

THE ROLE OF REGIONAL HEAD CANDIDATE SURVEYS IN POLITICAL PARTY DECISION-MAKING: A STATE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW ANALYSIS

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DOI: 10.33603/responsif.v15i2.9562

Abstract: *The use of candidate surveys in the determination of candidates for regional heads by political parties is an increasingly common practice, but its effects on the legitimacy of political decisions and state administration have not been widely studied. This research aims to explore the role of candidate surveys as an instrument of legitimacy in the context of state administrative law and identify its impact on fairness and transparency. The research method used is qualitative analysis through interpretation of primary legal materials by referring to legal doctrines and relevant theories. The results showed that from the perspective of state administrative law, surveys of candidates for regional heads can strengthen the legitimacy of political decisions by providing evidence of public support, but also potentially pose a risk of manipulation and methodological bias that can undermine fairness in the state administrative system. The implications of these findings highlight the need to improve survey methodologies, implement strict regulations, and conduct effective oversight to ensure transparency and accuracy. This research provides valuable insights into how candidate surveys of regional head candidates can be used fairly and effectively in political processes and public administration.*

Keyword: *Candidate Surveys, Political Legitimacy, Administrative Law.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In modern political dynamics, the process of determining regional head candidates by political parties plays a central role in determining the direction and quality of a country's leadership. Political parties, as the main institutions in a democracy, are not only responsible for mobilizing public support, but also for ensuring that the elected candidates for regional heads represent the aspirations of the community and are able to compete effectively in electoral contestation. In this context, candidate surveys have developed into an increasingly important tool for political parties in measuring the popularity and electability potential of their candidates. Candidate surveys, which were initially used as a measure of public opinion, have now become an integral component in the strategic decision-making of political parties, especially in terms of determining candidates to be promoted in regional head elections. However, this increasing reliance on surveys raises important questions about how they affect the legitimacy of the political process and their legal implications. Therefore, this study aims to explore the role of candidate surveys in political parties' decision-making processes from the perspective of state administrative law, focusing on their impact on fairness and transparency in the process of selecting candidates for regional head elections.

While candidate surveys have become an important instrument in political parties' decision-making processes, the existing literature suggests a gap in the understanding of their direct influence on parties' selection of candidates for local government headship. The use of candidate surveys, which aim to measure the level of support and popularity of prospective candidates, often carries complex consequences in legal and administrative contexts. In particular, questions arise as to how these surveys may affect the legitimacy and integrity of the candidate selection process, including the potential for bias and its impact on political legitimacy. This lacuna is further exacerbated by the lack of studies that specifically link the use of candidate surveys to the framework of public administration law, which should be the foundation in regulating fair and transparent political practices. This research emerges in response to the urgent need to understand how candidate surveys influence political party decisions and to examine their legal implications, particularly in ensuring that such decision-making processes are conducted in accordance with applicable legal principles.

The current situation, where the majority of political parties do not support Anies Baswedan to run in the 2024 regional elections, reflects the complex political dynamics and various strategic factors that influence the parties' decisions. In this context, it is important to understand that political decisions are not only based on individual popularity, but also on broader strategic considerations. For example, political parties often consider how their support for a particular candidate could affect their power and position in larger local elections, be it legislative elections or upcoming presidential elections. This shows that in politics, decisions are not always black-and-white, but rather involve various nuances that party leaders must consider.

Political parties' decisions to support or not support Anies Baswedan are also influenced by their long-term strategic interests and existing political coalitions. Many parties may feel that aligning with another candidate who is perceived to be more in line with their political agenda will provide greater benefits in the long run. For example, if a party believes that another candidate has a higher chance of winning the election, they may prefer to support that candidate to ensure their continued hold on power. In addition, alignment with the national agenda is also an important consideration, where political parties seek to maintain their image and relevance in the context of emerging national issues.

This situation suggests that to understand the political dynamics at play, there needs to be a deeper understanding of how party interests and strategies interact. Uncertainty and instability in political support can create challenges for prospective regional head candidates such as Anies Baswedan, who may have to find new ways to build coalitions and attract support

from a wider voter base. Therefore, to overcome this challenge, it is important for prospective regional head candidates to not only focus on individual popularity, but also on developing effective communication strategies and strengthening political networks that can support their vision and mission. Thus, this complex political situation requires a careful and planned approach to achieve success in the upcoming elections.

This research offers a new perspective in understanding the role of candidate surveys in the decision-making process of political parties, by emphasizing the analysis of state administrative law. Although candidate surveys have become an integral part of modern political strategies, this research highlights the novel aspect of examining how surveys are used not only as a popularity measuring tool, but also as a legitimizing mechanism in the political process that has far-reaching legal implications. This research is important because it introduces an approach that combines empirical and legal analysis to explore the extent to which candidate surveys can affect fairness and transparency in the determination of candidates for regional heads by political parties. As such, this research not only contributes to the existing political and legal literature, but also offers insights that can be used by practitioners and policymakers to strengthen the integrity of the electoral process in a democratic system. The justification for this research lies in the urgency to answer fundamental questions related to the use of surveys in politics, which until now have not received sufficient attention in academic studies, especially in the context of state administrative law.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a normative legal research method (doctrinal research) that focuses on legal analysis of regulations, doctrines, and principles of state administrative law relevant to the use of candidate surveys in the process of determining candidates for regional head candidates by political parties. This normative legal research is prescriptive, which aims to examine and interpret existing legal norms and provide recommendations based on in-depth theoretical analysis. The approaches used in this research include a conceptual approach, and a case approach. The conceptual and case approaches are used to explore relevant legal doctrines and principles as well as to analyze court decisions relating to this issue.¹

The data used in this research consists of secondary data which includes secondary legal materials, and tertiary legal materials. Secondary legal materials include scientific literature such as books, journal articles, as well as comments and legal interpretations from experts relevant to the research topic. Tertiary legal materials include legal dictionaries, encyclopedias, and indexes used to support the understanding of the legal concepts analyzed. Data collection was conducted through document study and literature analysis, where relevant legal sources and literature were systematically collected to ensure the validity and reliability of the data used in this research.²

Data analysis in this research was conducted using a qualitative analysis method. The analysis process involved interpreting secondary legal materials by referring to relevant legal doctrines and theories, as well as making comparisons with findings from secondary and tertiary literature. The interpretation technique is used to assess the suitability of the object of research with the principles of state administration law and the theory of political legitimacy. In addition, this research also uses a comparative analysis method to examine how similar regulations and practices are applied in other jurisdictions, as well as their impact on the decision-making process by political parties. The results of the analysis are then presented in the form of systematic legal arguments, with the aim of providing a comprehensive

¹ Peter Mahmud Marzuki, *Penelitian Hukum* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2017), 93–95.

² Soerjono Soekanto, *Pengantar Penelitian Hukum* (Jakarta: UI Press, 2008), 42–44.

understanding of the influence of candidate surveys on the legitimacy of the electoral process in the context of state administrative law.³

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. The Effect of Candidate Surveys on Political Party Decisions

The use of candidate surveys as a decision-making tool by political parties has been shown to have a significant impact on the way candidates for regional heads are selected and the legitimacy of those decisions. In the context of modern politics, political parties increasingly rely on data and analysis to understand voter preferences and design effective campaign strategies. Candidate surveys serve as instruments that allow political parties to gauge the level of public support for potential regional head candidates, providing valuable insights into how such candidates are received by the public. By utilizing survey results, parties can make more informed decisions regarding the selection of potential regional head candidates to be promoted in regional head elections.

Survey results are often the main consideration in the candidate selection process, creating a mechanism that can increase the legitimacy of political decisions. According to research conducted by various survey institutions, decisions based on survey data tend to be more accepted by the public, because they are considered to reflect the votes of the majority of voters. This data provides strong evidence of voter preferences, so political parties can avoid the mistake of selecting unpopular candidates. Thus, the use of candidate surveys not only helps in selecting the right candidates for regional head elections, but also increases public trust in the political process.

However, while candidate surveys can increase the legitimacy of political decisions, there are risks of bias and manipulation that need to be considered. In some cases, improper survey design or misinterpretation of data can lead to misleading conclusions. For example, if surveys are conducted in unrepresentative areas or if the questions asked tend to influence respondents' answers, the results obtained may not reflect the opinions of the community as a whole. Therefore, it is important for political parties to ensure that the survey methods used are valid and reliable so that the results can be trusted.

Further analysis of candidate survey usage shows that there is a close relationship between social, economic factors and survey results. For example, regions with higher levels of education tend to show more diverse survey results, while regions with low levels of education may be more homogenous in their political preferences. These findings suggest that candidate surveys not only reflect individual preferences, but are also influenced by the broader social and economic context. Therefore, it is important for political parties to consider these factors when analyzing survey results and formulating their campaign strategies.

To achieve optimal results in the selection of prospective regional head candidates, political parties need to adopt a more holistic approach in using candidate surveys. Addressing the risk of bias and ensuring representativeness in surveys are important steps to maintain fairness in the election process. In addition, political parties must realize that surveys are only tools and should not be the sole basis for decision-making. Therefore, combining survey results with qualitative analysis and input from various stakeholders can lead to better and more legitimate decisions. Thus, this comprehensive approach will contribute to improving the quality of democracy and public trust in the political system.

The theory of political legitimacy, described by Max Weber in his work *Economy and Society*, views legitimacy as the basis for legitimate political power. Weber identified three forms of legitimacy: traditional, charismatic and rational-legal. In the context of candidate

³ Johnny Ibrahim, *Teori dan Metodologi Penelitian Hukum Normatif* (Malang: Bayumedia, 2006), 295–297.

surveys, surveys are often used to reinforce the legitimacy of party decisions by claiming that the choice of prospective regional head candidates is based on broad public support. Research by Paul R. Abramson and John H. Aldrich also shows that in democratic systems, legitimacy often depends on perceived representation by the public, which is often influenced by candidate survey results.⁴

Political parties often use candidate surveys to legitimize their decisions. However, there are variations in how such surveys are implemented and how the results are interpreted. Studies by Gary King and his colleagues show that while surveys can provide popular indications, there are often flaws in survey methodology that can affect the accuracy of the results. Biases in survey design, data collection, and interpretation of results can result in decisions that do not fully reflect true public opinion. Research by Robert D. Putnam on political participation also notes that political decisions that rely heavily on survey results can exacerbate the gap between politicians and voters, as survey results do not always reflect the complexity of public opinion.⁵

While candidate surveys can enhance legitimacy, there is a great risk that surveys are used for broader strategic purposes than simply reflecting public opinion. In an increasingly complex political context, surveys often become tools used by political parties to shape narratives and public opinion. This can be seen from how some surveys are designed in such a way as to produce favorable results for certain candidates, rather than to provide an accurate picture of voters' views. In other words, surveys not only function as a measurement tool, but also as an instrument of propaganda that can influence public perception.

Surveys can be manipulated to favor a party's pre-selected candidate or to create the illusion of greater support than actually exists. In some cases, data obtained from surveys may be selected or presented in a way that emphasizes the superiority of a particular regional head candidate, while downplaying or ignoring other candidates. This can create a significant bias in people's views, where voters may feel swayed by survey results that do not reflect reality. Research shows that when respondents see a particular candidate as having high support, they tend to give the same support, regardless of their personal views.

This interpretation supports the view that political decisions based on candidate surveys need to be made with caution to avoid errors and potential manipulations that could undermine fairness in the political system. In this regard, it is important for political leaders and policymakers not to rely solely on survey results as the only indicator for making decisions. Instead, they should consider multiple sources of information and conduct more in-depth analysis to understand the broader dynamics in society. In this way, they can avoid the pitfalls that survey data manipulation may bring.

It is important to improve survey literacy among the public so that they can understand the context and limitations of the survey results presented. The public needs to be equipped with the ability to critique and analyze survey results, so that they do not just take information for granted. Education about survey methods and the potential biases present in data collection can help voters to make more informed and reasoned decisions. By understanding how surveys work, the public can become more skeptical of the results presented and more thoughtful in interpreting the information they receive.

As such, while candidate surveys have the potential to enhance legitimacy and provide insights into public opinion, their use should be conducted with caution and deliberation. Efforts to ensure transparency in data collection methods and analysis of survey results are essential to maintaining the integrity of the political process. In addition, raising public

⁴ Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 113–115.

⁵ Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 210–213.

awareness about the importance of being critical of surveys can help create a more fair and balanced political environment. In the face of these challenges, collaboration between political parties, survey institutions, and civil society is necessary to create a more transparent and accountable system.

Candidate surveys can serve as an effective legitimization tool in a political context, but the practice needs to be well-managed to avoid negative impacts. In the increasingly competitive world of politics, candidate surveys are often used to gauge a candidate's popularity and support among voters. However, if not conducted properly, these surveys can provide a misleading picture of public opinion and potentially harm the democratic process. Therefore, it is important to ensure that candidate surveys are designed and implemented with sound methodological principles so that the results are reliable and reflect the reality on the ground.

The theoretical implications of these findings suggest that candidate surveys should be used carefully and not only as a political tool to strengthen the position of existing candidates. In many cases, survey results can be misused by prospective regional head candidates or political parties to reinforce certain narratives, which in turn can influence voters' perceptions. For example, if a survey shows that a candidate for regional head has a high level of support, that candidate may be more aggressive in their campaign, while other candidates may feel pressured to change their strategy. This can create unfairness in political competition, where the actual votes of voters are not well represented.

This practice also suggests the need for transparency in survey methodology and interpretation of results to ensure that surveys truly reflect the views of voters. Without transparency, voters and other interested parties may doubt the accuracy of survey results⁶. For example, information regarding the sample size, sampling techniques, and questions asked should be openly provided. This way, voters can assess whether the survey was conducted objectively and reliably. This will also help reduce the potential for data manipulation that could harm the integrity of the electoral process.

In addition, in-depth analysis of survey results is also very important. Understanding the context behind the numbers obtained from surveys can provide better insights into voter preferences⁶. For example, if a survey shows that a particular candidate enjoys higher support among young voters, it is important to explore the reasons behind this phenomenon. Is this related to certain issues that are more relevant to the younger generation, or are there other factors that influence their choices? By conducting a comprehensive analysis, stakeholders can develop more effective strategies to reach voters and address their needs.

Thus, to maximize the benefits of candidate surveys in the political context, a holistic and responsible approach is required. Managing surveys well will not only strengthen the legitimacy of regional head candidates, but will also ensure that voters' voices are heard and taken into account in the decision-making process. Therefore, it is important for all parties involved in politics to understand and appreciate the role of surveys as a valuable tool, while maintaining the integrity and accuracy of the information presented to the public. In this way, we can encourage greater participation and create a healthier and more democratic political environment.

The use of candidate surveys has significant social and ethical implications, especially in the context of a democratic political system. Candidate surveys are often used to gauge voter preferences and predict election outcomes, but manipulation of survey results can undermine the integrity of hard-won political systems. When survey results are influenced by vested interests or presented in a misleading manner, it can undermine public trust in an electoral process that is supposed to be transparent and fair. In the long run, this has the potential to create apathy among voters, which can ultimately undermine the democratic participation that is vital to the survival of a country.

Reforms in survey practices and stricter oversight are urgently needed to ensure that candidate surveys are conducted in a fair and transparent manner. For example, there needs to be clear and strict standards regarding survey methodology, including sample selection, data processing, and presentation of results. In addition, the involvement of an independent third party in the survey oversight process can help maintain the objectivity and accuracy of the results obtained. Thus, these measures will not only enhance the credibility of survey results, but will also help rebuild public trust in the political process. When people feel that candidate surveys are conducted with integrity, they are more likely to participate in the electoral process.

These findings highlight the importance of maintaining the principles of fairness and integrity in the political process to ensure that political decisions truly represent the public interest. In this context, it is important for all stakeholders, including the government, survey institutions, and the general public, to collaborate in creating a healthy and transparent political environment. Only in this way can we ensure that people's voices are heard and recognized in political decision-making. Therefore, efforts to increase transparency and accountability in candidate survey practices should be a top priority, for a better and more inclusive democratic future.

B. The Role of Candidate Surveys as Legitimizing Instruments in Administrative Law

Candidate surveys for regional head candidates play a key role in the legitimization of political party decisions, especially in the context of state administrative law. In an increasingly complex political world, where information and public opinion are highly influential, candidate surveys serve not only as a tool to measure the popularity of regional head candidates, but also as a strategic means to increase the legitimacy of political decisions in the eyes of the public and state institutions. As such, it is important to understand how these surveys can influence public perceptions of prospective regional head candidates and the decisions taken by political parties.

In recent years, many studies have shown that the level of public trust in political parties is strongly influenced by candidate survey results. Data shows that parties that are able to demonstrate strong public support through surveys tend to gain greater legitimacy in decision-making. For example, parties that have regional head candidates with positive survey results are often more confident in formulating policies and making risky decisions. This suggests that candidate surveys can serve as a tool to strengthen a party's bargaining position in the political arena.

Further details on the influence of candidate surveys can be seen in how political parties respond to the survey results. When surveys show that a particular candidate has strong support, parties tend to be bolder in proposing policies that may have previously been considered controversial. Conversely, if surveys show that support for a candidate is declining, parties may take steps to improve the candidate's image or even replace the candidate with a more popular one. This creates an interesting dynamic where political decisions are often influenced by public perceptions measured through surveys.

A deeper analysis shows that candidate surveys can also create a domino effect in politics. When people see that a particular regional head candidate has a large amount of support, they tend to go with the flow, which in turn can increase the candidate's legitimacy in the eyes of the wider community. This phenomenon is often referred to as the "bandwagon effect," whereby individuals feel compelled to support regional head candidates who are considered popular. Candidate surveys therefore not only reflect public opinion, but can also shape it, creating a powerful feedback loop between surveys and political decisions.

Considering all these aspects, it shows that candidate surveys have a very important role in legitimizing political party decisions. For this reason, it is important for political parties to

understand and utilize survey results wisely, in order to formulate effective strategies in facing political challenges. In this context, candidate surveys are not just a measuring tool, but also a strategic instrument that can influence the direction of overall political policies and decisions. Therefore, efforts to improve transparency and accuracy in candidate surveys should be a priority for all parties involved in the political process, in order to create a political system that is more legitimate and responsive to the needs of society.

In public administration law, legitimacy is a central concept relating to how administrative decisions are accepted by the public and authorized institutions. Legitimacy theory, as proposed by Max Weber, emphasizes the importance of public acceptance of administrative decisions as the basis for the legitimacy of power. In this context, candidate surveys can be seen as a mechanism that assists political parties in strengthening their claims of representation and public support, which in turn can influence the legitimacy of state administrative decisions. This theory is in line with research conducted by Paul R. Abramson and John H. Aldrich, which suggests that in a political system, decisions that are considered to represent the voice of the people have the potential to increase the legitimacy of these decisions.⁶

Candidate surveys are often used by political parties to legitimize their choice of candidates for regional head by claiming that their decision is based on strong public support. However, there is a risk that these surveys may be affected by methodological bias or manipulation, which can have a negative impact on the legitimization process in public administration law. The study by Gary King and his colleagues underscores that survey results are often influenced by a variety of external factors, including survey design and data interpretation, which can mislead perceptions of the public and public administration agencies. The findings indicate that while surveys can strengthen the legitimacy of decisions, imprecision in survey methodology can threaten fairness and transparency in the administrative system.

Candidate surveys can have a significant impact on the legitimacy of decisions in public administration law. In this context, surveys serve as a mirror that reflects the public's views and expectations of public policy. With data showing support or opposition to a policy, decision-makers can better understand the public's perspective, making decisions more relevant and in line with public needs. However, it is important to remember that survey results do not always reflect objective reality. A survey that is not conducted with proper methods or with a non-representative sample can produce misleading data, which in turn can affect the legitimacy of decisions taken by the government.

In practice, candidate surveys are often used to strengthen the legitimacy of administrative decisions by providing evidence of public support. For example, when survey results show that the majority of the public supports a policy, this can provide encouragement for the government to continue or strengthen the policy. However, there is a risk of manipulation that needs to be watched out for. This manipulation can occur through unfair sampling techniques, biased questions, or misleading interpretation of the data. Research shows that when surveys are not conducted transparently and accurately, public trust in administrative decisions can suffer. This raises questions about the integrity of the decision-making process and the extent to which decisions truly reflect the voice of the people.

There is an urgent need to ensure that candidate surveys are conducted with strict principles of transparency and accuracy. Reforms in survey management are essential to avoid manipulation and bias that can undermine fairness in political and administrative processes. By applying higher standards in survey methodology, as well as involving various stakeholders in the decision-making process, we can ensure that state administration decisions not only reflect

⁶ Paul R. Abramson and John H. Aldrich, *The Decline of Electoral Participation in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 89–92.

public opinion, but also strengthen people's legitimacy and trust in government. In the long run, these efforts will result in a healthier and more responsive political environment, where people's voices are truly heard and valued.

The social implications of using candidate surveys as legitimacy instruments are important to understand, especially in the context of public trust and fairness in the public administration system. Candidate surveys are often used to illustrate people's views and preferences towards a particular candidate or policy. However, when survey results are manipulated or presented in a misleading way, this can undermine the integrity of administrative decisions taken based on such data. Inaccuracies in surveys can lead to the formation of policies that do not reflect people's needs and expectations, leading to dissatisfaction and skepticism among the public.

Furthermore, manipulation of survey results can reduce people's trust in the political and administrative processes of the country. In many cases, people will feel that their votes are not valued if survey results do not reflect reality. For example, when surveys show high support for a candidate who does not actually have strong support on the ground, this can create the illusion that the candidate is more popular than he or she actually is. As a result, people may feel alienated from the political process, which can lead to apathy and decreased participation in elections. This situation potentially threatens the legitimacy of the government and exacerbates distrust of state institutions.

Reforms in survey management and stricter oversight are urgently needed to ensure that candidate surveys are conducted in a fair and transparent manner. Stricter oversight can help prevent manipulative practices and ensure that the data obtained truly reflects the voice of the people. In addition, it is important to apply the principles of fairness and integrity in the state administrative law system, so that the public can feel confident that decisions made based on surveys are legitimate and representative. With these measures, it is hoped that public trust in the political process and state administration can be restored, as well as creating an environment that is more conducive to the active participation of the public in the life of the nation.

IV. CONCLUSION

Surveys of regional head candidates serve as a significant legitimization tool. The findings suggest that from a public administration law perspective, surveys can strengthen the legitimacy of political decisions by providing evidence of public support, allowing political parties to justify their choices as a reflection of public preferences. However, the research also identifies potential risks associated with the use of surveys, including the possibility of data manipulation and methodological bias, which can undermine integrity and fairness in the state administration process. In this context, candidate surveys should be conducted with high transparency and accuracy to ensure that political and administrative decisions truly reflect valid public opinion. As such, candidate surveys, while useful as legitimizing instruments, must be carefully managed to avoid negative consequences for fairness and transparency in the political and administrative systems.

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