

The Political Communication of Executive, Legislative and Religion Institution in Improving Religious Development in North Sumatra, Indonesia

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Abstract: This study aims to find out and analyze the political communication of legislatives and executives and the research paradigm used is phenomenological paradigm. The subject and the object of the research obtained in the field on the research to the data burnout. The data collection technique used is interviews and observation. Data analysis according to Miles and Huberman is the data reduction, data display, and conclusion. For understanding, the theory used is the theory of relational dialectics of Baxter. The results showed that the political communication of legislatives and executives performed by the dialogue communication approach and transactional communications. The dialogue is to equalize their ideas, opinions and attitudes about the use of budgets and expenditures in order to improve development, especially the development of religion in North Sumatra. Transactional communication is a communication that directly creates actions and reactions political communication which is raised by the members of the legislature both formal and informal meetings with the executives. The actions and reactions are verbal and non-verbal. The relationship built by religious institutions with the executives and legislatives is harmony in structural relationships. However, if in view of the implications of religious institutions relationship with the executives and legislatives at the practical level, it can be said not harmonious yet. This can be seen from the number of fund receivers from religious institutions and the amount of the funds given by the government in order to help the development of the religious institutions in North Sumatra especially Majelis Ulama Indonesia Sumatera Utara (Indonesian Ulema Council of North Sumatera) and Aljam'iyatul Al-washliyah Sumatera Utara.

Keywords: Al Quran; political communication; executives, legislatives, religion institution; religion development

I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is the third largest democracy country in the world after India and the United States who becomes the role model for other countries in the world in the implementation of democracy.¹ Democratic system adopted by Indonesia is Pancasila democracy which emphasizes the value of government of by the people and for the people by positioning the people sovereignty as the supreme authority. This democratic system gives freedom to the people to express their opinions and thoughts.²

The communication between the executives and the legislatives and religious institutions can take place either if it is supported by harmonious situation and ambience. To create the harmony in a communication there must be supreme trust and honesty as well as openness. This attitude must be awakened among the executives, legislatives and religious institutions, especially in the process of the five years development plan. According to Nitin Bhatnagar and Mamta Bhatnagar:

*“Communication climate an organization’s or educational. they encourage openness and honesty, and their employees feel free to confess their mistakes, to disagree with the superiors, ethical people are generally trustworthy, fair and impartial, respecting the rights of others and concerned about the impact of their actions on society.”*³

¹Azyumardi Azra, *Addressing Challenges of Radical Islam: Some Indonesian Lesson to Learn*, Hans Kochler, ed., *The “Global War on Terror” and the Question of World Order*, (Vienna: International Progress Organization, 2008), p. 201.

² Undang-Undang Dasar (UUD) 1945 article 28.

³ Nitin Bhatnagar and Mamta Bhatnagar, *Effective Communication and Soft Skill Strategi for Succes*, (New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley, 2012), p. 364.

Besides the legislative and the executive communication, religious institutions must also build a communication to the both organizations above. The task of religious institutions is to establish the spiritual human into a better direction, to guide people to have good attitudes and ethics in all the life of religious, society, politics and the state. Moreover, it is viewed from the condition of today's society where moral decadence has occurred, either in the state officials, political figures or in academic circles.

Religious institutions receive the funds from the government in order to improve a religious attitude, to build mental and personality of the people so that they come together to build, to maintain and to preserve the development. The emergence of a miscommunication among religious communities is initiated by the perception of different religions sights in the society. If the religion relationship is not managed properly, it may become a latent threat for the government system in Indonesia.

The most commonly issue faced is the people attitudes that do not care for the development performed by the government. The ignorant attitude is urgent matters that needed to be solved. In this very urgent issue, religious institutions should be involved in development plan from conducting the development plans meetings from the district level to the provincial level. Until the establishment of RAPBD (Budget Plan of Regional Development), it is not yet fully performed. Therefore, if the two intertwined political communications are good, then it certainly can be ascertained the performance of these two institutions will also run well too. If the two political communications do not fit as they should be, of course, it will surely give inflications to efforts on each tasks and functions.

II. METHODOLOGY

Regulation No.22 year 1999 gives a widest autonomy to the regions to build the structure of government and bureaucratic areas according to their ability and needs. Therefore, this regulation gives leeway to the regions to have their own governance structure and bureaucracy. The establishment and management of local government institutions fully become the regional authority.

The law also authorizes the regions to formulate the policies and regional development programs in accordance with the regions' aspirations and interests. Thus, it is expected that the regional development policies and programs will become more responsive and effective. This regulation also gives the regions rights power to adopt, deploy, and develop regional apparatus. Regions are also given the authority to determine their intensive systems and the welfare apparatus in accordance with their financial ability. However, the implementation of regional autonomy may produce a potential problem that if it is not well anticipated, it may create new unwanted problems. The inequality among the regions is one of the issues that will arise, and also the emerging of the political officers which in this case the control center is more limited that can lead to the slow movement of development in the regions.

The enactment of Regulation No. 22 year 1999 about regional government and Regulation No. 25 year 1999 about the balance of regional finance are the basis for the birth of regional autonomy, where the head of the region has the right to manage his regional budgets through the approval of the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) in accordance with the interests of the people. To run the system of regional autonomy, governors and legislators must build good political communication so that what people want can be realized as well as possible.

Political communication is basically defined as the process of the relationship among the institutions in the national political system and the relationship with the public institutions so that there is an exchange of meaning between the two or more parties in connection with the distribution and management of power.⁴

Political communication in some regions has changed its direction, in which political communication is used as arena to defeat one another. In some cases the legislators become the suspects because of taking the advantage of their authorities. In other cases the head of Parliament is quitted and again ironically the legislators together with the head of the region abused their authorities. This is the reality how complicated the problem of political communication is between the executives and the legislatives.

The relationship between DPRD and the regional executives will take place continuously since the duties and authority carried by the two institutions are mutually supporting the government ruling process. This corresponds to the content of Regulation No. 32 year 2004 article 16 which says that local legislative bodies are parallel and become a partner of the Local Government. To ensure the implementation of the duties and authorities so that they may take balanced, the both institutions are given the equal position in partnership. It means between there is no a hierarchical relationship or not applicable the superior-subordinate relationship. Thus what is known is the coordinative relationship or partnership, and not sub coordinative relationship.

⁴Miriam Budiardjo, *Dasar-Dasar Ilmu Politik* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2008), p. 289.

III. DISCUSSION

Political communication that takes place between the executives and legislatures is the communication that relates to the powers, duties and authority of both institutions. On one side the executives as communicators and on the other side the legislatures as communicators. Both of them are very important elements for communication that must be met for a smooth communication. In the space of mutual receiving information, the communicator is generally a group that provides communication messages to the communicant which is not always a one-way, because the communicant can also act as a communicator if the communication process involves communicators and communicants as groups that need message each other.

In politician activities which involve political communication process, the most interesting to observe is the process of a hearing in the plenary meeting between the commission and the government as partners. Before the issue is brought to the plenary session of the meeting, there is an internal party meeting. Before any formal decision, usually there has been informal communication between the legislators and the party's internal factions and then it creates informal communication patterns. Furthermore, when all communication has been established, that is between the members of parliament with the party, there is a coordination meeting on the internal faction. It is time for a faction to express a view of each faction in the plenary meeting. The formal communication pattern happens into the plenary session.

When we see from the above communication process, it is understood that the communication pattern in the council building is a symmetrical pattern where there is a resistance or opposition to the policies proposed by the legislators and the government. When a person appears to give an emphatic statement then there is one who makes the stationing refusal by giving something back and there is one who accepts it. This is the implication of the symmetrical communication pattern in the council building.

The authority granted by the Regulation to the Parliament for establishing and overseeing the budget in the region makes the House feel responsible for it if there is a violation of the regulation and make them as a person who "knows better, greater and more powerful" to put a certain figure in the specific position. As the researcher observes, there are many other meetings conducted by politicians of the House with their counterparts which are packed politicians with verbal and nonverbal language outside the council building in such a way, so that it looks like the politicians are the ones who should be approached so that the problems about taking decisions in the council building can be solved.

There is a statement heard from people "when one becomes a member of the House, he is the same as the others." From the expression, researcher tried to examine the behavior of legislators when they have officially become members of the House are not different as the above expression stated. No matter if he comes from Islamic political parties or nationalist political parties. There is no significant difference in political attitudes and behavior of certain individuals among the politicians who come from different political parties including in political communication and management of their impact on the political stage. The Islamic party platforms on the bearer party will not be visible while they sit in the Parliament. This is one of the purposes that successfully established in this study. It means that there is no appreciable difference that a politician who comes from a political party that has a certain party platform will tend to vary with politicians from other parties who have a different party platform.

*"The way or attitude in delivering the political messages in the Parliament by politicians depends on the individual's background and political experience of politicians, which is not related to the background of their party. However, in the case a decision on opinions or views fraction it is not separated from the private, groups and political party interests. The decisions taken at the meeting is also marked by the faction's views and attitude as well the response of an argument in the room of the plenary and other meetings."*⁵

The background of the parties either small or large parties, government supporters or not does not affect the capacity of the politicians to be able to communicate politely politics with other institutions. Even the major strong religion-based party is the size that *Ukhwah* or the communication built runs smoothly and harmoniously.

And the irony is there is often a chaos between friends in one party because of the differences in viewpoint against a decision to be taken. The reason may cause many cases of less ethical in many moments of political messages exchange in the House of Representatives. When the phenomenon of violence in political communication in the House of Representatives began to be discussed, many of which later associate them with instant political figures recruited on ad hoc basis. But such an assumption cannot be measured when the political parties who made the process of recruitment to the instant politicians turned out to produce a credible cadre on the political stage, even though it turned out he sits in the House of Representatives through a insufficient

⁵Toman Nababan, assistance of Legislature Secretary, The interview was held in Council building of Noth Sumatera on 23 July 2016.

selection process even if his behavior is unethical in the delivering the political messages is not just comes from the nationalist party but from religious parties. Therefore, it is perhaps that there is a difference motif among politicians in taking actions that violate the norms in communicating the political messages in a various important moments in the plenary and hearings meetings at the parliament.

The legislative members are challenged to demonstrate their performance because there are constituents or mass that will judge. Lose or win of the legislative members depends on the people choice. It is the same as the governor and deputy governor which are political positions that must be chosen by the people as well as the members of the executive parliament from the district secretary to the bottom ranks who are appointed by the governor performance are not judged by the people.

Governor and deputy governor is a political position that must be chosen by the people as well as the members of the legislatives. Then between Parliament and the executive there is the same pattern of view in which the decisions taken at the parliament meeting room is a decision that can meet many interests of the executive and Parliament to defend the people interests.

Political actors in Parliament are very dynamic. They have more individual motives even the interests of the party is on the front lines in playing a political role in the parliament besides the people interest. For that purpose they often make impression management to realize their interests. Politics stage is a world that is very thick with self-manipulation. So, the same political messages in a fraction may be a disagreement among the members of the factions, but it is interpreted the same by politicians from different fractions.

Political executive communication with legislatives runs in accordance with their respective roles. There is no rulers and be ruled, although of course the ruler meant here is not always in the sense of the owner of the authorities, but the ruler in terms of their respective functions is the executives as the embodiments of the government implementing the policy. Meanwhile, the legislatures as the framers of the rules as well as the groups have the power in an effort to oversee the government performance in realizing the work program. If so, the communication patterns of the executives and legislatives is a better form of communication patterns which more positioned both parallel to the duties and functions, so that the communication patterns over the communication patterns which is negotiating in an attempt to deliver the messages, because the two institutions mentioned above are the two groups that tend to influence each other in the political communication process.

The executive communications with legislative pattern can be seen in the interactions in the council building at formal hearings. The communication is not always in a normal situation for both always influence each other. The communication between the two institutions is a political communication form, so that the mutual efforts to strengthen the position and influence are efforts that cannot be avoided in the political communication process.

Religious institutions, especially the MUI and Al-Wasliyah are among the religious institutions in North Sumatra. The symbiotic mutualism between the government and MUI was born from the policies of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) in the last presidency, October 24, 2014 which set the budget MUI center comes from the National Plan and Budget (APBN) and the budget of regional MUI comes from Regional Plan and Budget (APBD).

The relationship between religion and government institutions is virtually harmony. What is meant by harmonious is a structural relationship. When the government carries out an activity, whether it relates to the commemoration of government or religious holidays, the chairman of the religious institutions and community leaders will attend the events. Likewise, when religious institutions carry out ceremonial activities, the executives and the legislatives also have a role in the success of the event. But the relationship built is not only on ceremonial form, but it must put the political officials become the member of the religion organizations. This is in accordance with what was presented by Hasbullah Hadi, the former chairman of PW Alwashliyah and former Member of North Sumatera Parliament.

Power much determines a struggle runs smoothly. To obtain a good position and power in the executive and legislative institutions, it must be supported by all elements of the society especially we are as Muslims should support each other. Any conflicts and differences should not serve as a barrier in achieving common progress. In political terms, Muslims must participate and contribute either to the support or the provision of information to the public for the success, Muslims should know about politics. Religious institutions may not separate themselves from politics in the country and should involve the executives and the legislatives in each management agencies so that what the objectives of Islamic institutions are can make the public realized to return to their way so that they can run in accordance with the desired.

This is according to the interviews conducted by the researcher with the Secretary of PW Alwashliyah, Hisma Fadli Ardiya Pulungan, he graduated from Faculty of Da'wa IAIN North Sumatra who deals in politics, and also a former of the House of Representative member from Golkar faction in the parliament of North Sumatra.

In carrying out the activities relates to the community development, religious institutions are work partners with government in order to improve the spiritual intelligence of the community, but there are obstacles faced by the religious institutions.

MUI in working order is not much different from the BPOM (Food and Drug Monitoring Agency) whose job is to check whether the food or disposable products is worth consumed, or proper to use. Meanwhile MUI provides *fatwa* (decision) whether the food is *halal* (accepted) or not. But even though the work of these two institutions is almost the same but in the finance of POM households it is covered by the government fully because POM is in the governance structure in the form of the legal authorized agency. Unlike MUI, whose position is not included in the governance structure either under the Ministry of Religious Affairs or the regional government.

So is the case with the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KONI). KONI is an institution which is independent but managed and under the government in coaching and physical training of the people, while MUI is engaged in the mental development of the people. These two institutions are equally important in this country, but in reality, when it is seen from the assistance given by the government to MUI is not as much as the assistance to KONI.

From the description above, it is proper that MUI is in one institution which has its structure to the government directly under the ministry even though it is managed by independent ulema. In addition, there is one thing that becomes a dilemma in MUI as an institution that issued the *fatwa* of *halal*, *haram* or other *fatwa* sometimes against the wishes of the government. Thus, in this case the government thinks that MUI as a religious institution which does not support the government. In fact, MUI works accordance with the basic budget which have been programmed and agreed. This also becomes a consideration for the government to provide assistance to the MUI, as the case of Ahok or Tjahaya Basuki Purnama as a governor who tries to raise the Muslims anger thus MUI gives *fatwa* that it is blasphemy. In this case the government thinks that MUI does not support the government.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the research conducted in the field related to the political communication of executives, legislatives and religion institutions in the improvement of religious development in North Sumatra, then it can be drawn some conclusions: 1) The pattern of political communication executive with the legislatives can be seen in the interactions in the council building at the formal meetings. The communication is not always in a normal situation because there is always an effort to influence each other in both institutions. Communication between these two institutions is a form of political communication, so that the mutual efforts to strengthen the position and influence is an effort that cannot be avoided in the process of political communication; 2) The political communication conducted by the executives and legislatives in determining the development budget in North Sumatra always have problems and obstacles. The emergence of a conflict among the executives and the legislatives even the high tension due to unfulfill the constituent interests of each member of the council and also the executives' interests; 3) There are two patterns of approaches used that is a communications approach in the form of dialogue and transactional communication. The communication in the form of dialogue is carried out to enable the sharing of vision, acceptance, to build trust and good cooperation between the executives and the legislatives on the direction and objectives of the development in North Sumatra. The dialog is enabled to develop an understanding of the two sides towards an issue or topic that in turn will find a common understanding on something complex. The implication of this dialogue is seen in the budget setting process in North Sumatra in which there is a dialogue and negotiation between the executives and the legislatives. The dialogue occurred prior to the meeting and the interval score performed whether the dialogue is an internal party, or inter-party committee; 4) The dialogue communication as a communication pattern form of executives and legislatives is seen in an interaction with one another, for the executive position as the authority holder and doer and the legislatives as a group to supervise the performance of the executives surely the interaction between them form a pattern of dialogue communication in the form verbal and non-verbal in the political communications of executives with the legislatives in improving the religious development; 5) Transactional communication appears in any communication established between the executives and the legislatives. The transactional communications is characterized by the emergence of the action and reaction of every decision taken at official meetings.

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