

Humbang Hasundutan Regional Head Election In 2020: Empty Box Volunteer Political Communication Movement

Faiz Albar Nasution¹, Muhammad Husni Thamrin¹, Randa Putra Kasea Sinaga¹, Muhammad Imanuddin Kandias
Saraan¹, Yofiendi Indah Indainanto²

¹Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

² Faculty of Information Technology and communication, Universitas Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Correspondence: Faiz Albar Nasution, Program Studies Political Science, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia.

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Abstract

The occurrence of a single candidate in the 2020 Humbang Hasundutan District Head Election has spawned political communication to choose an empty box. The empty box volunteer political movement influences voters to vote for blank ballots in the name of ideal democracy. This study examines how empty-box volunteers convey their political messages in music to voters. Qualitative research methods with framing analysis approaches are used to analyze data or political messages in songs against political movements of empty box volunteers. Data collection techniques through literature studies show five songs about the Empty Boxes in the 2020 Humbang Hasundutan Regional Head Election. The results show that the Empty Boxes volunteers place the issue of Empty Boxes Democracy as the main issue with various frames of political messages in the Empty Boxes song. The five songs of empty box volunteer articulate, frame, highlight, and disseminate political messages on three themes, among others, ideal democracy, democracy becomes a movement for change and democracy against political elites.

Keywords: regional head election, indonesia, empty box, volunteer, political communication movement

1. Introduction

1.1 The Background of the Study

It is hard to separate the continuity of a nation's political system from the political activity there. The elements that influence how efficiently the political process is run are the people and groups that are actively engaged in it (Amin, 2022). Elections are, therefore, one of the fundamental tenets of a democracy because they can symbolize people's sovereignty (Christiano, 2018). As a further measure to advance local democracy, regional head elections were instituted. As a result, direct elections are used in Indonesia every five years to rotate the regional heads (Aminah, 2020). However, in Indonesia, the selection of regional heads and their delegates by political parties often tend to be influenced by early factors, including religion, blood links, regional equality, and aspects of allegiance and proximity to party leaders (Aspinal, 2019).

Similarly, the party's internal dynamics frequently choose to renominate incumbents whose leadership had been tested five years before (Widhiasthini, 2020). As a result of the incumbent's ability to win and the formation of an uneven party alliance, other political parties may be unable to participate in the Regional Head Election (Damanik, 2020). As a result, there has been an increase in the number of single candidates in Regional Head Election events. There were three single candidates in the Regional Head Election in 2015, nine single candidates in 2017, and sixteen single candidates in 2018. According to the General Election Commission, there will be 25 single candidates running for office in 2020, spread across several area with 23 incumbents. This is a one-of-a-kind occurrence because the trend toward single candidates is increasing, which can be a positive or negative indicator of Indonesia's democracy (Rahman, 2022).

The legal foundation for the development of the empty box phenomenon is governed by Law Number 10 of 2016 regarding Regional Head Elections that only have one candidate present. A single candidate must receive more than 50% of the valid votes, according to Article 54d. The defeated candidate pair may run again in the subsequent election if the votes cast do not exceed 50%. Pematang Siantar City, Gunung Sitoli Regency, and Humbang Hasundutan Regency were the three regions that continued the empty box phenomenon in North Sumatra Province at the 2020 Regional Head

Election. Humbang Hasundutan Regency, North Sumatra Province, is one of the cases that need to be taken a closer look at, especially the single candidate against an empty box in the 2020 Regional Head Elections in Indonesia.

In the North Sumatra Province's Regional Head Elections, Pematang Siantar City and Humbang Hasundutan Regency each had a single candidate running against an empty ballot box, and the results of this study by Situmorang reveal various political dynamics. Political activity is more active and forward-thinking in Humbang Hasundutan Regency than in Pematang Siantar City, which has a more passive political climate. The results of this study demonstrate that the community is more willing to support an empty ballot in the election of the regional head of the Humbang Hasundutan Regency (Situmorang, 2022). This indication is also in line with Marbun research showing the empty box political movement carried out by the Humbang Hasundutan Democracy Caring Forum (FPDHH) systematically and massively in the 2020 Humbang Hasundutan Regional Head Election. In this election, Dosmar Banjarnahor-Oloan Paniaran Nababan, as the sole candidate, became the winner based on the recapitulation of the vote count results with a total of 51,799 votes (52.5%) against an empty box with 46,941 votes (47.5%). So that Among the 25 regencies/cities with a single candidate pair, Humbang Hasundutan Regency has the highest percentage of empty box voters in the 2020 Concurrent Regional Head Elections in Indonesia (Marbun, 2022).

The two previous studies specifically show how the occurrence of a single candidate in the Regional Head Election of the Humbang Hasundutan Regency has spawned a political movement that chooses the empty box. They acted by establishing winning posts where the Chairperson of the Humbang Hasundutan Democracy Caring Forum (FDPHH) announced that 1,400 posts had been formed. They also said that systematic socialization was carried out door to door, focusing on socialization related to the empty box movement and a single candidate considered detrimental to democracy (Simanews.com, 2020). Additionally, while singing and having fun with songs about empty boxes, they invite market visitors to print logos or empty box symbols on their clothing. This is a unique strategy for convincing people to select an empty box (Hariansib, 2022). Despite its defeat in the Regional Head Election, this movement cannot be viewed as a group that has had less success in influencing voter turnout (Marbun, 2022).

Previous studies need to be elaborated again to see how empty-box volunteers persuade voters to choose empty boxes. The results of the author's observations show that the political communication activities of the empty box Humbahas volunteer movement are more dominant in influencing voters. They are campaigning for choosing an empty box through a musical approach to voters. For the people of Humbang Hasundutan Regency, where the majority are of Toba Batak ethnicity, music is not only for entertainment but for expressing emotions, strengthening personal lives, and preserving culture and traditions (Simanjuntak, 2021; Simanjuntak, 2022). Meanwhile, during the 2020 Humbang Hasundutan District Head Election, empty box volunteers used music to fight local political elites and influence voters to follow movements in the name of ideal democracy.

1.2 The Problem of the Study

This study was conceptualized to specifically examine how empty box political volunteer Humbang Hasundutan explored the following themes in the lyrics of some of their songs: Choose Koko (Empty Box); Empty City; Empty Box Song for Humbahas; Empty Box; Empty Box for Democracy Humbahas. This research is not devoted to analyzing their entire musical repertoire or the diversity of issues addressed in their music. However, purposive samples of their songs with political messages are contained in the song's title above. This study uses a textual analysis approach to describe the meaning of the songs. The author uses a framing strategy to illustrate how empty box volunteers use their music to spread political ideas to Humbang Hasundutan voters. This project aims to find out how to frame the song lyrics of the empty box volunteer movement for the 2020 Humbahas Regional Head Election.

1.3 Relevant Studies

1.3.1 The Phenomenon of a Single Candidate in Indonesian Regional Head Elections

The decision of the Supreme Court of Number 100/PUU-XIII/2015 is a solution to the democratic deadlock that has occurred in several regions in Indonesia (Vera, 2019). At first, it was never expected that a single candidate would appear in the contestation of Regional Head Elections in Indonesia (Mahardika, 2018). The problem is that Law Number 8 of 2015 concerning Regional Head Elections needs to solve this problem. The lawmaker then implemented the judgment into Law Number 10 of 2016 concerning Regional Head Elections after realizing that the legal position needed to be improved. This phenomenon is seen in the contestation of democracy in Indonesia due to the failure of political parties to carry out their duties as a means of political regeneration, in addition to the existence of the Constitutional Court's ruling about the existence of a single candidate. Of course, both the durability of Indonesian democracy and the country's constitutional structure is negatively impacted by this situation.

The results of the previous study showed that the results of vote recapitulation from the three regions of Tangerang Regency, Tangerang City, and Lebak Regency were won by a single candidate dominantly. In contrast, in Makassar City,

the "single candidate" was defeated by an empty box (Ngenget, 2020). In addition, Widhiastini research shows that the socialization carried out by the Bandung General Election Commission is quite complicated; they are very intensive in conducting outreach to maintain voter participation. Caution is needed in conducting socialization so that there is no movement of voters choosing empty columns in the 2020 Bandung City Regional Head Election (Widhiastini, 2020). What is more, Dhesinta research provides an assessment of the undemocratic regional elections with a single candidate in Blitar City, not following the concept of democracy developed by experts; how is the community's ability to elect regional leaders (Dhesinta, 2016).

Furthermore, Prilani research proves that the occurrence of a single candidate in the 2020 regional election for the Kediri Regency was caused by all political parties providing support for one pair of candidates. So, it is challenging for individual candidates to meet the minimum amount of support required (Prilani, 2020). A single candidate is the logical result of ambiguity in the internal candidacy of political parties, according to Damanik analysis (Damanik, 2020). Therefore, Mahardika research demonstrates that winning empty squares in democratic contestation is evidence that the people are weary because the regeneration system in political parties is failing, which is yet another indication that voters do not always support the candidates promoted by all political parties (Mahardika, 2018). Additionally, Asyadi research highlights how challenging it is for independent candidates to meet the criteria, which promotes the growth of a single candidate in concurrent regional elections (Asyadi, 2021).

Numerous analyses of the single-candidate phenomena in regional head elections have been done in connection with earlier studies. However, in practice, the argument over a single candidate is still quite heated because political parties' attempts to avert Pilkada contestation through party renewal and pragmatism have failed. In general, the research on the single-candidate phenomena in regional head elections focuses on how one candidate or pair secures support from every party. Additionally, how challenging it is for independent candidates to participate in the Regional Head Election and how the public views a single candidate in the Regional Head Election. Because studies have yet to be identified on a single candidate in Indonesia's regional head elections that are more focused on the political communication of empty box volunteers, it is necessary to thoroughly examine prior research findings.

1.3.2 Political Communication: Music and Politics

Governments communicate with the public through official statements, speeches, and campaign advertisements (Amin & Ritonga, 2022; Thamrin, 2022). Politics is represented through music in traditional contexts like songs, advertisements, and live performances and typical political contexts like national anthems and party-political broadcasts. Although past study has shown that music can carry political signals, there are differing views on the precise relationship between music and politics (Way, 2019). Much popular music has the propensity to be reflective and parochial in its subject matter (Chornik, 2018). Russia's detention of Pussy Riot, however, demonstrated the influence of music on geopolitics and human rights (Street, 2013).

The findings of earlier research also demonstrate the significance of music in the revolutionary upheavals that toppled Hosni Mubarak's government in Egypt and Bin Ali's regime in Tunisia. The power of society as it competes to assert its identity is reflected in the music. In addition, music, like other kinds of art, may support and further social and political change (LeVine, 2012). Political behavior changed significantly after the Houphouet-Boigny Côte d'Ivoire government, as evidenced by the political discourse in "patriotic" zouglou songs during the Ivory Coast crisis from 2002 to 2007: politics became more populist, nationalism was revived, and public spaces became more active. Additionally, this circumstance demonstrates how a younger generation of political actors is utilizing popular music to engage voters (Schumann, 2013).

One of the least understudied fields of political communication research relates to music and political messages. Voter political education and political behavior, political advertising, political actors, and, more recently, the new impact and usage of social media on interpersonal and group political conversations are the main themes in this field of study (Onyebadi, 2017). At a minimum, Miriam Makeba used her music to promote a political statement opposing apartheid authorities. He created songs and staged performances against apartheid that inspired the downtrodden black population of South Africa to overthrow the Afrikaner ruling class (Onyebadi & Mbunyuza-Memani, 2017). Therefore, understanding the connection between music and politics and the meaning conveyed in music can be improved by studying sociopolitical movements through framing analysis (Way, 2019). Such a study enhances the science of political communication by demonstrating not just what empty box volunteers communicated to the sole candidate for the Humbang Hasundutan (Humbahas) Regional Head Election through a song but also how it was accomplished.

2. Method

Qualitative research methods are used to explore and understand the meaning conveyed by a group of people (Empty Boxes) ascribed to social and political issues (Creswell, 2016). The approach to analyzing political data or messages in music is framing analysis. This approach is appropriate in seeing how empty box volunteers interpret, understand, and frame political messages in music. This method is appropriate for interpreting the meaning of a text from music to

frame an event (Onyebadi, 2018). There are 5 Empty Boxes songs in the Humbang Hasundutan Regional Head Election that were selected and can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of Viewers of the Empty Box Music Video for the 2020 Humbang Hasundutan Regional Head Election

| Song Title/Songwriter | Number of Viewers/1-12-2022 |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Pilih Koko (Kotak Kosong)/ by Stella Nita | 4,1 thousand |
| Kotak Kosong/ by Sikat Pasaribu | 6,9 thousand |
| Kotak Kosong Untuk Demokrasi Humbahas/ by Lasro Sitohang | 8,9 thousand |
| Lagu Kotak Kosong Untuk Humbahas/ by Sabar Sianturi | 1,8 thousand |
| Kotak Kosong/ by Kabar M Manalu | 7,2 thousand |

Source: Youtube

This study employs the framing analysis methodology developed by Gamson and Modigliani. This analysis model, which sees actuality in the media, is widely used. Two devices support framing. First, there is the framing device, which is directly related to the central theme or frame that the media highlights in the text. The metaphors (parables or presuppositions) and catchphrases (interesting, contrasting, noteworthy sentences in a conversation) are characteristics of these devices. Second, reasoning tools, also known as framing devices, are related to the coherence and cohesion of the text and refer to specific ideas, such as roots (cause and effect), appeals to principles (fundamental premises, moral claims), and consequences (outcomes or consequences resulting from the frame) (Eriyanto, 2012).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Mobilization of Political Movements Through Music

The way music is used as a movement to voice democratic life has a significant impact on people's desire to participate in democracy. The relationship between music and democracy is frequently discussed in terms of how music can be used to support specific ideologies or groups in democratic debate, how it can be used to assert democratic rights in non-democratic settings, or how it can provide propaganda symbols for freedom of expression (Payne & Thomas, 2020). Because of this situation, it is possible to raise a variety of verbal movement expressions. According to him, the Humbang Hasundutan (Humbahas) community used music with the "Empty Box" theme as a form of expression to carry out movements against the ruling political elites in the area (Hariansib, 2022).

The campaign shows that the song's "Empty Box" title is the cornerstone for participation in sustaining democracy. In reality, some genres of music serve as the foundation for crucial political communication channels that challenge oppressive political authorities (Gunde & Chikaipa, 2021). The people of Humbang Hasundutan use music to protest the local political establishment and win support for initiatives that promote a perfect democracy. By choosing an empty box, voters can participate effectively in local elections. This decision is essential in the assumption of making changes. Call it the lyrics "Let's uphold democracy, let's just choose an empty box," blatantly leading to distrust with the Regional Head Election with a single Regional Head candidate. Music is part of the effort to promote democracy. As a medium for voicing movements, music attracts people's attention for reasons of preferences, pleasure, and habits in everyday life. Through lyrics, political messages can be channeled properly. As for various problems and conflicts of democracy, music has meaning in democracy; it can act as a mass movement supporting democratic practices or opposing democracy. The context that occurs in the Humbahas community reflects the meaningful music against democracy that belongs to certain elite groups.

Table 2. The Appearance of Framing in the Empty Box Volunteer Song in the 2022 Humbang Hasundutan Regional Head Election

| Framing | Appear | Positive Tone | Negative Tone | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------|--------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Empty Box | 57 | 57 | - | 47,5% |
| Democracy | 10 | 10 | - | 8,3% |
| Change | 17 | 17 | - | 14,1% |
| Political Elite | 9 | - | 9 | 7,5% |
| Party | 9 | - | 9 | 7,5% |
| Leadership | 7 | 5 | 2 | 5,8% |
| Self-regard | 6 | 6 | - | 5% |
| United | 5 | 5 | - | 4,1% |
| Amount | 120 | - | - | 100% |

Source: Data Processed by the author

3.2 Empty Box View as Movement to Change Democracy?

Seeing the emergence of various songs about the Empty Box with various lyrics places various words that are considered as a reason to carry out an empty box action movement, namely "democracy" (see table 2). Democracy is essential in attracting people's attention with various framing. At least three main framings appear in the empty box song lyrics.

Table 3. Song Lyrics Empty Box Against Ideal Democracy

| Song Title/Songwriter | Lyrics | Framing |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Pilih Koko (Kotak Kosong) By: Stella Nita | <i>"Mari kita tegakan demokrasi, kita pilih kota kosong saja", "Mari kita Bersatu demi demokrasi tercinta" "Jayalah Demokrasi mari lakukan perubahan"</i> | Ideal Democracy, Hope/Change, Political Elite/Power |
| Kotak Kosong By: Sikat Pasaribu | <i>"Aspirasi dan demokrasi, kota kosong dijamin undang-undang"</i> | Ideal Democracy |
| Lagu Kotak Kosong Untuk Humbahas By: Sabar Sianturi | <i>"Demokrasi di Indonesia, bebas artinya rahasia."</i> | Ideal Democracy |
| Kotak Kosong By: Kabar M Manalu | <i>"Disini tidak ada unsur sakit hati, kami hanya ingin demokrasi sehat", "Melawan rejim pembungkam demokrasi,"</i> | Ideal Democracy, Political Elite / Power |

Source: Data Processed by the author

First, the idea of an ideal democracy appears to be one of the movement's main goals (Table 3). We share lyrics highlighting several points using democracy as an empty box option. This alternative is considered legitimate and legal to address various criticisms of the growth of diverse democratic practices. Several songs, like "Let's defend democracy, we'll only choose an empty city," "Democracy in Indonesia, free implies secret," and "aspirations and democracy, an empty city is protected by law," emphasize the principles of democracy. Democracy, in this usage, refers to the ability to cast ballots.

Second, Democracy is a movement for change. This assumption arises from the lyrics that openly consider an empty box to be the solution to change both movements and system, which is guaranteed to mention in the lyrics "Long live Democracy, let's make a change," "there is no element of hurt here, we only want healthy democracy," and "Democracy in Indonesia, free means secret." This affirmation strengthens the empty box movement, considered ideal, and breaks various doubts against other parties who suspect them of being a line of hurt feelings (Realitasonline.id, 2020). Third, Democracy is against political elites. This movement is inseparable from the emergence of single-candidate candidates and local political elite groups that dominate the democratic system. This background places the lyrics "Against the regime of silencing democracy" as a firm movement against various silencing of Democracy, such as forcing a single candidate and voting rights sovereignty.

3.3 Expecting Ideal Leadership

The movement's concentration on leadership changes in the Regional Head Elections (Pilkada) became the starting point for the emergence of various resistance movements in the name of empty boxes. The initial emphasis on the legality of the empty city volunteer movement became the basis for guiding and mobilizing the community to determine the ideal candidate for a leader who is an empty box. The empty box represents the single-candidate resistance movement that dominates in regional head elections (Table 4).

Table 4. Empty Box Song Lyrics Against Ideal Leadership

| Song Title/Songwriter | Lyrics | Framing |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Pilih Koko (Kotak Kosong) By: Stella Nita | <i>"Awat jangan salah pilih kita pilih kota kosong saja". "jangan percaya janji manis ayo berubah demi Humbahas"</i> | Suffrage, Leader |
| Kotak Kosong By: Sikat Pasaribu | <i>"kami ingin perubahan Pemimpin baru, harapan baru, visi misimu tabur dusta, Janji Palsu,"</i> | Suffrage, Leader |
| Lagu Kotak Kosong Untuk Humbahas By: Sabar Sianturi | <i>"memilih kepala daerah, yang santun bersahaja, jangan pilih yang serakah" "Bersatu kita menang, Bersatu kita menang, rapatkan barisan, Kotak kosong, kotak kosong yes"</i> | Leadership |
| Kotak Kosong By: Kabar M Manalu | <i>"Kotak kosong pilihan terbaik, untuk kalahkan calon tunggal"</i> | Leader, Regional Electoral System |
| Kotak Kosong Untuk Demokrasi Humbahas By: Lasro Sitohang | <i>"Koko..atau Kotak Kosong. Itulah yang akan kita pilih. Dari sinilah tumbuh tunas baru. Yang akan memimpin Humbang Hasundutan ini"</i> | Leader |

Source: Data Processed by the author

The ability to voice the ideal leader is inseparable from the opinion that current leaders nominate are no better than empty boxes. The lyrics show this condition: "we want changes, new leaders, new hopes, your vision and mission sow lies, false promises." Leader renewal movements are difficult to implement, so placing empty squares is an important part to choose from. The movement against a single candidate can be seen from the effort of the lyrics "Empty box is the best choice, to defeat a single candidate," which not only criticizes the regional election system but the candidate candidates who have led for a long time have had no significant impact. This emphasis can be seen in the lyrics, "choose a regional head, be polite and modest, don't vote for the greedy one."

There is a sense of disappointment and distrust of a single candidate supported by all parties, which is seen as not reflecting an honest leader and defending the people's interests. This argument places the use of several lyrics to lead and direct choosing an empty box as an ideal figure in the Regional Head Election. Although, the end of this resistance put a solution that still raises doubts about the ideal figure of a leader. The hope of a modest leader prioritizes the interests of the people, is honest, fair, and works thoroughly. Become the desired leader in the empty box movement.

3.4 Mass Movement Against Political Elite

Efforts to carry out the empty box movement as a form of resistance to the political elite can be seen through various supports that continue to increase from the community. There is some resistance movement emphasis visible in the lyrics. First is community self-respect; this movement focuses on awareness efforts seen from various development, policy, and performance issues. Self-esteem also drives social issues, which tend to be used as a tool for power to protect the interests of political elites who support their group's movements. This condition gave rise to lyrics such as "but self-esteem doesn't want to be bought, but our self-esteem doesn't want to be suppressed." This awareness encourages community movements to lead to choices towards empty boxes, such as the lyrics "For the sake of our beloved Humbahas, let's choose an empty city." Collective awareness is the key to the movement against the political elite.

Second, the movement against party networks. Each regional head candidate needs a supporting party to become a regional head. Widespread support for a single candidate is inseparable from a strong party network in making decisions. The party elite's support is inseparable from the influence of party representatives in the region. The condition of party networks governed by regulations places parties tending to form coalitions for party power in the region. The difficulty in submitting candidates for Regional Heads outside the party is considered an important starting point for the empty box volunteer movement.

Table 5. Song Lyrics of the Empty Box Against the Political Elite

| Song Title/Songwriter | Lyrics | Framing |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pilih Koko (Kotak Kosong) By: Stella Nita | " <i>Demi Humbahas tercinta ayo kita pilih Kota kosong</i> " | Suffrage |
| Kotak Kosong By: Sikat Pasaribu | " <i>Tetapi harga diri tak mau dibeli, tetapi harga diri kami tak mau ditindas</i> " | Self-regard |
| Lagu Kotak Kosong Untuk Humbahas By: Sabar Sianturi | " <i>Kota kosong pilihan kita, melawan elit partainya</i> " | Political Dowry |
| Kotak Kosong By: Kabar M Manalu | " <i>Melawan rejim pembungkam demokrasi, pemborong partai demi kepentingan</i> ". " <i>Kotak kosong solusi terbaik untuk kabupaten Humbang. Hasudutan</i> ". " <i>Marilah kawan rapatkan barisan, melawan elit politik yang serakah</i> " | Political dowry, Power Elite |
| Kotak Kosong Untuk Demokrasi Humbahas By: Lasro Sitohang | " <i>Dari sinilah si penguasa itu. Di Kabupaten Humbang Hasudutan ini</i> " | Rulers |

Source: Data Processed by the author

For local party elites, party networks are used to mobilize and mobilize a mass of supporters to strengthen and spread influence. The resistance of empty box volunteers is inseparable from the strong party network at the institutional level. This assumption can be seen from some of the lyrics that call for resistance to the party. Calling the lyrics "an empty city of our choice, against the party's elite," these lyrics point to the party's interests that require a "political dowry" when the candidate they are promoting wins the regional election. Other lyrics, such as "Fighting the regime of silencing democracy, buying parties for the sake of interests," emphasize the party's institutional network, which is very powerful in the region. This party network makes leaders prone to intervention to defend their interests. This condition allows policies only to benefit specific groups.

Third, democratic competition efforts. This condition is inseparable from the requirements for nominating Regional Heads, which are so high that it makes alternative (independent) paths difficult and ineffective. Many candidates fail because of the candidate's administrative requirements. One of the best ways is to be supported by the party. However, when the party helps design a single candidate to appear in the people's choice, the empty box becomes an alternative against party

networks to make Regional Head Elections more democratic. Call it the lyrics "for the sake of our beloved Humbahas, let's choose an empty city," "let's close our ranks, fight against greedy political elites," and "empty box is the best solution for Humbang Hansudutan district." These efforts are an alternative to making the democratic process run well.

4. Conclusion

The Empty Box volunteers used several framings of political themes in the Empty Box song to make the Empty Box Democracy issue the primary topic. The background of the empty box song does not place events about the causes and consequences of the political movement of the volunteer "empty box." These three themes—an ideal democracy, democracy as a movement for change, and democracy against political elites are among the political messages that are articulated, framed, highlighted, and spread through the five songs of the empty box volunteers. Expectations for leaders include modesty, putting the needs of the people first, as well as honesty, justice, and hard work. As a long-awaited leader in the empty box volunteer movement.

There is some emphasis on the empty box volunteer movements on political elites, which is evident in the lyrics. First is community self-respect; this movement focuses on awareness efforts seen from various development, policy, and performance issues. Second, the movement against party networks. Widespread support for a single candidate is inseparable from a strong party network in making decisions. Third, democratic competition efforts. This condition is inseparable from the requirements for nominating regional heads that are so high that it makes alternative (independent) paths challenging to occur and ineffective because of the difficulty in the administrative requirements of candidates. Recommendations for future research are essential to look at an actor's motives in creating lyrics by emphasizing choosing an empty box and the psychological impact of someone listening to music on the political discourse of a single candidate in the Regional Head election.

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