki-diramal-bakal-menguat-dalam-pemilihan-2020>

In Table 7, the family relationship between the candidates and several elites in the power circle is a form of dynastic politics. Dynastic politics is an effort to direct the regeneration of power by certain elite groups to nuclear families, such as the son of the resident, the son of the vice president, and the minister's younger brother. This can be seen from the political institutions that bear the candidates who have close ties with the eligible participants' families. As seen from the PDIP and Gerindra. PDIP, which carries Gibran and Hanindito, is the institution of Jokowi and Pramono as well. Gerindra carrying Saras, its general chairman is Prabowo. On further inspection, the same is true for other institutions. Golkar, which supported Ironman, was where Syahrul Yasin Limpo started his political career before moving to Nasdem. PKB, which carries Titik, is Ida Fauziah's institution. Dynastic politics can continue because there is no single regulation that prohibits it. The political elite can freely pass their power to their immediate family without any legal consequences. The only thing they clashed with was political ethics, but this could easily be pushed aside for control.

Previously, dynastic politics had been eliminated by Law Number 8 of 2015 in Article 7 letter r, which stipulates that one of the requirements to apply for a candidate for Regional Head is not to have a conflict of interest with the incumbent, namely not having blood relations, marital ties, and / or Line of descent 1 (one) level straight up, down, sideways to the incumbent, namely father, mother, parent-in-law, uncle, aunt, brother, sister, brother-in-law, son, son-in-law unless they have passed 1 (one) term of office. The provisions are intended to cut dynastic politics in the regions. In substance, this provision can be seen as a positive effort to create fairer procedural democracy. So far, there is an assumption that the incumbent family will be the leading candidate for the winner of the election because they are supported by abundant resources, tend to be immune and corrupt.

Political dynasties of political elites are based on blood ties or marriage, which form political oligarchy. In the Indonesian context, an elite group is a group that has the capability of financial and social resources to influence the political decision-making process. The strengthening of the political networks established by political dynasties based on family political closeness led to political recruitment for those outside the dynasty.

But the Constitutional Court Decision No. 33 / PUU-XIII / 2015, among others, states that Article 7 letter along with the explanation of Article 7 letter r in the Election Law regarding the requirements for regional head candidates not to have a conflict of interest with the incumbent, contradicts the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and has no binding legal force. The 1945 Constitution Amendment does not contain a clause that limits the president and vice president and KDH and KDH representatives from nominating their wives and close relatives after the president and vice president and KDH and deputy KDH end their second term.

Article 7 paragraph (2) letter g Law no. 10 of 2016 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents, and Mayors (Election Law) related to the requirements that regional head candidates are not currently convicted of a criminal act. The Constitutional Court's decision states that former convicted convicts may still run for regional head candidates during a criminal offense, which carries a sentence of fewer than five years imprisonment, a convict who has

committed a crime of negligence, and political crimes. Except for the convicted or defendant whose criminal act carries a prison sentence of 5 years or more and the criminal act of corruption, treason, terrorism, threatening the state's safety, divides the Republic of Indonesia.

**Second**, a single candidate's phenomenon is also considered to be a factor that makes the oligarchy stronger in the 2020 elections. The practice of dynastic politics is counterproductive to democracy because it limits people's participation to be involved in political leadership in this country. One of the goals of a democratic system is to provide equal political opportunities for all people to be hindered by strengthening the phenomenon of single candidates in regions with strong dynastic politics. This happened in 2018 when three out of four areas in Banten Province held elections with a single candidate, namely Tangerang City, Tangerang Regency, and Lebak Regency. The reason for this was the strong dynastic politics of the incumbents and made political institutions reluctant to lend support to other candidates. In the 2020 Election, this phenomenon is likely to repeat itself, with the presence of dynastic politics that characterizes candidate election participants' recruitment.

If observed, the number of single candidates since 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2020 elections has increased significantly, as presented in Table 8. For the 2020 election, there are 28 districts/cities with one candidate registering. Thus, the 28 regions have the potential to hold elections with a single candidate or candidate pair. The single Bapasangan calon is spread across 14 provinces. Of the 14 areas, Central Java is the province with the highest number of unmarried candidates, with six chaperones spread across six regencies/cities.

**Table 8 Number of single candidates in the 2015, 2017 and 2018 elections**

Election Year	District	Information
2015	3 district	Blitar District, Tasikmalaya District, North Central Timor District
2017	9 district	Tebing Tinggi City, Tulang Bawang Barat District, Pati District, Landak District, Buton District, Central Maluku District, Jayapura City, Tamberauw District, Sorong City
2018	16 district	Deli Serdang District, Padang Lawas Utara District, Prabumulih City, Pasuruan District, Lebak District, Tangerang District, Tangerang City, Tapin District, Southeast Minahasa District, Bone District, Enrekang District, Makasar City, Mamasa District, Mamberamo Tengah District, Puncak District, Jayawijaya District
2020	28 district	Ngawi and Kediri (East Java); Kebumen, Wonosobo, Sragen, Boyolali, Grobogan, and the City of Semarang (Central Java); Bintan (Riau Islands); Sungai Penuh (Jambi); Badung (Bali); Gowa Soppeng (South Sulawesi); South Manokwari and Raja Ampat (Papua), and the Arfak Mountains (West Papua) West Sumbawa (West Nusa Tenggara); Manuk Market (West Sumatra); Pematangsiantar, Serdang, Bedagai, Gunungsitoli, and Humbang Hasundutan (North Sumatra); Central Mamuju (West Sulawesi); Hulu Utara (Bengkulu); Ogan Komering Ulu and Ogan Komering Ulu Selatan (South Sumatra); and Balikpapan and Kutai Kertanegara (East Kalimantan)

Source: KPU, processed from Election Info.

Even though the rules are, the election with one candidate pair is possible because the technical implementation has been regulated in KPU Regulation (PKPU) Number 14 of 2015 concerning elections with one team of candidates, which was later revised PKPU Number 13 of 2018. This means that the election with one candidate pair is not an issue new because it happened in the previous election. However, a single candidate is not in line with strengthening local democracy because it limits access for eligible participants' best candidates. According to Syamsuddin Haris (2019), the emergence of a single candidate not only shows the weakness of the cadre system carried out by political parties but is also related to the higher political costs that candidates must incur if proposed by political parties or a coalition of political because, at the same time, incumbent candidate pairs have electability. High and has sizeable financial support, increasing institutional support so that it has a chance to win.

**Third**, nominations are dominated by incumbents. Of the total number of 714 candidate pairs that ran in the 2020 election, 290 incumbent regional head candidates ran in 236 regions, or about 70 percent of the incumbents who advanced in the 2020 election. Law Number 10 of 2016 concerning Regional Head Elections requires all regional heads/deputy regional heads who participate in the election to leave outside the state's responsibility. Therefore, the Ministry of Home Affairs has prepared 137 actings (Acting) Regional Heads to replace regional heads participating in the 2020 simultaneous elections. Of the total 137 Acting governors, including 4 Acting governors, 119 Acting Regent, and 14 Acting Mayor. Of the entire 137 Acting Governor, 119 Acting Regent, and 14 Acting Mayor.

Incumbents as candidates in regional head elections at the local level play a notable role. They intervene in the election budgeting cycle and intervene in civil servants by increasing the number of civil servants and reducing personnel expenditure (personnel expenditure) (Velibor Mackic, 2014).

**Fourth**, election nomination by former inmates. In the 2020 election, four candidate pairs were involved in criminal corruption cases (Table 4), namely Johan Anuar for the election of Ogan Komering Ulu (OKU) Regency, Merlin Haryani Wijaya for the Deputy Regent candidate for the South Lampung election, Syafurrahman Salam for the Regent candidate for the Dompu election. And Agustin Najamudin, the candidate for Governor for the election of Bengkulu Province. This condition is suspected to lack potential cadres of the institution entering the nomination market for elections. Even though it is considered to be injurious to political ethics, in terms of rules, former corruption convicts may still run for office as long as a political party is proposed under the provisions of Article 7 letter g of Law Number 10 of 2016, which reads "never as a convict based on a court decision that has obtained permanent legal force."

Further regulation is regulated in PKPU Number 18 of 2019 concerning Candidates for the Election of Governor and Deputy Governor, Regent and Deputy Regent, and / or Mayor and Deputy Mayor, which is stipulated on December 2, 2019. Article 4 stipulates that regional head candidates' requirements are not there is a prohibition for former convicted of corruption. This provision has also been strengthened by the decision of the Constitutional Court No. 42 / PUU-XIII / 2015, where former convicts can run for regional heads or deputy regional heads as long as they state openly and honestly to the public as former convicts. In article 4 of PKPU Number 18 of 2019, he said there was no nomination requirement for non-corruption convicts.

**Table 9. Candidates for Election Participants in 2020 Who Have Been Affected By Criminal Cases**

Candidates for Election Participants	Cases	Bearer Political Institutions	Sources
Johan Anuar, the pair of the Incumbent Regent Ogan Komerling Ulu (OKU) Kuryana Azis and Deputy Regent Johan Anuar are advancing again in the 2020 OKU Election.	Johan Anuar is caught in a corruption case in the procurement of grave land in OKU, the source of the APBD amounting to 6.1 billion rupiahs. Has filed a pretrial lawsuit and won. In December 2019 he was named a suspect in a similar case and detained, but the detention period ended, May 12, 2020.	PPP and Gerindra	<a href="https://www.wartaekonomi.co.id/read300454/kpk-akan-awasi-rekam-jejak-calon-kepala-daerah">https://www.wartaekonomi.co.id/read300454/kpk-akan-awasi-rekam-jejak-calon-kepala-daerah</a>
Merlin Hariyani Wijaya, Candidate for Deputy Regent of South Lampung.	Trapped in a fictitious credit case, the South Lampung Bawaslu stated that because the person concerned had never served a sentence, it was not included as a person who did a waiting period.	PAN, Gerindra and PKB	<a href="https://republika.co.id/berita/qj8ru5428/infografis-calon-kepala-daerah-yang-pernah-terjerat-korupsi">https://republika.co.id/berita/qj8ru5428/infografis-calon-kepala-daerah-yang-pernah-terjerat-korupsi</a>
Syafurrahman Salam, Regent Candidate who is also the former Regent of Dompu.	In the case of a Japanese grant-fund corruption case, Bawaslu Dompu decided that the waiting period would begin when someone left prison.	Demokrat, PAN, PPP and Golkar,	
Agusrin Najamudin, Candidate who is also the former Governor of Bengkulu.	He was caught in the PBB-BPHTB case in 2006-2007 Bengkulu Province and has finished serving a prison sentence of 5 years	Gerindra and PKB	

Oligarchy in political institutions in elections has the potential to lead to informal governance practices, namely government administrators that are more controlled by social, economic and political forces outside the formal government structures (Syarif Hidayat, 2009). Informal government is an anomaly that arises as a result of transactional politics in elections. The involvement of the informal economy, namely regional elites, both from political institutions, entrepreneurs, and social elites in the regions who have the economic and political capital to assist candidates before and during the election process. They bid or offer to be involved in the political contestation process, by financing candidates for election, in other words, they carry out the investment process to get guarantees and recognition in the investment process, so that when the election is over the informal governmental power axis is outside the formal structure of local government but has a powerful influence on proper governance because it can directly or indirectly influence the decision-making process and policy implementation (Syarif Hidayat and Abdul Malik Gisamar, 2016: 32).

### 4.3 Direct Election System Problems

The problems of the direct election system studied are 1. Centralized candidacy; 2. The conditions for nomination (parliamentary threshold) are too high; transactional political practice

#### *Centralized Candidate and High Cost of Recommendations*

Centralized candidacy is one of the main factors causing the very high cost of electoral politics. The highly centralized process of candidacy has made it difficult for the candidate pairs who will compete in the election because they have to pay a lot of money. This was revealed by Faida, the Regent of Jember, who explained his experience when he became a candidate pair. According to him, to get an institutional recommendation, candidate pairs need billions of money. At the same time, according to him, when he was elected as a regent, the regent received an average salary of 6 million rupiahs. This is significantly disproportionate to the cost of dowries for the recommendations obtained. As a result, regional heads find it difficult to upright in carrying out the mandate as regional heads (Koran Kompas, 9 July 2020).

Candidates who are obliged to obtain recommendations from institutional administrators at the central level are mandated by Law No. 8 of 2015, where Article 42 paragraph (4), paragraph (5) and paragraph (6) requires an institutional decree at the main level, so that registration of regional head candidate pairs to the local KPU, it is not only signed by the political institution management or a combination of local political parties but also must be accompanied by the approval of the political party management at the central level.

According to Syamsuddin Haris (2019), the process of candidacy, which gives great power to the central level officials, creates not only a centralistic and oligarchic process but also has high political costs. All candidates nominated by a political party in the regions, both provincial and district and city, must obtain a recommendation from the central leadership of the institution, and be signed by the general chairperson and secretary-general of the institution. Even though the nomination of candidate pairs has been signed by the chairman and secretary of political parties at the provincial level for provincial elections or the chairperson and secretary of political party administrators at the district/city level, for elections at the same level, the KPU at the central class will reject the candidate pairs nominated by an institution if not accompanied by a letter of recommendation from the general chairman and secretary-general of institutions at the mid-level.

A further impact of such a candidate process is the emergence of dependence on regional administrators and branch institutions on the central management. Apart from that, the high reliance of regional administrators on the central board gave birth to opportunities for buying and selling support, blessings and of course letters of recommendation, or popularly known as "reform". In the end, this record was what the regional administrators and figures interested in running as candidates in the election were looking for. It is strongly suspected that they, the provincial administrators and models who want to advance, flood Jakarta every time before the election to seek recommendations from the central political party management. It is also common to suspect that tens and maybe even hundreds of bags of cash have moved from the hands of local people to unscrupulous administrators or leaders of institutions in Jakarta. This phenomenon gave birth to the term political dowry, which is a kind of political cost for a candidate pair if they want to get a recommendation from an institution to compete in the election.

The process of hunting for records also occurred in the 2020 Election, even though the Covid-19 pandemic made the election stage postponed, even though the election stage was delayed, lobbies continued amid the Covid-19 pandemic. In the process of obtaining recommendations, some individuals act as "political brokers" where they connect the

candidate pairs with faction members in the DPR, from faction members who have close relations with the leadership of the political party so that the recommendation lobby process has certainty.

Almost all institutions provide offers to regional head candidates before the recommendations are issued as well as logistical support for elections. There is also bargaining and price negotiation for a request. For example, the rate for advice for a candidate for mayor (candidate for mayor) is offered at an initial price of 10 billion rupiahs. Some individuals open bids at 2.5 billion rupiahs. In the end, the number of requests doubled, because the competition for recommendations was tighter, then some sold "recommendation" which amounted to the number of seats in the DPRD. Also guarantees for institutional machines in mobile areas (Cendrawasih Pos, 21 July 2020).

Recommended prices also vary, for areas or regions that are strategic and economically potential to be more expensive than "dry" zones. Likewise, the cost of the room for non-cadre figures and less feasible electorally is more costly than those who are cadres and are considered to have high electability potential. Suppose a candidate is a popular public figure, an institutional cadre, and has high electoral potential. In that case, the institution often does not ask for a dowry, but only "political costs for promotion, outreach and campaigning (Syamsuddin Haris, 2019).

Dampak serius dari semakin mahal biaya rekomendasi atau mahar politik adalah terbentuknya hasil pemerintahan yang korup dan transaksional. Para pasangan calon yang sumberdaya finansialnya terbatas, akhirnya terperangkap kasus korupsi karena harus mengembalikan biaya politik, termasuk mahar kepada pemodal atau pengusaha yang membiayai mereka.

*Eligible Candidates for Political Parties Level Too High*

The simultaneous election event based on article 1 number 3 of Law No. 8 of 2015 followed by 2398 election participants has been proposed by political institutions and a combination of political institutions as well as pairs of candidates from individual channels registered or registered at the KPU. Details of the number of regional head candidate pairs who participated in the contest to advance in 2015, 2017, 2018 and 2020 simultaneous election contest are presented in Table 10.

**Table 10 Number of Candidate Pairs in Election Implementation**

<b>Election Administration</b>	<b>Candidate Pair</b>	<b>Information</b>
9 December 2015	852 candidate pair	21 candidate pairs for the gubernatorial election, 714 regent candidate pairs and 117 mayor election candidates
15 February 2017	310 candidate pair	24 pairs of candidates for the gubernatorial election, 236 candidates for regent election and 50 candidates for mayor election
27 June 2018	522 candidate pair	55 pairs of candidates for the gubernatorial election, 346 candidates for regent election and 121 candidates for mayor election
9 December 2020	714 candidate pair	Twenty-four pairs of candidates for the gubernatorial election in 9 provinces. There are 99 candidate pairs for mayor in 37 urban areas. Then there are 591 candidate pairs for regents/representatives in 224 regencies.

Source: KPU-processed from election info

Before the 2015 simultaneous elections, the nomination requirements were 15% of seats and or 15% of the valid votes of political institutions in the elections. However, since the enactment of Law No.1 of 2015, the nomination requirements have been increased to 20% of seats and 20% of the institution's valid votes in the election and will remain in effect until the issuance of a replacement for Law No.1/2015, namely Law No.10 of 2016,

Table 11 Candidacy Requirements in the Pillkada Law

Constitution	Nomination Requirements
Law No 32/2004	15% of seats and 15% votes
Law No 12/2008	15% of seats and 15% votes
Law No 1/2015	20% of seats and 25% votes
Law No 16/2016	20% of seats and 25% votes

In Article 40 paragraph (1) of Law No. 10 of 2016, it is stated that the requirements for political institutions to propose pairs of candidates are as follows "Political institutions or coalitions of political institutions that can register pairs of candidates if they meet the requirements of at least 20% of the number of DPRD seats or 25% of the accumulated acquisition of valid votes in the general election for DPRD members in the region concerned". However, the support for 20% of these seats does not come from one institution, but several political institutions, so that regional heads receive minority support in the DPRD.

The effect of this regulation has caused a problem where there are very few political institutions capable of meeting the 20% requirement to nominate candidate pairs without forming coalitions with other political institutions or can be counted on the fingers. Most political institutions, both in the Provincial DPRD and Regency / City DPRD, do not join or form a coalition with other political institutions. The general trend that has occurred so far is that large institutions in obtaining seats or votes in the DPRD include the axis of a nominating coalition with the support of small and medium institutions.

The effect is that a pragmatic coalition is difficult to form, and it is also challenging to find alternative candidates. The basis for formation is no longer based on the similarity of programs and platforms of candidates but because of the same need to get a nomination ticket. So that when a pair of candidates is elected, there is often disharmony in the relationship between regional heads and deputy regional heads, usually in the second year after being inaugurated. The coalition was formed to carry potential leaders based on the same vision, mission, and institutional program so that they could be fought for. Still, in reality, many coalitions of political institutions are deemed very fluid and full of compromise or transactional. That is, an alliance of institutions is built only to win contestation in elections regardless of ideology and institutional programs.

The next problem is experienced by institutions that are the axis of the nominating coalition because it turns out that the political support obtained from small and medium institutions is not free. The pair of candidates who are promoted by the institution which is the axis of the coalition must pay "boat fees", not only to the political institutions that are the anchor of the alliance but also to the small and medium-sized political institutions that also support the candidate pairs, so that the coalition of political institutions that carry the support meets the conditions stipulated. UU. The nominal value of boat fees or political dowries is, of course, different at each level, province and district/city, including the economic potential of the area where the election takes place.



The impact of the application of the high nomination threshold is the emergence of a tendency for political institutions to "trade" authority in the form of recommendation authority possessed by the political management institution at the central level. Still, the tendency for small and medium-sized institutions to also "trade" the percentage of votes or seats they have. to complete the threshold requirements that the political institutions that carry the candidate pairs cannot fulfil. This reality occurs when all elections arise, so that the moment of election becomes a kind of "big harvest" period for elites of political institutions, both for the central board who has the authority to provide recommendations, as well as for regional administrators of small and medium political institutions who have the votes and seats in the DPRD to complete the threshold requirements. The limit for proposing pairs of candidates in the election.

*Strict Individual Candidacy Requirements*

In line with the high requirements for political institutions proposing pairs of candidates and coalitions of political institutions, Law No.10 of 2016 also includes strict requirements for individual candidates, Article 41 aya1 (1) The election law regulates the initial support requirements for each particular candidate according to the number of residents listed on the final voter list.

The threshold requirement for initial support for individual candidates as mandated in Law No. 10 of 2016 is more decadent than Law No. 12 of 2008. If Law No. 12/2008 the initial support threshold ranges from 3% to 5% of the total population of election organizers, then the calculation was changed from the latest Pilakda Law to increase to 6.5 to 10%. The population base has also changed from the total population to the number of permanent voter lists.

**Table 12 Requirements for Individual Candidates based on Total Population and Implementation of Law**

Total Population	Law No 12/2008	Law No 8/2015	Law No 10/2016
<b>Province</b>			
≤ 2 million	6,5%	10,0%	10,0%
2 - ≤ 6 million	5.0%	8.5%	8.5%
6 - ≤ 12 million	4.0%	7.5%	7.5%
≥12 million	3,0%	6,5%	6,5%
<b>Regency/District</b>			
≤ 250 thousand	6,5%	10,0%	10,0%
250.000-≤500 thousand	5.0%	8.5%	8.5%
500 thousand -≤1 million	4.0%	7.5%	7.5%
≤1 million	3,0%	6,5%	6,5%

Source: Processed from Law No. 10 of 2016, article 41 paragraph (1)

These severe conditions have restricted the emergence of candidates for regional head from outside political institutions and at the same time shackled politicians from political institutions who are unable to pay high political dowries but who are interested in participating in electoral competitions. The high price of political dowries raises hopes for politicians who cannot afford to pay dowries to advance in the election through individual candidates, but find it difficult for them to meet the increasingly stringent requirements. Since the 2015 election, politicians who are interested in individual candidates have decreased but then increased again in 2018, as shown in Table 13.

**Table 13 Election Years and Individual Candidates**

Constitution	Individual Candidate Pairs	The Elected Candidate Pair
The Election 2015	135	13
The Election 2017	68	3
The Election 2018	13	-
The Election 2020	70	

According to Syamsudin Haris (2019), the legal framework which makes it more difficult for the emergence of individual candidates seems to be deliberately institutionalized by political institutions in the DPR so that politicians from political institutions have a greater chance of contesting the election. The resistance of politicians from political institutions to individual candidates can be seen from the steps to tighten the initial requirements to contest the election as a pair of individual candidates. Apart from having to garner a large amount of support, the administrative requirements are costly, because candidates have to make sure their supporters are at home when factual verification is done by the KPUD to be counted as a condition of support. Administrative costs such as duplicating letters and support for ID cards also have implications for high prices.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

1. The high political costs in elections are the excess of the strengthening of the oligarchy of political institutions in the electoral system. The oligarchy of political institutions has resulted in undemocratic, elite and closed recruitment of candidate pairs. Elites or oligarchs as rulers in political institutions dominate the decision to select and determine candidate pairs to participate in the election contest. So that nomination through political institutions is not an arena for contesting capacities and capabilities, but instead in the arena of capital/capital battle, popularity and closeness to oligarchs/elites of political institutions.
2. The oligarchic phenom of political institutions is increasingly visible in the 2020 election contestation, it can be seen from the rise of dynastic politics in nominating candidate pairs, the emergence of single candidates, the dominance of incumbents in elections and pairs of candidates for former prisoners.
3. The autonomy granted to political institutions in the recruitment of regional head candidates is not followed by the restructuring of the institutional functions of the political institutions in terms of recruitment and regeneration. On the other hand, the specific framework in Article 29 paragraph (2) Law no. 2 of 2008 concerning Political Institutions does not emphasize more detailed rules regarding the recruitment of prospective Regional Head Candidates, especially the further regulation of the procedures and procedures carried out at the political institution level in accepting prospective candidates, the registration process at political institutions, the selection procedures, the selection committee and a scoring system or criteria used at the political institution level to accept or reject prospective candidates. The Political Institution Law also does not describe in detail and clearly the meaning of being democratic and open in the recruitment process and only entirely leaves it to the internal mechanisms of political institutions.
4. The problem with the regulatory framework for the Election Law article 42 paragraphs (4), (5) and (6) is because it opens up high-cost political space, namely

concerning a centralized system of candidacy (candidacy), the requirements for nominating at the level of political institutions are too high and the more stringent nominations from individual candidates.

### **Remedial steps**

Steps to reform the electoral system in the future are needed to eliminate political costs through improving election regulations and political institutions, including the following:

1. Changing the electoral paradigm by conducting primary elections both within political institutions and externally by coalitions of political institutions, aimed at reducing the power of oligarchs and elites in recruiting candidates who prioritize financial capability, popularity and closeness rather than ability and capacity to lead regions.
2. Revision of the Law on political institutions to reduce the centralization of political institutions, by decentralizing some of the authority of the management of central political institutions to the power of political institutions at the regional level, including the decentralization of nominations or candidacy of candidate pairs, brought up in elections so that the management of political institutions no longer depends on the recommendation of the rule of political institutions at the central level because this is a political money arena for dowry recommendations.
3. Revision of the nomination threshold outlined in the Election Law, namely 20% of DPRD seats and 25% of valid votes in DPRD, if they cannot be eliminated, the minimum threshold is reduced to 10%.
4. The high threshold for candidacy does not only limit the emergence of candidates who have qualified and qualified capacity but do not have an excellent political base in the DPRD. But it also opens up opportunities for the public to obtain candidate choices in the election. Eliminating the nomination threshold is an essential step in stopping and closing opportunities for rampant political transactions between the institutions that form the axis of the coalition. This causes high-cost politics.
5. The proposal also includes reducing the threshold requirement for initial support for individual candidates in elections to 3-5% of the final voter list in the region concerned. The reduction of the initial support threshold requirement for individual candidates is needed so that the election can attract as many of the best candidates in the region as possible.
6. Regulatory reforms or improvements will not be optimal without the support of institutional reform through reforms of political institutions so that money politics can be reduced. Improving political institutions is urgent to build a commitment to eliminating money politics in elections, so it is essential to institutionalize inclusive, tiered and sustainable cadres and to institutionalize an open, democratic and accountable political recruitment system.

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