Powerful Custom, Dominated Country: Domination of *Adat* Functionaries over the Village Government in Kerinci Regency

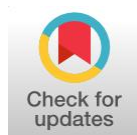Rio Yusri Maulana[1], Makmun Wahid[2], Dori Efendi[3], Moh. Arif Rakhman[4], M. Yusuf[5], Michael Lega[6]

[1,2,3,4,5,6]Department of Governmental Studies, Universitas Jambi, Indonesia

[1]*Corresponding Author: rioyusrimaulana@unja.ac.id*

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Abstract: The discussion on the power relationship between the state and *adat* is always exciting because it is most likely getting tension from the state through various regulations and keeps signifying its existence. An interesting phenomenon that happened after the downfall of the New Order regime and the expansion of the Regional Autonomy System's implementation was *adat* power's reappearance at the local level. For instance, the *adat* functionaries in Kerinci Regency signified their dominance over the village government. The studies about the relationship between *adat* and the state tend to put it as an identity and spirit for gaining support, power, and fund also tools to deal with the government. This study began since *adat* is in a dominant position over the village government in decisions making. This study found that the Kerinci Regency returned to adat as the government structure. As a result, it affected the village administration's stability and community solidarity mechanism in Kerinci Regency when resolving various conflicts. Thus, the meaning of domination, which is commonly interpreted as a negative issue, is turning out to be a contrary one since the community is more solid through *adat*.

Keyword: Adat Functionary ; Decision Making; Village Government.

INTRODUCTION

After the New Order regime collapsed, democracy in various regions began to strengthen. However, there was no assumption that the political phenomena of both religious and ethnic identity would exist later on. The phenomenon is quite surprising because decentralization, which is intended to improve government administration efficiency while strengthening democracy in the regions, actually brings up this new phenomenon. Democracy in regions gives the rights that have been regulated by a centralized system and raise their identity, which has disappeared for a while (Hadi, 2018).

This study discusses how the reappearance of traditional custom and why customs (*Adat*) and the *adat* functionaries dominate the village government in making strategic decisions for the village. Various critical decision-making in the village is inseparable from *adat* interventions, such as arranging village development plans, setting up annual village budget plans, resolving vertical and horizontal conflicts, dividing land inheritance and resolving socio-religious problems in various aspects of community life.

This study is relevant to explore the phenomenon of power relations between village government actors and Adat functionary after the New Order regime collapsed since user identity is massive with various motives. Based on Haboddin's (2012) opinion, identity exists as an antithesis to the authoritarian-centralistic system. The issue of identity is one of the cores for regaining, maintaining, and running the power. This identity issue exists within the centralized democratic pattern. Thus, it provides opportunities for various groups to participate in power contention.

The strengthening of identity is a phenomenon found in various regions in Indonesia, such as the return of the Surakarta Palace's power in Solo, the influence of Puri in Bali, and the Ternate's reappearance Sultanate, the Kutai Kertanegara Sultanate in Kalimantan and the Yogyakarta Palace. In general, these community groups prioritize identity politics to fight for cultural freedom and require recognition of their existence (Irawati, 2012). The interpretation of identity politics has been extended not only to religion, ethnicity, local people but also to indigenous people as explained by Irawati above and the Samin against colonials and the building in Pati Central Java (Aziz, 2012). Usually, the term *adat* is used as a symbol in their fundamental rights struggles. Therefore, *adat* functionaries as *adat* representatives in this study are also part of identity politics.

The use of identity when associated with local and village politics tends to bring up negative stigma. Besides, many people seem pessimistic about political identity. It is quite reasonable because, starting from various facts of identity politics motivated by hegemony, domination, and horizontal conflicts, such as one of the conflicts in Puncak Regency, Papua Province, has caused many lives to die at that time (Kogoya, 2015). Besides, identity politics is also causing disharmony among the community.

Village Law number 6 of 2014 about Villages recognizes village origins' rights that have been dismissed through a policy of equalizing the form, name, and system of the village by-law number 5 of 1979 about village governance. The new Village Law gives autonomous powers to the village government to carry out self-government. However, the principle of recognition is precisely interpreted as a basis for responding to the state's arrogance in regulating the system of village governance.

Kerinci Regency was chosen as a research location because, in general, the community is still sacring of *adat* as a life aspect basis. *Adat bersendi syara', syara' bersendi kitabullah* becomes the basis in the implementation of community life. This *adat* is practiced by *adat* functionary or named as *ninik mamak, rio, mangku dan depati*, and another name with the same meaning. Some of the village *adat* institutions in Kerinci Regency have different *adat* structures but still have the same function.

A person who holds the position as an *adat* functionary has a role in creating adat law policy and implementation. Among those names are hard to be given hierarchy because each tribe has an *adat* that is not always similar. In its development, their role is not only for the ritual purpose but also has a vital role in the decision-making process in the village. The phenomena in Kerincy Regency are already gone beyond identity politic, as explained by Aziz (2012), Haboddin (2012) dan Irawati (2012) above. An interesting fact shows that adat functionaries can intervene even decide the regulation strategy in decision-making at the village level.

Many of strategic decision is related to adat functionaries, and they come up as the decision-making actors. The problem is that the governance structure from a state perspective can decide the regulation strategy at the village level. What has happened is the appearance of a double governance actor. The first actors are the village government consisting of the Village Head, the Village Deliberation Forum (BPD), and the village structure with formal legal authority. The second one is the *adat* group. Besides having *adat* authority, it also can decide in regulation-making.

A study by Asrinaldi & Azwar (2018) has focused on influencing adat functionaries in local democracy. It revealed that the power practice was not more than building the Malay identity and strengthening *adat* and culture. In this context, the cultural identity was only used to support political contention in the regions so that the culture could be used for the government through policy and political tools.

Meanwhile, Haboddin (2012) emphasized strengthening the identity politics in Riau, Central Kalimantan, West Kalimantan, and Irian Jaya Province. He wrote the movement of reappearance identity politics as the double image of local politic contention. Its manifestation came up for local people to power regaining and getting more significant budget allocation from national.

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Ulum, Jannah, & Arifullah (2017) explain social hegemony practice and political dominance in Jambi seem to show the nearly similar sign what has been explained by Haboddin. Nevertheless, the phenomenon that shows up is contention between the local community who live in a marginal location with newcomer community almost not have experienced social problems. The majority and the minority in race and religion become a hegemony basis and dominance over another group. What has been explained is not a concern to the community and state. It is about the local community with those who are not majority and minority.

Contrary to those three points of view, Mudzakkir (2011) looks at how the local (*adat*) community has affairs with the government through opposition and negotiation within the climax is the consensus between the community with the government. The adat community's discussion with government, NGO, journalist, researchers, and tourists contributes to revival awareness. *Adat* is limited to traditional rituals and transformed into political power in dealing with the government. It means that *adat* is a bargaining point to respond to government policy.

Like Mudzakkir, Prioharyono (2012) relates the power practice by *adat* functionary given by origin myth and position prioritization system concept and social structure. Both of them are related that is not only to the traditional political system but also show its existence in a procedural formal political system. Bayo (2009) explains that the power contention among the state and church institutions to *adat* shows the power rivalry, culture, and Adat power policy is still dominant; meanwhile, the church power decreases. The value of *adat* is never cut off, although getting tension from church and the state.

Irawati (2012) studied the movement of cultural politics based. Irawati emphasized the study about political movement and the dynamic of Kerapatan Adat Kurai (KAK) in West Sumatera's local politics. The result showed that the ground of KAK was for political purposes to them get access and representative from their group in local government. The KAK movement's dynamic is powerfully close with the actor's plan to gather support in the particular political event. As initiators, the adat leader is not appointed yet as a political, cultural, and economic representative.

Most of the studies revealed that identity was a movement and struggling phrase in getting power and budget allocation (Haboddin, 2012; Irawati, 2012; Ulum et al., 2017). The struggling strategy dealing with government (Mudzakkir, 2011) was getting support by adat and also as a spirit to run the government (Asrinaldi & Azwar, 2018; Prioharyono, 2012), and the interesting issue was the power contention among the state, adat, and church (Bayo, 2009).

This study shows the new fact in the local political context after implementing Law Number 6 of 2004 about Village. It is *adat* as one of local identity surprisingly comes up and dominated the government through the procedural way, such as the apparatus election and placement, and non-procedural through formal and non-formal interaction. Bayo (2009) analyzed the contention among significant influence (state, adat, and church) separately in context before Law Number 6 of 2004 about Village. This study will have to emphasize the arising and dominance *adat* toward the state after implementing the Village Law of 2004.

This study's basic assumption is *adat* as a significant resource used to control and dominate the village government and answer how *adat* functionaries dominate the Village Head. The researchers view that *adat* functionaries' effort is a reconstruction of the traditional group's political movement. Kerinci Adat, as the group that uses ethnic identity develops the issue and finds out the media to deliver their plan.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research took place in four villages, namely Tebat Ijuk, Koto Lanang, Koto Tuo, and Koto Petai Village, using an exploratory qualitative method. This method was used to understand the sign or phenomenon relationship between village government and Adat power (Soehartono, 2008). The deciding the villages as a study location were based on the argument that their character was still strong and used by the community as an indicator for daily life practice.

The primary data collecting was conducted by structure and non-structured interviews and integrated with participant observation, whereas the researchers tried to identify and

lookup around freely (Corbetta, 2003). The field data was supported by secondary data, such as reports, village regulation, news from media. The study result was used as a source to support research analysis

The information was found out by deciding who was considered knowing the early information about the needed data. The primary information consisted of Village Head (Tebat Ijuk, Koto Lanang, Koto Tuo, and Koto Petai Village) and those *adat* functionaries (*ninik mamak, rio, depati*, and *mangku*). Next, the researchers asked the information references that knew well about strategic information needed using snowball sampling techniques. Those were considered qualified, such as religious leaders, adat leaders, youth leaders, former of Village Head, and the *anak jantan* and *anak betino*. The selected persons were the significant actors of village governance.

Several pieces of information from a primary and secondary source were processed using coding. This technique was used to get an interpretation of every piece of information and source. Besides, a coding system is considered adequate to determine the tendency of information that is reliable for its validity.

The coding result was described by narration that showed dominance relation practice of Adat functionary. The presenting data were done by giving a comparison toward previous research. The analysis came from the basic theory in this study. The researchers would also affirm specific findings in running the village government and local political study academically, result from the discussion, and a recommendation at the end of this study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
The conformity in the village government system

The state has a close relationship with the *adat* community because, after an independence declaration, Indonesia held power to protect, look after, accomplish, and respect their existence. The obligation is written in Constitutional Law 1945. In Fourth Paragraph, it mentions that the state aims to protect all nations. Philosophically, the state must recognize the *adat* existence growing before Indonesia obtained its sovereignty (Sulastriyono, 2014).

Nevertheless, their existence (*Adat* community) in reality is most likely to get tension and always weakened. The weakening of indigenous peoples can be seen in enacting various national laws contrary to its objectives. It is shown in the implementation of Law number 5 the year of 1960 about basis land regulation that also regulates *adat* rights. The implementation Law Number 5 of 1979 about village government abolished the system and form of *adat* community. The abolition is followed by repressive action by government action, non-government action, and non-*adat* community (Syamsudin, 2008).

The enforcement of these rules uniformly has implications for changes in *adat* communities' governance structure, such as several villages in Java, clans in South Sumatra, Nagari in Minangkabau, Curia in Tapanuli, Wanua in South Sulawesi, Banjar in Bali. The customary unity has autonomous completeness and arrangements such as the division of labor, the system of value devices and the rule of law itself, and community institutions have political, economic, legal functions and the function of maintaining the community's survival (Syamsudin, 2008).

Various government systems have implications for changing the governance structure of customary communities such as villages in Java. *Dusun* in Kerinci Regency did not escape this policy, so the original structure was shifted into a village. In the beginning, each backwood was led by a chief who led several Village Heads below it. When aligned with the current village government structure, a chief's position is the same as that of the Village Head. Chief is one of the traditional leaders who is commonly referred to as *tungku tigo sejarang*. The structure is a relationship between *adat* elders, aristocracy and religious scholars as a unity of *adat* leaders in running the village government that was in effect and now experiencing a shift into a village.

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The Resurrection of *Adat* Functionaries

Various power practices that weaken *adat* leaders' existence in the village through laws seem unable to stem *adat* peoples' forces because now the constitution respects and recognizes their rights. The resurrection of the power of *adat* functionaries in the Kerinci Regency is inseparable from the context of political change on a national and local scale. Decentralization policy opens the door to the rise of the identity politics movement. Changes in the policy-map are significant for the emergence of various political movements in various regions. Democratization at various levels has become an essential momentum for Adat functionary because, through openness, freedom of opinion is an asset for Adat peoples to determine policy direction.

Strengthened democracy at various levels provides opportunities for the revival of *adat* power, strengthened by several rules. The 1945 Constitution in article 18B paragraph (2), which recognizes and respects the *adat* law and their traditional powers, as well as Law Number 22 of 1999 replaces Law Number 5 of 1979 concerning Village Government which was later revised into Law No. 32/2004 gives excessive authority to the Regency and City Governments (Irawati, 2012). The consequence of enacting regional laws in 1999 and 2004 seems to be that the granting of authority to the regions did not consider the socio-political consequences in each region, especially after enacting Law Number 6 of 2014, which explicitly recognizes the authenticity of villages that once existed.

Recognition of the right of origin strengthens the position of ethnic political entities. The enactment of the village government law inspired *adat* groups to revive local values previously existing in the state's formal government concept. The regions' authority to develop based on their respective local contexts makes the regional elites revitalize cultural and religious customs' values penetrating the public sphere (Irawati, 2012).

The rise of ethnic awareness of Minangkabau identity reinforces the belief that *nagari* governance must be returned as the lowest formal government (village). They claim the *nagari* as a characteristic of a democratic and egalitarian society (Irawati, 2012). While Kerinci Regency is geographically close to West Sumatra Province, many economic transactions have occurred. Even from the historical aspect, this area has a kinship with the Pagaruyung kingdom. So. it is not surprising that the culture also has similarities; for example, the *tungku tigo sajarangan* in Kerinci Regency also exists in West Sumatra.

The revival of *adat* power in West Sumatra inspired the people of the Kerinci Regency to re-emerge *adat*. If West Sumatra managed to restore the existence of Nagari to replace the village, on the contrary, in Kerinci Regency showed a different phenomenon. What happens in Kerinci Regency because it occupies a vital position in village governance administration without eliminating the structure according to the law. Harun & Sagala (2013) noted that in Jambi Province, there was an attempt to restore the traditional governance structure as in Bungo Regency, but only returned the designation to the village as *Rio*.

Kerinci Regency is swift to respond to opportunities to bring up this local identity. This revival spirit was then manifested by the inclusion of *adat* functionaries in the village governance structure, namely, members of the BPD. However, this concept is only applied in the village while the regency government cannot be enforced. There is no structural position of adat functionaries within the regency government because *adat* authority is limited to the village level. The *adat* authority in the regency only regulates customs rites.

Identity becomes the principal capital in fighting for rights, like the Samin who make *adat* as the basis for the struggle against the company (Aziz, 2012) and the struggle of the Mosaliki who use their source of origin in their political struggles (Prioharyono, 2012). In the context of Kerinci, it shows a precisely different phenomenon, where *adat* is not used as a tool of struggle to obtain rights that policies have eroded during the new order. However, *adat* is used as a narrative to dominate power over the ruling village government.

The power of *Adat* Functionaries in Village

Democracy in the village provides an opportunity for *adat* functionaries to regain shifted government. Even though they did not directly oppose their position as villages, the Village

Head election process was inseparable from their intervention. Efyanti, Hainadri, Mahabbati, & Harlina (2017) explained that the intervention began from selecting the election committee who would compete in the Village Head election and overseeing the Village Head's election. The Semerap village case shows the *adat* effort to return the original functionary to their original position where the village head is the *adat* leader so that people who may become candidates for Village Heads are *adat* functionaries selected from their consultation results.

Rational considerations to obtain political capital, the blessing of the *adat* elders, became the prospective Village Head's legitimacy to fight as a representative of his colleague. Also, the community obedience to the *adat* functionaries is high so that the *adat* elders' voice can determine their members' alignments.

Likewise, with filling positions in the village government structure, determining BPD members is inseparable from the consultation process with *adat* functionaries. The *adat* functionaries also succeeded in putting down actors from *ninik mamak, alim ulama, cerdik pandai,* and *tetua adat* or commonly referred to as *golongan empat jenis,* plus representatives from *anak jantan dan anak betino* as representatives of youth as BPD members, holds vital positions in the village structure as section heads, and village secretaries. So that through these representative actors, the *adat* functionaries could effortlessly determine the direction of village development policy.

Reflecting on *adat* figures *totua ngata,* they are highly respected figures in resolving conflicts in the community. The factor influencing this role is the existence of obedience, community compliance with *adat* decisions. The community has a high awareness of *adat* values' importance to be maintained as a genetic heritage (Hendra, 2018).

In the Kerinci Regency, *adat* functionaries also have an important role such as in the implementation of marriages, land issues, housing construction, inheritance, rice fields, *adat* civil law, horizontal conflict resolution such as disputes between *anak jantan* and squabbles between *anak betino*, conflicts between tribes, conflicts of interest and conflicts between the village. The same case with vertical conflicts between the community and the village government and local government officials. They hold the mandate to solve various problems, which they call functions that *"menyelesaikan yang kusut, menjernihkan yang keruh".* It is essential to keep the family of male children and female children to remain calm and peaceful.

Adat power, which still has a significant influence on the Kerinci community's life, is a matter of marriage and land. The procession of tribal marriages in Kerinci Regency is carried out with various processions, such as *adat* marriages, religious marriages and state marriages. *Adat* marriage is done by carrying out *adat* rituals that are still valid and can only be done by the prospective bride's *adat* elders. In contrast, religious marriages and state marriages are wedding processions generally carried out by the general public. *Adat* marriage is one of the boundaries between *adat* and the community because if the community gets sanctions so that the *adat* leader is reluctant to do the marriage, the marriage is considered to be less than perfect and can detain the marriage procession.

Whereas the problem of land, it is still the authority of *adat* cannot be separated from the history of the tribe in Kerinci Regency. Most of the land is *adat* ownership which usually consists of village land and rice fields. Some of the Kerinci community settlements stand on *adat* land so that the community only has the right to use, not the ownership rights. To build a house, the community needs *adat* functionary approval, starting from the boundary's determination to the permission to build it. If the *adat* functionaries have given permission and determined the building boundaries, the community can start the construction.

In line with the explanation Pribadiono (2016) viewed *adat* law governed by its people as its independence that has proven effective in solving social problems. *Adat* enforcement's success is undoubtedly influenced by *adat* leaders who have charisma so that their members accept critical decisions. Although some choose to take the positive legal route, Kerinci Regency always faces a dead end.

In the end, law enforcers will restore problems using *adat* law first, except for those relating to severe legal violations such as stealing and killing. Even when the Village Head is deemed to have violated *adat* law, the *adat* functionaries can impose a fine on the Village Head,

but not vice versa. The Village Head does not dare to punish Adat functionary when they do not commit legal violations such as theft and murder.

The dominance of *adat* over the Village Head can be seen from the two's official *adat* and village meetings. The *adat* leaders usually hold regular meetings every three months to discuss the condition of *anak jantan* and *anak betino* and all their colleague members' problems. The meeting was attended by *depati, pemangku, ninik mamak, rio, anak jantan dan anak betino* and invited the Village Head. During the meeting, the Village Head as a guest, was only allowed to give an opinion if asked to submit an opinion to resolve the problem but did not have voting rights to determine the outcome of the deliberations.

Whereas when the village holds an official meeting such as a village meeting, formulating the policy of implementing the village government. The *adat* functionaries hold control or have the right to determine the results of deliberations in determining village regulations, the village income and expenditure budget, and the village's implementation of development policies. By submitting its opinion in the forum or directly to the BPD, then the opinion is brought by the BPD representative of the *adat* functionary. The proposed opinion is then discussed with the Village Head to take policy.

The village government can carry out activities without *pemangku adat*'s intervention, but many implementations of policies will be hampered if they conflict with Adat principles. In such a position, the village needs legitimacy from *adat*'s power. Various important decisions are usually through a process of joint meetings between the village government and *adat* functionaries. Village administrators will not make their decisions if not approved by them. The consequence that the village government must face if it does not involve *adat* is the rejection of the policies of *anak jantan* and *anak betino* members for substantial and practical reasons.

Cases of conflict between the village government and the *adat* functionaries prove their position is still more substantial than the village government's authority. A policy can be terminated by the *adat* functionaries for various reasons, both in principle and practice. As deemed contrary to Adat law, even physical development can be stopped when the construction is on *adat*'s land while the development has not received permission from the *adat* functionaries. *Adat* leaders also more often listen to their colleague members' aspirations, such as *anak jantan* and *anak betino,* as the nature of protecting tribal members. Suppose the colleague members oppose the village government's policies. In that case, the village government takes a safe nature to continue the policy if there is no policy from *adat* functionaries to continue the policy.

Vice versa, policies that had previously stopped because *adat* functionaries or tribal members opposed them could be resumed after a new policy from Adat functionary agreed to the policy. The legitimacy of *adat* functionaries is sometimes also misused by tribal members to justify their actions. Like when building houses that should not close the irrigation channel, but because they had already obtained a permit for the construction of the boundary from the *adat* functionaries, there were individual members of the tribe who crossed the previous boundary line to close the irrigation path, but the *adat* functionaries seemed not to take a firm stand in the case.

There is still a sense of sectoral ego on both sides, both from the Adat Leader and the Village Head. The *adat* leader felt that before the village's existence, they were the highest leader in the village, so that after the existence of the village, it was as if someone had taken his position. In terms of age, the average *adat* leader is older than the Village Head, and the *adat* leader has been in charge longer than the Village Head, so he feels more knowledgeable and experienced from the Village Head. The community's social conditions also support *adat* leader legitimacy because the community still believes in the *adat* leader and still obeys the *adat* laws that he made. Land ownership also has a significant influence because most of the land included in village maps is considered as the *adat* land, whereas the Village Head feels that he is currently the supreme leader in the village and is legally valid of the state.

From these conditions, the village government must synergize with the *adat* functionaries so that the policy can run because even though legally the village government has a higher position than the *adat* functionary, the reality is that the village government is only the executor

in the fields of physical development, village administrative affairs, and policies which directly deals with the central government such as the distribution of *raskin* and other forms of assistance for poor people. At the same time, *adat* functionaries are more dominant in policymaking. The village government can also use the *adat* functionary's authority to facilitate the government's netting by always cooperating with the *adat* functionaries in each of their policies so that if there is opposition from tribal members, they will solve the problem.

Why are Adat Functionaries Becoming Powerful?

Adat functionaries are the most dominant actors in the critical decision-making process in the village. In contrast, the Village Head and members of the village consultative body were co-opted by his dominance. *Adat* functionaries even exceed the authority of government authorities because they have various authority facilities.

Kerinci culture has long used a system known as democracy, namely by conducting consensus meetings conducted by *anak betino*, especially *anak betino tuo* (*anak betino* who are generally older) because they are considered more qualified spiritually have a closer relationship with the ancestors and knowing about *adat*. Several conditions must be owned by potential *adat* functionaries, such as "*simbai ikounyo, nyaring kukongnyo, runcing tajinyo, kembang kepaknyo, lapang dadonyo, nyalang matonyo, gedang paruhnyo, kuat kakinyo, bitnik bulunyo, kuat cakarnyo*".

The symbols are like describing adult roosters who are ready to fight. At least the main requirements contain symbolic meaning where people are considered fit to occupy the position of *adat* functionaries when those who can solve problems, master religious knowledge, adequate education, insightful, know about *adat*, wise, clear lineages because in the Kerinci Regency, people take lineage from the mother or *anak betino*, as well as *adat* functionaries must be economically independent, which means at least they have their rice fields, plantations and homes. From these requirements, it is hoped that the chosen *adat* functionaries will be those who have finished themselves both physically and spiritually to focus on taking care of *anak jantan* and *anak betino*.

Those who occupy positions as *adat* functionaries have a reasonably good networking ability. *Adat* functionaries in the Tebat Ijuk village, for example, are members of the Kerinci Regency Adat institution, members of the sub-Regency *adat* institution, and the Kerinci Dai members Indonesia Association (IKADI). Besides, the stakeholders are usually also active as regency, sub-Regency government officials, lecturers and teachers. People are appointed as a functionary with the criteria of *nyaring kukunyo* because they can solve various problems of tribal members or are good at diplomacy, and members hear their voices of their tribe.

Viewed from the lineage, people who can occupy *adat* functionaries have a lineage from the previous *adat* functionaries as either *depati*, *mangku*, *ninik mamak* and *rio*. With these criteria, not all members can be appointed by *kolbu* (bloodline of women). The selection of *adat* functionaries is carried out openly, and the main requirement of the candidate must be willing to take care of the members (*anak jantan* and *anak betino*). *Adat* elders inaugurated the electability through *adat* ceremonies, *pidato rajo* and taking oaths that are very sacred by religious leaders and witnessed by *kolbu* members. *Ninik mamak's* power is strong because his choice is done based on a request from *kolbu*. So it is not surprising if the Adat decisions are imperative and sacred.

Then, *adat* functionaries are economically well-chosen people. *Kuat cakarnyo* is a principle that the functionary in charge has been released from economic burdens because it is sufficient. Coupled with quite essential positions in the various sectors they have acquired such as agency in the regency, sub-Regency, lecturer and teacher. The adat functionaries' tenure is valid until the end of his life or when the *adat* functionaries are no longer able to carry out tasks such as illness or are not physically strong.

Meanwhile, the Village Head does not have such instruments. The power of the Village Head is limited to administrative sanctions. Even then, it does not have power because it is confronted with the principle of village government that must provide non-discriminatory services. Thus, what happened in the context of social, political and cultural life in the Kerinci

Regency shows no more power superior to *adat* functionaries' authority. Although in the village government structure, placing *adat* as part of the village government is not separated from the Village Head, but the power shows the opposite phenomenon in practice.

Elites from *adat* functionaries play essential roles in social matters related to the interests of their existence. Where *adat* identity is operated as a political movement, in this point of view, Irawati (2012) stated that identity is formed because it has been constructed by a party that aims to restore its authenticity. Their strength is a reconstruction of *adat* functionaries' political movements to show their existence as influential actors. *Adat* as identity is used as material to raise issues and find a place to channel their interests.

Adat functionaries as a new force in the implementation of village government have implications for decision-making. At the practical level, actor contestation is dominant in village development deliberations. The elements of the Village Head, BPD, and *adat* figures play an important role. The Village Head and BPD have the authority as stipulated in the village law, and the authority is obtained legally formally. While *adat* elders have traditional authority sourced from *adat* and religion, *adat* actors have stages to reproduce *adat* discourses such as *kenduri Sko,* religious events on the commemoration of Islamic holidays.

At this momentum, the Adat figure brings back the Customary narratives through such verbal poetry called Parno Adat on Adat and religious stages in public spaces. The village community puts the Adat elders as role models and is considered as a voice representation of the community so that it is difficult to be denied by *anak jantan* and *anak betino*. Adat rules that are born from traditional elders are sacred because the Adat leaders are not only the holders but also the religious scholars.

What confirmed the power of the Adat elders were the political platforms they had. The elders have informal spaces to interact with the community, namely through sermons in the mosque, Adat meetings, social community activities such as mutual assistance, formal village meetings to formulate village policies and budgets. The intense interaction in these public spaces is the Adat elders have various opportunities to reproduce various discourses. The peak of their power and strength lies in resolving conflicts between *anak jantan*, *anak betino* (tribal members of males and females) as in the distribution of inheritance or conflicts between tribes.

Decisions on resolving members' fights are imperative because members who violate *adat* law then do not obey the rules have implications for exile. Alienation becomes a kind of social punishment for adat violators, such as not being invited to a wedding and not being included in village meetings. Suppose the ceremony is an arena for the operation of power. In that case, the ceremony is political because it expresses power's social relations by naturalizing the social order as reality, thus obscuring the exploitation relations. It means that the ceremony is a tool to articulate power. The power relation is not visible (unconscious) through the ceremony, called symbolic power (Heriyawati, Soemanto, & Nugroho, 2012).

Kenduri Sko is a symbol that consists of ceremonies, while ceremonies are also symbols that have rituals. It means that *kenduri sko* has a symbol layer. The layer shows that *kenduri sko* consists of various ceremonies. In the implementation, there are rites, each of which has elements, such as offerings, proper equipment, performing arts, etc.

Adat functionaries re-imagined indigenous governance's triumph before enacting the policy of uniforming forms of government into villages. Then they reconstructed the forms of government in post-reformation, especially the birth of Village Law Number 6 in 2014. The village government may still operate administratively. However, the decision-making process remains under the intervention of the *adat*. The return of *adat* forces that legally obtained support gave rise to the duality of the government system. On the one hand, in the administration of government affairs carried out by the village government, social affairs and decision-making precisely lie among the *adat* elders.

Duality in government indeed confuses the people, but Kerinci Regency found a new government format that tried to return to the traditional values that had been eroded (it was only a ritual boundary). Structurally, it cannot be found as it was before because of the process of breaking up the *adat* territories into villages. The current pattern emerges where the village government holds authority in the administrative field while symbolically, the village is only a

symbol of its will. Concerns about the existence of identity politics will have an impact on the breakdown of unity as stated by Haboddin (2012), and Ulum et al. (2017) certainly have reasons that can be accounted for in the context of political succession at the regional level, but that view seems excessive. However, Kerinci Regency's phenomenon shows different issues: *Ninik Mamak*, as a representation of *adat*, becomes a strand of potential splits as previously feared by researchers. This paper highlights that the rise of *adat* forces had built the optimism of unity. Domination does not always have a negative meaning, but dominance gets a new meaning. In this context, domination is one of the glue to hold society during the struggle of social and political and cultural interests.

Mudzakkir (2011) shows the existence of Mosaliki, who has a source of strength from sources of origin and sources of precedence. They only use these resources to care for cultural rites and be used as a tool for Village Heads, who are also Mosaliki, to operate their power. It means that *adat* legitimizes what is done by the village government through *adat* elders' placement as Village Heads. The implication, decision-making, and implementation of programs in the village will be straightforward because the Village Head and Mosaliki are the same people. Besides having traditional authority, it also has formal legal authority in exercising power.

CONCLUSION

The rise of *adat* functionaries in the Kerinci Regency was inspired by the reappearance of Nagari in West Sumatra, supported by regulations that indirectly exploit democracy at various levels of government. *Adat* functionaries can operate their power in the village because they have social networking, economic and social. The village government's implementation shows a unique phenomenon in the relationship between the *adat* elders and the village government. The dominance of *adat* elders in the village government in making decisions in the Kerinci context shows a knot in solving various village problems. Thus, the strengthening of *adat* at the village level does not always affect the village government system's destruction but gives birth to an alternative decision-making process based on local wisdom.

From the study's findings, to restore the position of *adat* in village government, it is necessary to formulate a government format that reinforces the existence of *adat* that already exists. The pattern in Kerinci Regency shows firm control to ensure the stability of government at the village level. On the other hand, villages such as Kerinci Regency, which are vulnerable to social conflict, need alternative conflict resolution and the state's approach. The resolution of various social conflicts through the *adat* approach shows its practice, as proven in Kerinci Regency, that there has never been a considerable vertical or horizontal conflict.

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