

# The Role of Successful Teams, Toraja Nomads and Manipulation of Local Cultural Values in Transactional Politics in the 2020 Simultaneous Elections in North Toraja Regency

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## Abstract

In general, the 2020 election went well, all stages were carried out according to a predetermined schedule, without significant obstacles. Voter turnout of 82.28 percent exceeded the target set by the North Toraja KPU of 77.5 percent. This type of research is descriptive qualitative with case study research methods. The focus of this research is the relationship between candidates and donors in transactional politics in the implementation of simultaneous elections in 2020 in North Toraja Regency. Data collection methods include in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. Based on information from the Success Team informants and a number of resource persons, the funds needed by each candidate to fight in the 2020 simultaneous elections in North Toraja Regency range from 50 – 80 billion. In this study, role is defined as an activity carried out by an institution or organization of the Success Team formed by the Candidate (Spouse of the Regent Candidate/Vice Regent) to win the 2020 simultaneous election in North Toraja Regency. In conclusion, it can be concluded that the role of the Success Team has a major impact on the success of leadership candidates in Toraja. This conclusion shows that the political dynamics in Toraja are not only influenced by internal factors, but also by the active role of the Success Team and the external role of Toraja nomads.

**Keywords:** Wounds, Resource Persons, Success Teams.

North Toraja Regency is one of the 224 districts that held simultaneous elections in 2020. A total of three pairs of candidates for Regent/Vice Regent competed for the position of Regional Head. The candidate for Regent/Vice Regent, Yohanis Basang - Frederik Viktor Palimbong, was chosen as the winner with 60,614 votes (44.17%) (KPU Toraja Utara, 2021). In substance, the 2020 election in North Toraja Regency is still far from being a democratic election. According to the Chairman

of the Honorary Board of Election Organizers (DKPP) of the Republic of Indonesia (RI), Muhammad Abhan, the main problem of elections in North Toraja Regency is the rise of money politics, and unfortunately, the problem continues to recur (Updatekareba.Com, Toraja, March 3, 2020). What was conveyed by the DKPP chairman is still happening, even tending to increase in the simultaneous elections in 2020.

Transactional politics have made money and other materials the ruler. That is, democracy, i.e.,

sovereignty in the hands of the people, is replaced by the "sovereignty of money and other materials." Victory in elections is largely determined by financial strength; competence and integrity are only complementary. This is in line with what was stated by Charles F. Andrain (in Damsar, 2015: 72), that someone who has financial ability will be able to make various efforts to gain power.

Transactional politics require very large funds, so candidates must find sources of funding outside of their personal funds by conducting transactional politics with donors. According to the calculation of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the funds needed by candidates at the district or city level in the suburban category range from Rp 30 - 50 billion; the middle category ranges from Rp 50 - 100 billion, and the high category or metro area is more than Rp 150 billion (<https://news.detik.com/News/D-6295763/KPK-sebut-Cost-So-Head-Daerah-Achieve-Rp-150-M-Democracy-So-Transaction>).

The funds given by donors are certainly not free or without conditions, but certainly accompanied by political deals. Referring to the results of the 2018 KPK survey, it was revealed that entrepreneurs are willing to fund candidates in elections because they are driven by economic and non-economic motives (Elih Dalilah, et al., *Journal of Anti-Corruption INTEGRITY*, 5 (1), 181-188 e-ISSN/p-ISSN: 2615-7977/2477-118X DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32697/integrity.v5i1.391> ©Corruption Eradication Commission). Thus, the provision of funds from donors has the potential to "adhere" to the elected Regional Head to meet the expectations of donors. As a result, the elected Regional Head works not to serve the people but to serve the donors in return for giving funds in the *Pemilukada* process.

Based on the description above, it is necessary to conduct this research with the aim of revealing the role of success teams, Toraja nomads, and manipulation of local cultural values in transactional politics during the 2020 simultaneous elections in North Toraja Regency from the perspective of social exchange theory.

The study of transactional politics is very important for two reasons. First, transactional political events during elections continue to manifest in various forms and appear increasingly challenging to avoid. As a result, *Pemilukada* has become a terrain for individuals with power ambitions to control regional wealth. If this condition continues to develop, the democratic system, believed to be a means of realizing a just and prosperous society, will be jeopardized. Second, the study of transactional politics is crucial in efforts to conduct clean and fair elections, contributing to the realization of quality democracy in the regions.

## Methods

This type of research is descriptive qualitative with case study research methods. The focus of this research is the relationship between candidates and donors in transactional politics in the implementation of simultaneous elections in 2020 in North Toraja Regency. Data collection methods include in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. Informants from this study consisted of: Voters (3 people), Success Teams from the three Candidate Pairs (3 people), and Candidate Donors (2 people), Data analysis using data analysis of Miles and Huberman interaction models.

## Results and Discussion

Based on information from the Success Team informants and a number of resource persons, the funds needed by each candidate to fight in the 2020 simultaneous elections in North Toraja Regency range from 50 – 80 billion. The funds are not only sourced from the candidate's personal funds, but also from donors consisting of two major groups, namely Family/Relatives, and Entrepreneurs. The donors (families and entrepreneurs) are almost all successful Torajan people living outside the Toraja area, especially in Papua, West Papua, Kalimantan, and Jakarta.

### 3.1 The Role of a Successful Team

The change in the mechanism of Regional Head Elections, from originally being elected by

members of the DPRD to being directly elected by the people, has resulted in a shift in the focus of campaigning towards candidates. Additionally, candidates in Pimilikada are submitted by a coalition or political parties (Parpol), making Pemilukada challenging to view as a competition between political parties, but rather as a contestation between candidates. This condition leads to dynamics in the election process where the candidate is placed at the center. According to Aspinall (2014), this change has prompted candidates to build a vote mobilization machine that relies on social networks—defined as networks of individuals originating from interactions in everyday life, such as family/relatives, friends, work partners, etc. (McCarty, in Tawakkal et al., 2020: 1 – 14).

Tawakkal (2009) assessed that the presence of the Success Team was caused by the malfunction of the political party as a voter mobilization institution. It is further stated that the existence of a Success Team is not only a need for candidates but also for voters (Tawakkal, 2017). Candidates, as well as voters, simultaneously require the presence of intermediaries. Meanwhile, Finan and Schecther (2012) revealed that actors in the Success Team can help candidates in political mapping, useful in the practice of buying and selling votes. They have direct contact and a better understanding of constituents. The mapping serves to predict voter tendencies and the level of voter reciprocity.

Based on observations and information from the Success Team, who became informants for this study, it is known that the dynamics of vote-raising that occurred in the 2020 simultaneous election in North Toraja Regency were almost the same as in the Village Head Election, which in North Toraja Regency is called the Head of Lembang.

The election of the Head of Lembang was held long before the election was carried out directly, even since the time of the Dutch Colonial government. In the election of the Head of Lembang, it is also known that there is a Success Team called "ma'koro" (people who

gather). Therefore, it can be understood that the existence of the Success Team, with the mention of local terms, has become part of the political culture of the people in North Toraja.

In its development, the term "successful team" in the local context in the community of North Toraja Regency is referred to as "launcher." Linguistically, a "launcher" is a channel for conveying something to another party. In the context of elections, "launchers" are people who act as channels for candidates to provide money, goods, or other materials to voters to secure their votes. The term "launcher," according to information from informants, began to appear after the implementation of direct elections in 2005. However, some informants also state that the term "launcher" has been known in the Lembang Head Election.

Based on several previous studies and the results of observations and information from the Success Team, it can be found that the personnel of the Success Team consist of members and administrators of political parties, carriers, supporters, community leaders, leaders of community organizations, and individuals who have influence in the community. The Success Team of the three candidates in the 2020 simultaneous elections in North Toraja Regency is a combination of political parties, carriers, and supporters, along with the community and family members/relatives of the candidates.

There are two main reasons why candidates need to form a Success Team (Aspinall and Sukmajati, 2015: 32). First, Paslon realized that it was impossible to interact directly with voters due to the large number and the relatively wide coverage area. Some sort of agency working on behalf of the candidate is needed to organize support at the grassroots. The agent is not an individual but an organization with a strong network in the community. The network, in addition to playing a role in conducting propaganda, also acts as a liaison between the wishes of voters and candidates, especially in political transactions where voters make decisions in exchange for benefits.

Second, the practice of political buying raises concerns for the candidate whether the money given to the voter actually arrives, and whether it will get a reward in the form of votes from the voter. The presence of the Success Team can at least reduce these worries. Through the Success Team, it is hoped that the money given to voters is really on target, thus increasing Paslon's votes. Therefore, members of the Success Team must be people who have influence, and are authoritative and respected by the community so that they can persuade and even force the voters who are the target recipients of money to behave the same as them.

The role of the success team is so great for the victory of the candidate, because through their political information in the form of vision, mission and work program of the candidate can be known to the public. The results of several previous studies such as Fitriyah research (2015) show the role of the Success Team as a liaison between candidates and voters, introducing pairs of candidates whose successful teams are carrying, and as the spearhead of distributing money from candidates to voters. In short, the role of the Success Team in connecting Candidates with Voters is crucial.

However, the Success Team can also be a stumbling block for the Candidate, for example the image of the Success Team members is bad in the eyes of the public, ineffective team management, unclear line of command and other factors that result in the non-implementation of the Success Team's role. This condition in turn will result in a decrease in the level of electability of candidates. In addition, the Success Team will be a burden for the Candidate, if the team members are more oriented towards short-term profits, for example only willing to move if operational costs are available, and benefit him. Therefore, in recruiting Success Team personnel, candidates and political parties must be really selective.

Based on the results of field observations and information from a number of resource persons, the motivation to become a member of the

Success Team can be divided into three groups. First, the ideal group, this group is generally motivated to be a member of the Success Team because it assesses the Candidate is a good person, has the ability, and a clear program to build the area. As stated by ED (32 years old), one of the informants from the Success Team element of one of the Candidates, that:

"I honestly am willing to be the head of the Sub-District Success Team of one of the Candidates because I believe in the ability of our Candidates, people are honest, simple, have integrity and are very competent. Even if our candidate loses, I don't regret supporting him, for me victory in the current election is not an indicator that the leader is liked by the people, but elected just because he has the ability of money to buy the people's votes." (Interview results, March 3, 2021).

From the ED statement above, it is clear that the motivation to become a Successful Team is because of interest in the Candidate. Such groups are generally very militant in fighting for the Candidate, and generally come from among the easy generation and from the Family/Relatives because of the strong emotional connection with the Candidate.

Second, the long-term pragmatic group, this group is the ones who think about long-term gains. This means that they are motivated to become members of the Success Team because they hope that if the supported Candidate wins and is elected as Regional Head, they will get both economic and non-economic benefits, as stated by RR (52 years old) a member of the District Success Team from one of the Candidates that:

"I am motivated to become the Success Team of one of the Candidates in the 2020 Election in North Toraja Regency because I believe that the candidate I support will definitely win. In North Toraja, victory is determined by who has a lot of money and dares to buy voters' votes. I know

exactly that our candidate has enormous financial capabilities, and he is a "fighter" and committed. Well! My analysis proved the candidate came out as the winner. I trust him in his commitment and will pay attention to the team that has helped him" (Interview Results February 21, 2021).

From the statement stated by RR above, it is clear that the motivation concerned to become a Success Team is because of the belief that the Candidate he supports will win. With this victory he can obtain economic and non-economic benefits. This group is generally entrepreneurs, and those who hope to get a position in a local government organization or local business entity. In Aspinall's (2014) classification the group is classified as client-list brokers, people who already have a long-standing relationship with the candidate, with the motivation to receive profits later on.

Third, pragmatic groups pursue short-term gains. This group is motivated to become a member of the Success Team because it pursues profits as a Success Team. They become members of the Success Team because they think the candidate has a lot of money, strong power, and of course dares to spend a lot of money to finance various political activities. Through those political activities, they hope to make a profit. In short, their motivation is to benefit from the services of being a Successful Team. It is this kind of group called Aspinall (2014) opportunist brokers, members of the Success Team who are only looking for short-term profits.

### 3.2 Successful Team Organizer

Based on the results of field observations and information obtained from various parties, the recruitment mechanism for the Success Teams of the three Candidates competing in the 2020 simultaneous Owner in North Toraja Regency is almost all the same. The formation of the Success Team begins with a meeting of candidates with political parties and political consultants. The meeting in addition to

discussing and understanding the winning strategy design prepared by the Political Consultant, also aims to form a Success Team at the District level that will implement the Candidate winning strategy.

In general, the composition of the district-level Success Team consists of Advisors, Political Consultants, and Core Administrators. The Success Team Advisor serves to provide input regarding strategies and steps that need to be taken by the Candidate in winning the Election. Advisory Members are people who have maturity and experience as politicians, and have a strong influence (figure) in society. These advisors are generally the heads of political parties in the regions, community leaders, leaders of religious organizations, social community organizations, families of candidates including those overseas.

Given the importance of the role of the leader of the Success Team, in determining its chairman, it must be carefully considered by the candidate and the carrying political party. Based on information from a number of political party administrators, the leader of the Success Team must at least meet the requirements, including: having a strong influence, and a good image in society; can cooperate with candidates and political parties; able to lead and unite members of the Success Team.

In addition, the leader of the Success Team must have experience in *Pemilukada* contestation. It is interesting that of the three Candidates competing in the 2020 simultaneous elections in North Toraja Regency, the two Incumbent Candidates (RINDU, and KALETA) chose the leader of the success team from community leaders, while the OMBAS – DEDI candidate chose the leader of the success team from the carrying political party.

The Success Team of the three candidates in the 2020 simultaneous election in North Toraja Regency each has a secretariat equipped with various facilities such as admin rooms, meeting rooms, training rooms and other supporting rooms. The secretariat is also equipped with

facilities, such as computer devices complete with printers, telephone connections and fax machines, internet networks, so that various activities can be directly online. In addition, transportation facilities are also provided, both in the form of two wheels, and four wheels to support organizational mobility.

The Success Team was formed in a structured manner, starting from the District, Subdistrict, Kelurahan, Lembang, and TPS levels. At the district level, the core management consists of the General Chairman, Daily Chairman, Secretary, Vice Secretary, Bedahara, and Fields as needed. The number of District Level Success Team personnel in each Candidate varies from 50 (fifty) to 100 (one hundred) people. The large number of personnel, it also seems to be one of the strategies in gaining votes. In general, figures and people who have a strong influence in society, psychologically feel attached to a particular Candidate when his name is included as a member of the Candidate's Success Team.

One area that is very important, and almost present in all three Candidate Success Teams at the District level is the Data Verification Field. This field is tasked with checking and verifying potential voter data reported by the Polling Station Team through the District Team. Data verification is carried out to ensure that the names of registered voters have been registered in the Permanent Voter List (DPT) at a polling station. In addition, the Data Verification Field also checks directly in the field to ensure that the Voter is indeed present and ready to vote for the supported Candidate, and is not registered with another Candidate Success Team. However, in reality the effectiveness of data verification does not run optimally, because in almost all Success Teams very much found registered voter data on two, even on all three candidates.

The Success Team at the sub-district level consists of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and 2 members, selected based on their recognition and influence in the region. They coordinate the Success Team in the sub-district, assist the

Success Team in the sub-district and Lembang, and solve problems in the field. The main tasks of the Sub-District Success Team involve coordinating the distribution of campaign equipment, including clothes, PPE, billboards, and posts, as well as preparing witnesses at polling stations. DPRD members from supporting parties generally lead the District Success Team, which reports to the District Level Success Team.

The Village and Lembang Level Success Team, consisting of the Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer, is selected based on its recognition and influence in the region. Their task involves proposing the TPS Team and Witnesses to the District Team through the District Team. The team also coordinates, supervises, and assists the Polling Station Success Team, focusing on the seriousness of the work and distribution of giving to voters.

Almost all Candidate Success Teams, stated that the Polling Station Team determines the victory of the Candidate, because they are the closest and most aware of the condition of the Voters. The effectiveness of the strategy to win over candidates is largely determined by the ability of the polling station team to monitor the voters they accompany. In addition, TPS Success Team members must be able to build positive opinions and perceptions of the candidate's profile and vision-mission. This is so that Voters have a positive assessment of the Candidate being carried, and vice versa view negatively of other Candidates.

The task of the Polling Station Success Team, in addition to registering, and accompanying Voters, also plays a role in providing information about the hopes and desires of the Voters they accompany to Candidates through the District Success Team. In addition, they also play a role in reporting campaign issues submitted by other candidates including the amount of money promised to each voter. The strong role of the Success Team allows many Voters who know the Success Team better than the Candidate. Even from field

observations and interviews with a number of Voters, voters make their choice, or refuse to vote for a particular candidate is strongly influenced by their closeness to the Candidate's Success Team

The Success Team, especially the Polling Station Team in influencing Voters, generally uses family or relative lines, which in the life of Torajan society is still very strong. Successful Teams when visiting a Voter, will tell who the Candidate he supports, how he or she accomplishes, his personality; how the Candidate relates to one of the figures from the Voter's family. As the experience conveyed by MS (48 years old) one of the TPS Level Success Teams from one of the Candidates in Lembang Buntu Lobo', Sesean District that

"Before I visit the Voter's house, I first look for information about the family I will visit, especially who is the family figure closest to them. In order for them to be interested in choosing the Candidate I support, I tell them about the relationship between family figures and Candidates, how Candidates help family figures, and the various familiarities of Candidates with family figures. In addition, I assure them of the kindness, achievements, and financial capabilities of the Candidate I support, including promising them a thank you from the Candidate or "Direct Cash Transfer (BLT)" if they are willing to vote for him" (Interview Results, 17 April 2021)

The experience of one of the Success Teams above shows that Voter support is not solely determined by the giving of money, but is also largely determined by the closeness of the Candidate to family members, especially figures who become family figures. The amount of money thanked when the Success Team visited Voters, some did not mention the nominal, but some directly mentioned the amount that would be given to each Voter. Some even exaggerate, this is intended to make voters more interested in the candidate they support. As stated by LT, an infoman from the Candidate Success Team

element in Lembang Mai'ting, Rindingallo District that:

"Every time I meet with Voters, the candidate I support has a very large financial capacity. If other candidates give 300,000, we will give 500,000 / person, if they give Rp 500,000 we eight hundred thousand. Anyway our BLT (vote buyer money) must be higher than other Candidates. I do this so that people are more interested, and I am willing to register as a Voter. My strategy was quite successful before 2 weeks before voting day when 10 people came to contact me to be registered. That is why the BLT was given 1 day before voting so that they did not move to another Candidate, because the funds I gave were the same as those given by other Candidates, although they were a little disappointed but because my explanation was reasonable they still accepted, and it was proven that our Candidate managed to win. (Wawancara Results, 21 April 2021).

Practices such as those stated by MS above, are almost carried out by all Success Teams of each Candidate. They try to create opinions so that voters are influenced and hope to earn money. On the other hand, the opinions expressed by the TPS Team also caused the Candidate to be influenced, so they were willing to prepare funds according to what the Success Team presented. This practice is one of the causes of candidates competing with each other to raise BLT, and increasingly triggers the rise of transactional politics in every implementation of the "democratic party" in North Toraja Regency.

### 3.3 The Role of the Toraja Monitor in Transactional Politics

From a number of research results such as research by Ahdi Makmur (1988), George Jos Aditjonro (1998), Isak Pasulu (1994), Abustam (1990), Laendatu Paembonan (2022), it was revealed that the pattern of migrating from Toraja nomads is generally permanent (living permanently in the destination area), even many of them even though they have retired still choose to live in Parantauan, but the relationship with the area of origin remains strong. This is

reflected in the high involvement of nomads in various activities, especially traditional ceremonies in their home regions (Pasulu, 1994, Laendatu Paembonan, 2022). According to George Jos Aditjonro (1988), Toraja migrants in Papua work hard in the hope that they can return home. But their return was not to resettle in their home area, but as a sign of continuity of kinship.

According to Rantetana (2014) people in Toraja have lost their independence, they are hijacked by nomads because almost all their needs are met by nomads. Starting from the construction of tongkonan houses, the implementation of solo signs' to daily needs supported by nomads. In fact, the wheels of the Toraja economy today are very dependent on remittances from nomads.

Based on information from several banks in North Toraja, the average remittance money that enters Toraja every month ranges from 10 to 20 billion. Similarly, the results of a survey conducted by LPM UKI Toraja about sources of education financing from students, The survey results show that of 10,000 UKI Toraja students in 2019, as many as 85 percent of their tuition fees are borne by their relatives who are overseas.

In the political field, the role of nomads in North Toraja is also very strong, it can even be called very decisive. Their main role is to provide financial support for their relatives who will become candidates in the election of the Head of Lembang, elections, Members of the DPRD, and the election of Regents. In addition to providing financial support, the nomads also sent logistics such as boarding clothes, billboards, and contacted their relatives to vote for the candidates they supported, including conducting campaigns through social media. The strong support of nomads for their relatives who run for political office cannot be separated from the characteristics of the Torajan people who are more collective (Muhiddin et al, 2015: 8). Therefore, helping families occupy political positions is one of the strategies to increase and

maintain the prestige and prestige of the extended family in society.

The strong dependence of the family on nomads in fulfilling their various needs, also has an impact on their political choices which are strongly influenced by the political attitudes of family members who are overseas. As KS said, one of the informants that:

"Our family in the 2020 election chose the KETA couple, because through Dr. Eta my first child was able to get a job in Bontang - Kalimantan. He is the backbone of our family, therefore, his request to choose a KALETA partner must be followed. After all, as religious people, we do not thank people who have helped and helped us" (Interview results, May 9, 2020).

The same statement was conveyed by BS, one of the informants in Lembang Lili'kira, Balusu District, who claimed to choose the OMBAS – DEDI partner. He said:

"Our extended family chose the OMBAS – DEDI couple at the request of my brother who works in Timika. During Mr. Yohanis Bassang's tenure as Vice Regent in Timika, my brother received a lot of help from him, therefore, he asked our extended family to choose OMBAS – DEDI. We could not have refused his request, because he was the fulcrum of the family. He is very active in helping families, ranging from repairing or building Tongkonan houses, assisting families in meeting various needs in carrying out solo signs' ceremonies, and various other activities. Moreover, some children from our family in Timika got jobs thanks to the help of my brother. So it is very natural that our extended family followed his request to choose an OMBAS – DEDI partner, after all, we all believe that he must lead the family to the best choice" (Interview results, May 12, 2020).

From the two informants' statements above, it appears that the role of nomads in influencing family political decisions in Toraja is very strong. This is in line with Balau's theory of social exchange which states that a person who provides rewards (money, goods, services), will be able to demand obedience from those who



receive. Families or relatives will follow the advice, requests from family members who are overseas because they (families in their hometown) have a dependence on meeting their various needs. Refusal of the request will lead to disappointment that has the potential to cut off the assistance provided by the nomads.

If studied further, the relationship between the monitor and his family in his hometown, leads to the relationship of patronase and cliché. According to Scott (in Fathudin, dkk, 2020 : 23), the patron - client relationship is meant as a relationship between two people, in which a person of higher social economic position (patron) uses the influence of the resources he has to provide protection or profit or both to the lower person (client).

The patron-client relationship is generally concerned with the control of unequal resources, a personal (particularistic) relationship, and based on the principle of mutual benefit. Unequal resources can include wealth, position, or influence. In addition, there are personal relationships that contain affectivity which, according to Lande (Fathudin, et al, 2020: 25), can be interpreted as a form of attention from patrons and get loyalty in return from clients. The gift causes the client to reciprocate by providing general support and assistance, including personal services to the patron.

In this research contest, patrons are nomads, and clients are relatives or relatives who are back home. Patrons have capital resources that are used to help relatives or family in their hometown. While the client reciprocates the gift by following directions or orders, including selecting Candidates in the Election supported by the Patron.

The practice of clientelism between nomads and their families in Toraja, not only occurs in political contestation, but the relationship repeats even continuously in various life events. This relationship makes it easier for nomads to order their relatives and families back home to vote for the candidate they support. Even nomads send money to family/relatives to carry out vote

buying in order to win over the Candidate they support.

### 3.4 Cultural manipulation in transactional politics

Tongkonan, a vital cultural institution for Torajan society, is not just a home but also reflects the kinship system, center of power, and government. In philosophical studies, Tongkonan is considered a cultural center that governs all aspects of life, including values, rules, morals, and politics. Tongkonan's ownership and assets are collective, except for rice fields, and all descendants are responsible for it. The descendants of Tongkonan are called Tongkonan children, while the citizens under his rule are called *umpentionganni tongkonan*. Time passed led to the division of Tongkonan power and roles into three categories: Tongkonan layuk, Tongkonan pekamberan, and Tongkonan batu a'riri.

The process of selecting traditional leaders (Puang or Parengnge') is governed through deliberation in Tongkonan layuk, with requirements such as direct descent, intelligence, wealth, courage, and responsibility. Although all descendants were entitled, elections from among the nobility were made to preserve tradition. The concepts of leadership and social stratification in the Aluk' Todolo belief recognize the leader and the social as transcendental-ontological entities that cannot be changed. The social layering of the Torajan tribe, such as *tana' bulawan*, *tana' bassi*, *tana' karurung*, and *tana' kua-kua*, reflects the standard position in society. Although previously only two layers, the evolution of marriage and the development of society led to changes. This coating reflects the control of resources and special rights, such as the implementation of traditional ceremonies and the decoration of Tongkonan.

Tongkonan as a cultural center also includes a number of values, such as happiness, wealth, peace, self-respect, and respect for guests, politeness, and honesty. These values are interrelated, forming the system of *aluk sola pemali*. Wealth earned by hard work and honesty

is believed to bring happiness to the whole family. Karapasan (harmony) and fellowship become the main values, even prioritized over other values, such as loyalty and self-respect. Tongkonan plays a central role in maintaining these values and guiding the daily life of the Torajan people. Based on the results of Kobong's research (1983), about Torajan Man, it is known that there are 12 (twelve) values that are believed and considered important by individuals in thinking, feeling and behaving. These values include; happiness and wealth (kamasannangan and kasugiran), peace (karapasan), fellowship, self-esteem (siri'), respect for guests, courtesy, craft, being liked by all, marriage, loyalty, honesty and self-prominence. These values are interrelated, complementary and mutually supportive which are bound in aluk sola pemali.

The value of happiness, wealth, and prestige in the Aluk sola pemali faith is obtained through hard work, honesty, and the development of three resources: people, livestock, and plants (tallu lolona). This success is considered to provide happiness for the individual and the whole family. Harmony and communion are considered crucial, taking precedence over other values. The family is willing to sacrifice material wealth to maintain peace, and the value of carapasan is closely related to loyalty, especially to the family. These values are instilled early on to maintain harmony, love, respect, and support each other. Fellowship is defined as maintaining unity and unity to maintain family prestige, prestige, and prestige. In this context, the value of communion means helping each other, especially in the rambu solo' ceremony (mourning ceremony). Non-participation is considered out of the fellowship and is considered immoral, unworthy of being a member of the tongkonan. In addition, the value of self-esteem (longko'; siri') is considered very important and must be maintained, because it affects the whole family. Sirik (shyness) has always been associated with self-esteem as a human being, and everyone is willing to sacrifice

anything, including the soul, in order to maintain and maintain sirik in life.

In Torajan life, self-esteem is expressed through longko'. Pasande (2013) explained that in its efforts to seek happiness and wealth, Torajan society is supported by behavior and life orientation called longko'. Torajan people understand that longko', shame and honor are what make a person "human". Longko' is not only about shame and self-esteem, but also about tolerance, that is, the necessity of a person to have a polite and respectful attitude not to embarrass others. Kobong (2008) explains longko' attitude is influenced by other values, such as being liked by everyone and self-prominence.

In 1906, the Dutch East Indies government succeeded in conquering Toraja, and began to organize the government by dividing the Toraja region into 2 (two) Onderafdeling, namely Makale and Rantepao under Self Bestuur Luwu in Palopo. Furthermore, Toraja is divided into 32 (twenty-two) customary territories, where each customary territory is under the government of Landschap or Districts. The District Chief was given the title Parengé' which was chosen by the Chief Kampong, and set by the Controleur. The number of Kampong is 410 (four hundred and ten), and each Kampong is led by a Kapala (Patarai, et al, 2021: 22).

The Dutch East Indies government implemented a system of government with a "modern" organization in which laws, and various written regulations, were implemented formally, structured and separate from the belief system. This is very different from the tongkonan government system which is based only on aluk sola pemali; it is unwritten, and all decisions rest with the Tongkonan ruler; it merges with belief, so it cannot be changed because it is transcendental-ontological.

The presence of a "modern" government organization, replacing the tongkonan leadership has consequences for the weak, and limited power of tongkonan (Pakan, 2018). The role of the tongkonan leader as ruler, government, and

law, is taken over by formal government institutions. The appointment of nobility and the granting of the title Parege' to the head of the District, only further reduced Parege's power, and prestige, because it positioned him as a subordinate and had to be responsible to the Dutch East Indies government.

Similarly, the requirement of Parege' which must be from the nobility actually opens up opportunities for divisions between nobles. The huge role of the Dutch East Indies government in establishing Parege' in a District, resulted in competition among the nobility for power through an approach to the Dutch East Indies Government. Formally the submission of candidates, and the selection of candidates, were carried out by the Kapala Kampong, but the final determination rested with the Dutch East Indies Government. Prospective candidates proposed by the Kapala could be replaced if they were considered disloyal to the Dutch East Indies government. Such a decision has the potential to cause disappointment for other nobles which in turn creates divisions between them, thus weakening the tongkonan (Sarira, 2001).

The presence of the Dutch East Indies government in Toraja was followed by the spread of Christianity carried out by the Dutch missionary agency, the Gereformeerde Zendingsbond (GZB). The missionaries preached the gospel through the opening of schools, and approached nobles, and district chiefs. The strategy was quite successful; The demand for establishing schools from district heads continues to grow, so GZB must bring teachers from outside Toraja such as from Manado and Ambon areas. GZB's policy gives freedom to all levels of society to enjoy education, opening up opportunities for vertical social mobility for the lower layers.

In carrying out its evangelistic mission, GZB firmly rejected social layering based on tana' because it was believed to contradict the Christian faith which teaches that all people before God are equal. The toughest challenge faced by GZB is to convert Toraja Christians to

leave aluk sola pemali, especially in carrying out traditional ceremonies, especially rambu solo' (death ceremony). To solve the problem, GZB established an institution called the "Customary Commission". This institution is tasked with studying the separation between aluk and adat (Bigalke, 2016: 13-224). The results of a study from the Customary Commission concluded that aluk (belief) can be separated from adat (culture). The customary commission is of the view that Christians can perform traditional ceremonies, because it is the result of Torajan culture. However, the elements associated with the aluk (belief) of the ceremony, must be eliminated, replaced with Christian faith (Bigalke, 2016: 13-224).

The Customary Commission's policy of separating Alu' and Adat brought about major changes in the lives of Torajan people, resulting in traditional ceremonies such as rambu solo' losing the dimension of Aluk Todolo belief. The move, initiated by GZB, succeeded in increasing the number of Christians in North Toraja Regency to 85 percent. Despite success in the development of Christianity, the move was not followed by strategic guidance, leading to a value vacuum and the loss of controlling instruments within custom. Tana', as a barrier in ceremonies, was removed without a replacement. After independence, many Torajan people migrated permanently to various regions in Indonesia, forming groups and family organizations in overseas places. The unity of the Toraja nomads is very strong, based on friendly relations and active participation in the rambu solo' ceremony in their home region, bringing various donations as a sign of participation.

Thanks to hard work and perseverance, many Toraja nomads were economically successful and became community leaders in overseas areas. This success encouraged them to maintain or improve their social status in Toraja by building tongkonan, alang sura', buying land, and carrying out traditional ceremonies, especially rambu solo on a large scale. The traditional restrictions seem to no longer apply, allowing

anyone to set up a tongkonan and hold a solo rambu ceremony, as long as they have the money. These actions, especially by successful nomads, aim to gain prestige and prestige in society. This ambition was especially true among nomads with ordinary social status in Toraja, giving birth to a new social group called the *nouveau riche* (OKB).

The presence of the OKB as a new social group became a "threat" to the nobility, encouraging them to maintain their status and position. There was competition between the nobility and the OKB for respect and prestige from the community, which included the implementation of traditional ceremonies and competitions in religious and social organizations. This competition even penetrated the world of politics, where candidates were supported by the power of funds from nomads to win political contests. The implementation of political contestation is also full of transactional politics, where money spending is not based on economic rationality, but rather driven by the lust for power to pursue social prestige and prestige. The candidates did not take into account the difficulty of earning money from having donors from overseas families, who also expected their families to hold power to maintain or increase social prestige and prestige in society.

Transactional politics, especially money politics, has become the norm in political contestation in Toraja. Giving, especially money from nomads to families in the village, not only maintained personal prestige but also created a group known as *Orang Kaya Baru* (OKB), fueling social competition and closely linked to transactional politics. OKBs seek to manipulate cultures to maintain and increase their influence.

In traditional Torajan society, a social structure called *tana'* establishes a person's status and authority. The entry of Christianity, brought about by the *Gereformeerde Zendingen Bond*, rejected this system of social layering, resulting in changes and loss of social structure. This system used to give authority to the noble layers in the control of resources and the

implementation of traditional ceremonies, but slowly faded after the spread of Christianity in Toraja.

GZB's rejection of a social layering system based on *tana'* and the policy of separating *Aluk* (beliefs) and *Adat*, brought fundamental changes in the social and cultural life of the Torajan people until now. The solo rambu ceremony in Torajan life, is an expression of the depth of spirituality, called religiosity. Separating *Aluk* (belief) from custom will kill the religiosity of the ceremony, as a result the implementation of the ceremony is only understood as a custom or custom that is void of spiritual value. (Liku Ada', 2014: 191). Moreover, the *tana'* that controls the activities of the ceremony is removed, while the barrier that replaces it is not available. The value vacuum and absence of controlling instruments are then filled by other values such as economics, prestige, prestige, and politics (Tangdilintin, 2012: 10).

In *Aluk Todolo* belief, the form and number of sacrificial animals in the solo rambu ceremony must be carried out according to the social status (*tana'*) of the deceased. For *tana'* nobles, the number of sacrificial animals, in the form of buffaloes, is more than 24 (brooms, the highest level of solo rambu ceremony), and the implementation time lasts for approximately 20 days. However, with the abolition of *tana'*, these provisions no longer apply. The number of sacrificial animals is no longer limited, and the implementation of the *rambu solo'* *rapasan* ceremony can now be carried out not only by the nobility but by anyone who is important and has the funds to conduct the ceremony.

The nomads successfully returned to their home regions, competing to carry out their family's solo *signbu* ceremony as lavishly as possible. The more sacrificial animals and the greater the cost, the higher the prestige and *gensi* of the family in society. Given the substantial cost of performing the *rambu solo'* *rapasan* ceremony, all family members must participate. However, in today's reality, the cost of carrying

out the solo rambu 'rapasan ceremony comes mostly from Toraja nomads.

The implementation of the solo signa ceremony today has turned into a competition between the upper layers (nobles) and the lower layers (ordinary people) in maintaining and gaining prestige and prestige in society. The bagawan tried to maintain their social status according to the provisions of Torajan customs, while the successful ordinary people (OKB) tried to manipulate the culture to replace the prestige and prestige enjoyed by the nobility. No wonder that today the form and number of sacrificial animals in the implementation of solo rambu ceremonies are increasingly uncontrollable. This is in line with what Dase (2020: 65) stated, that the main trigger for the increasingly luxurious solo rambu ceremony in Toraja is driven by the desire of families to maintain or gain social prestige in society.

If examined more deeply, it appears that the implementation of the solo rambu ceremony tends to be a means for Torajan nomads, especially OKB, to show their success. In short, the implementation of the solo sign ceremony becomes a place for OKB nomads to display a behavior called Veblen conspicuous consumption (showing off) (Deliarnov, 2005: 147-148). When viewed from Veblen's point of view, in reading this reality, there is one foundational question attached to that mindset: "How do people appreciate me?" According to Veblen, the foundation is none other than "wealth ownership."

Sociologically, money not only functions as an economic medium of exchange but also has a social function, namely building one's good reputation through generosity and exhibited with a hedonic lifestyle (Basuku, et al, 2020). This phenomenon is also related to Weber's concept of status groups, where the material role of ownership determines a person's social placement in a community (Dunn, in Basuki, et al, 2020).

According to Pongtuluran (2012: 44), the implementation of the solo rambu ceremony has

been manipulated by overseas Toraja elites as a means of realizing their political goals. For most Torajan people, the implementation of the solo rambu ceremony is a very important event and is a form of appreciation and expression of children's love for their parents. Therefore, the presence (katongkonan) of someone in the ceremony is a form of respect and empathy for the bereaved family. The presence of political elites in the solo rambu ceremony is followed by gifts in the form of money, buffaloes, or pigs to family members of the deceased as a sign of participation in feeling the grief experienced by the family.

At first glance, the gifts from the elites can be understood as moral acts and traditions in the solo signbu ceremony. However, if you follow the theory of giving from Mauss (1992), gifts are never "free" given without any obligation to reciprocate. In the history of human civilization, gifts have always given rise to the obligation of reciprocal exchange. A person who receives a gift from another person has an obligation to give back to the person who gave him the gift, even though the nature of the exchange that occurs between them is unequal. It is a form of social ethics that marks respect for fellow citizens.

However, according to Pongtuluran (2012: 45) the provision of political elites in the solo signpost ceremony is more about imaging in order to get sympathy from the family of the deceased. The aid provided is more politically nuanced which is not realized by the recipient as a moral bond invested by political elites in realizing their political goals. Indirectly, the political elite has bound families to vote when leadership elections are held. As revealed by YN, one of the informants in Balusu sub-district, that

"Frankly in Pemilukada 2020, we chose the OMBAS – DEDI couple, our family is very indebted to Mr. Yohanis Bassang. Whenever there is a family performing a solo rambu ceremony, he is sure to be present (the barrel), the activity is not only done at the time of the candidate's progress, but, done since working in

Timika. He was very kind and very attentive to the family" (Result of Interview, 24 May 2021)

What the informant said above, it is clear that the presence of a person, especially the elites in the 'solo sign' way psychologically greatly affects the perception of family members. Those present were expressed with the words "dipa'tedong saratui" (equated to a hundred buffaloes whose meaning is highly valued). Therefore, family members are obliged to reciprocate in various ways including voting in support of that person in political contestation. Thus, the solo rambu ceremony has the potential to become a means of transactional politics in disguise between the political elite and the family of the executor of the ceremony.

The competition between the upper layers (nobles) and the lower layers (ordinary people) in the life of Torajan society today, not only in the implementation of traditional ceremonies, but also has colored the succession of leadership at all levels in North Toraja Regency. The implementation of elections directly by the people. In the regions, it opens opportunities for all levels of society to compete to become rulers. By occupying power, the noble groups can further strengthen their prestige and social *gensu*. Meanwhile, for ordinary people, it is easier for them to replace the position of the noble group, especially in gaining prestige and prestige in society.

The motivation to maintain or gain prestige and prestige in society, causes every implementation of leadership succession (Election of Head of Lembang, Member of DPRD, Regent / Vice Regent) nomads compete to help fund their families who run as candidates in political contestations. In addition to providing financial support, the nomads also sent logistics such as boarding clothes, billboards, and contacted their relatives to vote for the candidates they supported, including conducting campaigns through social media.

For the people of North Toraja, leadership succession is not only about choosing leaders but also to gain prestige and social prestige both

personally and family in the community. Economic rationality (costs and results, gains and losses) in seizing power is forgotten, but the main thing is the pursuit of prestige and social *gensu* as rulers.

Such rationality becomes fertile ground for transactional political practice because candidates will spend money not based on economic rationality, but dominated by the motivation to gain power as a means to maintain or gain prestige and prestige in society. As a result, the costs required are very large, so that the candidates who compete are those who have large funds, both personal and from family support. That is why from the three times the election has been held since North Toraja district was designated as a new autonomous region, the candidates who competed and won the election were nomads, because they were the ones who had strong economic capital.

The ambition to rule, maintain and gain prestige and social prestige, is welcomed by people who increasingly do not question the quality of choosing potential leaders, but they prefer candidates who can give money. According to Panimba (2020), the leadership succession model that occurs in Toraja today is who has a lot of money, then he will be the one who will be elected. The practice of transactional politics, especially money politics has become a reality that is slowly being regarded as fair value.

Cultural manipulation is also evident from the increasing materialist, hedonistic, consumptive, and pragmatic attitudes in society. According to Rantetana (2014), the dependence on remittances has had an impact on weakening the value of hard work and perseverance among the Torajan community. The value of hard work and perseverance is decreasing because the demands to meet the necessities of life can be obtained easily. A person's social status and character have shifted; Wealth becomes a measure of success in life. The value of hard work and perseverance is decreasing because the demands to meet the necessities of life can be obtained easily.

The shift in the value of hard work and perseverance results in the development of speculative behavior and shortcuts to obtain money (wealth) through gambling practices, which are widely played by nomads (Rantetana, 2014). No wonder the increasingly widespread gambling practice has become one of the struggles of religious and government institutions in Toraja. One form of gambling that was known to the Torajan people long before the Dutch government came to Toraja, was cockfighting gambling which in Toraja language is called *massaung*. Even many of the cockfighting gamblers claim that the activity is part of Torajan culture. The claim is because cockfighting gambling is generally carried out at the end of the solo *rambu* ceremony'. While people who reject cockfighting, reject if this form of gambling is claimed to be part of Toaraja culture. However, it must be admitted that many forms of gambling are very difficult to eliminate from Torajan life.

The practice of gambling has permeated the political world in North Toraja Regency, especially in every implementation of democratic parties such as the election of the head of the valley, members of the legislature, and regional head elections. The results of the 2019 North Toraja Regency Socio-Cultural Conditions Mapping research revealed that political contestation is often used as a gambling arena, with bets on candidates as a form of specialization. The study concluded that this is a factor causing the rampant practice of money politics in the region. The practice of gambling also involves prospective donors giving money to make bets in secret or open. The successful team of a particular candidate uses the political technique of gambling by involving supporters of other candidates. They give money to supporters to use to gamble, distract and vote voters. This practice does not only occur at the polling station level, but also involves the basin, *kelurahan*, and sub-district levels. The main factors that led to the rise of transactional political practices in Regional Head Elections

(*Pilkada*) were speculative behavior and financial support from nomads, who also engaged in gambling practices. The majority of voters in North Toraja tend to have a pragmatic typology, where they vote for candidates who are willing to provide rewards in the form of money, goods, or services for personal gain, thus increasing the cost of elections.

In addition, voters in North Toraja Regency are mostly in a type of voter called *Upe* (in Rasyad, 2016: 35) pragmatic-adaptive rationality. This type of rationality is based or adjusted to the political stimulus that arises at the time of the general election (election). Pragmatism-adaptive behavior arises from future pessimism and campaign promises that are just a figment that ultimately encourage voters to become pragmatic (pragmatic voting). Not to mention the assumption that whoever is in power will not be able to make significant changes. The reason this model does not follow the tradition of prospective (future) models and is not based on retrospective models (past views). In other words, the behavior of choosing pragmatic - adaptive rationality is more oriented to the present, seeing only temporary interests. Patterns of mutually beneficial exchange relations

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be concluded that the role of the Success Team has a major impact on the success of leadership candidates in Toraja. There are three types of Success Teams with different goals, namely idealists who support good and ideal leaders, long-term pragmatic groups that take into account long-term gains, and short-term pragmatic groups that focus on immediate gains. The significant role of Toraja nomads as a source of capital for families or relatives running to become regional leaders also influences political dynamics. Although culture is still manipulated in transactional politics, practices such as political money, gambling, and rewards remain high in the Torajan political arena. This conclusion shows that the political dynamics in Toraja are not only influenced by

internal factors, but also by the active role of the Success Team and the external role of Toraja nomads.

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