

## Leadership Analysis in Regional Head Elections in Indonesia: Implementation of Contemporary and Islamic Leadership Theory

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper discusses the implementation of various leadership theories in the context of regional head elections (Pilkada) in Indonesia and the challenges faced, such as the practice of money politics. Using the literature study method, this research analyzes transformational, transactional, situational, service, and participatory leadership theories, as well as their relevance in regional head elections. The results show that the application of transformational and service leadership theories can increase voter support and build trust in the community. However, fraudulent practices such as money politics still pose a serious threat to election integrity. The conclusion of this study confirms the importance of applying positive leadership theories to achieve better democracy in Indonesia, while recommending measures to overcome the existing challenges.

**KEYWORDS:** Leadership Theory, Regional Head Elections, Money Politics, Democracy, Indonesia.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the implementation of simultaneous regional elections regulated in Law Number 8 of 2015 concerning General Elections and strengthened by Law Number 10 of 2016 concerning Regional Elections, the process of regional head elections in Indonesia has undergone significant changes. This law regulates the simultaneous implementation of regional elections in all regions for cost efficiency, time, and to increase community participation. Law No. 10/2016 also emphasizes the importance of integrity and fairness in the election process, and provides technical guidelines on the implementation and supervision of Pilkada. However, despite efforts to equalize these processes, fraudulent practices and money politics are still rife, potentially undermining election outcomes and public trust in democracy. Setiyawan (2020) asserts that, "The existence of money politics and fraud in local elections is a major challenge that must be overcome to maintain the credibility of elections."

Regional head elections (Pilkada) in Indonesia are one of the important pillars in the democratic system that serves to increase community participation in determining local leaders. However, the implementation of Pilkada in Indonesia often faces various problems, such as money politics, low voter turnout, and fraudulent practices that disrupt the integrity of the electoral process. Fraudulent acts, such as vote manipulation, voter data falsification, and intimidation of voters, pose serious challenges for prospective leaders in creating an image and gaining support from the community. As stated by Riswan (2019), "Fraudulent practices in Pilkada are a major obstacle in realizing quality democracy."

In this context, leadership theory plays a crucial role in understanding the dynamics of local elections. Theories such as transformational theory, which emphasizes inspiration and motivation, transactional theory, which focuses on exchange and outcomes, and situational leadership theory, which adapts leadership style to the situation at hand, offer different perspectives in developing campaign strategies. In addition, values-based leadership and participatory leadership theories also provide important insights into how candidates can build better relationships with their constituents. According to Bass and Avolio (1994), "Transformational leadership can bring about significant changes in the behavior and attitudes of followers, which is particularly important in the context of elections."

By understanding and implementing these various leadership theories, regional head candidates can not only increase their chances of victory, but also contribute to improving the quality of local democracy in Indonesia. Through this study, it is expected to reveal how leadership theories can be integrated in candidates' campaign strategies, as well as the challenges that may be faced, including fraudulent practices that disrupt the electoral process. An in-depth understanding of these theories can serve as a foundation for candidate leaders and political parties in designing effective strategies to attract voter support and overcome the various problems that exist in Pilkada.

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## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership in the context of regional head elections (Pilkada) in Indonesia is an interesting topic to research, especially when examined from the perspective of leadership theory and Islamic values. Various leadership theories, such as transformational, transactional, and situational theories, provide a framework for understanding how leaders can influence their followers in the context of local politics (Northouse, 2018). These theories emphasize the importance of vision, communication and interpersonal relationships in building effective leadership.

In the Islamic context, leadership is not only seen from the managerial aspect, but also from the moral and ethical values contained in Islamic teachings. The concept of leadership in Islam, as explained by Al-Ghazali (2005), emphasizes justice, trust, and social responsibility. Ideal leaders in the Islamic perspective are those who are able to integrate spiritual values with daily leadership practices, so as to create a just and prosperous society.

Research by Rahman (2020) shows that leaders who adopt Islamic values in their leadership tend to be more accepted by the community, especially in the context of regional elections. This is due to the community's expectation of leaders who are not only technically competent, but also have moral integrity. In addition, research by Sari (2021) emphasizes that leadership based on Islamic values can increase community participation in the democratic process, as people feel more connected to leaders who have visions and missions that are in line with religious teachings.

Furthermore, research by Hidayat (2022) revealed that effective leadership in the context of Pilkada also requires the ability to adapt to existing social and political dynamics. Leaders who are able to understand and respond well to community needs will be more successful in attracting voter support. In this case, an inclusive and participatory leadership approach becomes very important, where leaders not only function as decision-makers, but also as facilitators who listen to the aspirations of the community.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, the method used is a literature study, which is a systematic approach to collecting and analyzing information from various literature sources. Researchers carefully collected data from a variety of sources, including scientific journals, reference books, and official documents relevant to leadership theory and the implementation of Regional Head Elections (Pilkada) in Indonesia (Mulyana, 2020; Supriyadi, 2021). This data collection process aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic under study.

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative approach, which allowed researchers to explore in depth the application of leadership theory in the context of the Pilkada campaign. Through this analysis, researchers sought to identify patterns, themes, and relationships that emerged from the literature data, as well as understand how leadership theory is applied in the practice of political campaigns at the local level (Hidayat, 2022). Thus, this research focuses not only on data collection, but also on interpretation and a deeper understanding of the dynamics of leadership in Pilkada in Indonesia.

## 4. THEORETICAL BASIS OF STUDY

### 4.1. Leadership Theory in Worldly concept

Leadership is a complex phenomenon that has been the focus of research across various disciplines, including psychology, sociology, and management. Numerous leadership theories have been developed to understand how leaders influence followers and achieve organizational goals. Among the most globally influential leadership theories are:

#### 4.1.1 Trait Theory

This theory emphasizes specific characteristics or traits possessed by effective leaders. Early research in this area sought to identify traits such as intelligence, self-confidence, and communication skills that distinguish leaders from followers (Stogdill, 1948). While the theory provides insight into desirable leadership qualities, critics argue that no single set of traits guarantees leadership success in all contexts.

#### 4.1.2. Behavioural Theory

Behavioural theory focuses on the actions and behaviours of leaders rather than their traits. Two key approaches within this theory are the Ohio State and Michigan approaches. The Ohio State approach identifies two main dimensions: consideration (concern for people) and initiating structure (task orientation) (Fleishman, 1953). The Michigan approach highlights employee-oriented and production-oriented leadership styles (Kahn & Katz, 1953). This theory suggests that leaders can be trained to develop effective leadership skills.

#### 4.1.3. Contingency Theory

Contingency theory, as developed by Fiedler (1967), posits that no single leadership style is universally effective. Instead, a leader's effectiveness depends on the alignment between their leadership style and the specific situation. Fiedler's Contingency Model considers factors such as leader-follower relationships, task structure, and leader power. This theory highlights the importance of flexibility in leadership.

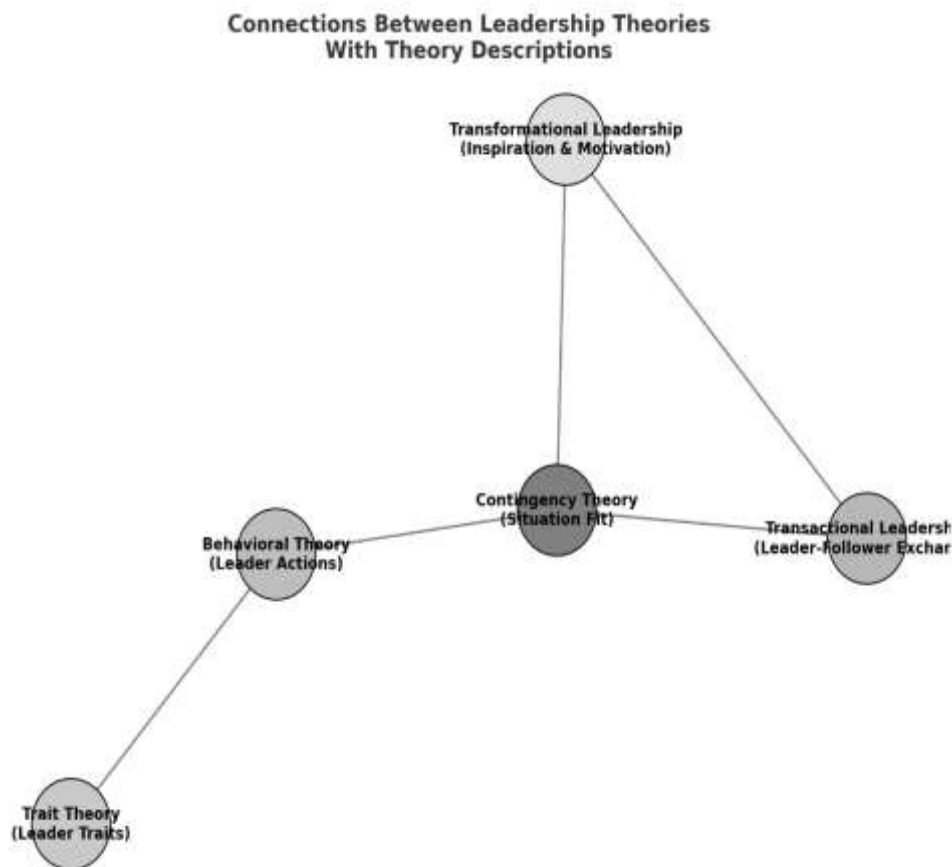
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## 4.1.4. Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership theory, popularized by Bass (1985), emphasizes a leader's ability to inspire and motivate followers to achieve higher goals. Transformational leaders focus on follower development, create compelling visions, and foster strong relationships. This theory suggests that leaders who can shift the values and beliefs of their followers can bring about significant organizational change.

## 4.1.5. Transactional Leadership Theory

In contrast to transformational leadership, transactional leadership theory centres on the exchange between leaders and followers. Transactional leaders reward or discipline followers based on their performance (Bass, 1985). This theory underscores the importance of structure and supervision in achieving organizational objectives. While effective in certain contexts, it is often viewed as less inspiring compared to transformational leadership.



The picture 1 illustrates the connections between key leadership theories. Each theory is represented as a node, and the arrows indicate their relationships and influences. For example, Trait Theory connects to Behavioral Theory, reflecting how leader traits influence actions, while Contingency Theory links to both Transformational and Transactional Leadership, emphasizing its role in adapting leadership styles to various contexts

## 4.2. Leadership Theory in Islamic Perspective

Leadership in Islam is deeply rooted in principles of accountability, justice, service, and moral integrity. Unlike secular leadership theories that may prioritize results or efficiency above all else, Islamic leadership emphasizes holistic development, balancing material and spiritual objectives to benefit both individuals and communities. Below is a discussion of how Islamic principles align or contrast with established leadership theories:

### 4.2.1. Trait Theory and Islamic Leadership

The Trait Theory, which emphasizes the characteristics of a leader, finds partial resonance with Islamic teachings. Islam encourages leaders to possess qualities such as:

- Taqwa (piety): Consciousness of God ensures moral and ethical behavior.
- Amanah (trustworthiness): Leaders are stewards who are entrusted with responsibility.
- Adl (justice): Ensuring fairness and equity is a central duty of a leader.

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Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) exemplified these traits, emphasizing humility, honesty, and compassion, which are timeless attributes for effective leadership. However, unlike Trait Theory's argument that certain traits inherently make a leader successful, Islam asserts that personal development and adherence to divine principles are critical.

### 4.2.2. Behavioural Theory and Islamic Leadership

Islam aligns strongly with Behavioural Theory, which focuses on a leader's actions rather than inherent traits. In the Islamic context, a leader is judged by their ability to Serve their community (*khidmah*), Make decisions through consultation (*shura*), and Lead by example (*uswatun hasanah*), as demonstrated by Prophet Muhammad's exemplary conduct. The Qur'an encourages actions that reflect ethical leadership:

"Indeed, the best of you is the one who is most beneficial to others." (Hadith, Sahih al-Bukhari). This emphasizes servant leadership, where leaders act in the best interest of their followers.

### 4.2.3. Contingency Theory and Islamic Leadership

The Contingency Theory, which suggests that leadership success depends on the alignment between a leader's style and the situation, finds parallels in Islamic principles of adaptability and pragmatism. Islamic history is replete with examples of leaders adapting their leadership styles to different circumstances. For instance:

- During peace, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) exemplified negotiation and inclusion (e.g., Treaty of *Hudaybiyyah*).
- In times of war, he adopted a more assertive and strategic leadership approach.

This flexibility underscores that leadership in Islam is context-sensitive but always grounded in ethical principles.

### 4.2.4. Transformational Leadership and Islamic Leadership

The Transformational Leadership Theory, which focuses on inspiring and motivating followers, aligns well with the Islamic leadership model. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) motivated his followers not only through words but also through actions, instilling in them a sense of higher purpose and self-accountability to Allah. Core aspects of Islamic transformational leadership include:

- Visionary Leadership: Creating a compelling vision aligned with divine objectives.
- Empowerment: Encouraging personal growth and moral excellence.
- Accountability: Leaders and followers are equally accountable to Allah (Qur'an 33:72).

The ultimate goal of Islamic transformational leadership is not only organizational success but also spiritual elevation.

### 4.2.5. Transactional Leadership and Islamic Leadership

While Transactional Leadership, which emphasizes rewards and punishments, may appear less aligned with the Islamic ethos, it has its place in the context of shari'ah (Islamic law). Leaders are expected to enforce justice, reward good behavior, and deter wrongdoing. However, Islam encourages leaders to balance transactional aspects with compassion and understanding. For example, the Qur'an commands justice but also encourages forgiveness where appropriate in Qur'an 5:8. The Qur'an also reminded leaders not to exploit their authority for personal gain (Qur'an 2:188).

## 5. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1. Leadership Theory in the context of Indonesia Regional Election

Leadership theory plays an important role in understanding the dynamics of local elections in Indonesia. In this context, various leadership theory approaches can be used to analyze how local leaders interact with communities and influence election outcomes.

In the Indonesian context, cultural and religious values also influence the way leadership is understood and applied. Research by Rahman (2020) shows that leaders who integrate local and religious values in their campaigns tend to be more accepted by the community. This shows that leadership in Pilkada does not only rely on universal leadership theories, but must also consider specific social and cultural contexts.

Leadership theory in the context of regional elections in Indonesia includes various approaches that complement each other in accordance with the development of political dynamics in Indonesia. This study found that from various perspectives of existing leadership theories, in the context of Regional Head Elections in Indonesia, the most relevant leadership theories applied are:

#### 5.1.1. Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership theory is one of the most relevant approaches in the context of regional head elections in Indonesia. This theory emphasizes the leader's ability to inspire and motivate his or her constituents with a clear vision and collective goals. According to Bass (1985), "Transformational leadership is the process by which leaders encourage followers to exceed their self-interest to achieve a common goal." In the context of Pilkada, regional head candidates who are able to convey a vision and mission that is attractive and relevant to the needs of the community will be better able to attract voter support.

This approach is important given that voters are often emotionally involved in choosing candidates. When candidates can inspire a sense of confidence and hope, they will tend to follow them. For example, candidates who promote social and developmental issues can increase public confidence and momentum of support.

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### **5.1.2. Servant Leadership Theory**

Service leadership theory, introduced by Robert K. Greenleaf, emphasizes that leaders should serve others first. Greenleaf (1970) states, "True leaders are those who place the interests of others above self-interest." In the context of Pilkada, the application of this theory can help regional head candidates in building better relationships with voters, because it focuses on how they can meet the needs and expectations of the community. Candidates who adopt service leadership tend to prioritize transparency and community engagement, creating stronger bonds with voters. It also sets a good example in improving ethics in politics, which is crucial to improving the image of democracy in Indonesia.

### **5.1.3. Participative Leadership Theory**

Participative leadership theory emphasizes the importance of involving followers in the decision-making process. Based on research by Vroom and Yetton (1973), "Participatory decision-making can increase the sense of belonging among followers and lead to greater commitment to the decisions taken." In the context of Pilkada, regional head candidates who involve the community in formulating programs and policies can increase the level of voter participation and support. This approach creates an inclusive atmosphere and strengthens people's sense of responsibility for the outcome of the election. When people feel involved in the process, they are more likely to support the candidate.

### **5.1.4. Situational Leadership Theory**

Situational leadership theory, developed by Hersey and Blanchard, focuses on adapting leadership styles to the specific conditions and needs at hand. According to Hersey and Blanchard (1982), "Effective leadership depends on the situation, and successful leaders are those who can adapt to the demands of the situation." In Pilkada, regional head candidates need to understand the social and political context in their respective regions to formulate appropriate campaign strategies. By adapting their leadership style based on the needs of the voters, candidates can create better communication, faster response to local issues, and more loyal followers.

## **5.2. Money Politic in Indonesia Regional Election**

Money politics refers to the practice of using money and financial resources to influence potential voters in the context of elections. In the implementation of regional head elections (Pilkada) in Indonesia, money politics often appears in the form of giving cash, goods, or political promises that are not related to a clear program. This practice tends to undermine the integrity and quality of democracy, and leads to an untransparent and unaccountable government (Rizki, 2019).

Money politics not only impacts the integrity of elections, but can also affect the quality of elected leaders. One significant impact of this practice is the formation of a "vote-buying culture," where voters assume that their votes can be bought, thus creating a pragmatic attitude in voting. According to Setiyawan (2020), "The practice of money politics often leads to irrational choices, where voters no longer consider the vision and mission of candidates, but rather the rewards offered."

Another impact of money politics is the decline in public trust in the democratic process. People who witness this practice become skeptical of the integrity of the candidates involved and the democratic process as a whole. When people see money politics being practiced openly, it can undermine their expectations of good and responsible leaders. Some of the factors that cause the practice of money politics in Pilkada in Indonesia include: Economic Instability: Economic downturns make people more vulnerable to financial offers. In difficult situations, voters tend to opt for immediate rewards rather than considering the long-term consequences of their choices.

- Lack of Political Education: People's lack of understanding about their rights and the function and impact of their votes provides room for the practice of money politics. "Weak political education among voters helps strengthen the position of the perpetrators of money politics" (Kurniawan, 2021).
- Culture of Corruption: Corruption that is ingrained in the political environment makes the practice of money politics feel 'normal' and accepted in the electoral process. Research results show that "Systemic corruption at the local level is often the main driver for the implementation of money politics in Pilkada" (Sari, 2019).

Until now, the practice of money politics in elections in Indonesia has been very real but cannot be proven, as stated by the chairman of the General Elections Commission (KPU) RI Hasyim Asy'ari about the obstacles to proving money politics in elections. According to him, finding evidence of money politics is one of the difficult things. (detik.com2022).

In research conducted by Prof. Burhanuddin Muhtadi, M.Ag., Ph.D Professor of Political Science at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP) UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta who conducted research on money politics found that one type of electoral manipulation that occurs in many new democracies including Indonesia is the practice of buying and selling votes. Based on his research, around 33% or 62 million of the total 187 million voters included in the permanent election data in 2014 were involved in money politics. Likewise in 2019, the total survey respondents who answered "very often, often, and rarely" reached 33.1%, exactly the same as the findings in 2014.

In this case, voters who are sympathizers are the main target of money politics and account for 15% of the total electorate, while the other 85% are swing voters. The survey also shows that money politics operators come from all parties. Vote-buying

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strategies only influence the choice of 10% of voters, which is more than enough for a candidate to win an election. The average margin of victory to defeat a rival in an election is only 1.6%. So, (10%) can make the difference between a winning and losing candidate. At least a third of voters or one in three voters in Indonesia admitted to having been directly targeted by money politics in the 2014 and 2019 elections.

This proportion makes Indonesia the third country with the highest level of money politics in the world. In his research, Prof. Burhan explained the need for a comprehensive evaluation of the electoral system from open proportional to closed proportional. To reduce clientelistic practices and encourage programmatic politics, Indonesia needs to shift to party-based electoral competition, thus reducing the use of vote buying to obtain personal votes. Untuk mengatasi permasalahan politik uang dalam Pilkada, beberapa langkah yang dapat diambil antara lain:

- Political Education to the Community: Increase public awareness of voter rights and the importance of resisting money politics through systematic political education campaigns.
- Strict Monitoring: Increased supervision by the General Election Commission (KPU) and other oversight institutions to detect and prevent money politics during the campaign.
- Law Enforcement: Applying stricter sanctions against perpetrators of money politics to provide a deterrent effect. "Consistent and transparent law enforcement is the key to reducing this deviant practice" (Mulyana, 2022).

### 6. STUDY CASE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF LEADERSHIP THEORY IN REGIONAL ELECTION IN DKI JAKARTA

The 2017 DKI Jakarta Regional Head Election (Pilkada) became one of the key moments in Indonesia's political history. This election not only involves competition between various candidates, but also raises a variety of complex social issues, including race, religion, and money politics. In this context, leadership theory becomes crucial to analyze how regional head candidates influence voters and what impact they have on the election results.

#### 6.1. Candidate and Leadership Theory

In the 2017 DKI Jakarta elections, there are several main candidates, including:

- Anies Baswedan: A candidate promoted by a large coalition of political parties. Anies uses a transformational leadership approach by putting forward a vision to bring Jakarta into a better city through populist programs. He often raises issues of social justice in his campaigns, which is able to attract public sympathy.
- Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok): An incumbent candidate known for his transactional leadership style. Ahok is known to be firm and direct, and often addresses public issues with concrete steps. He used a more pragmatic approach in his campaign, emphasizing the achievements made during his term and promising the continuation of these programs.
- Sandiaga Uno: As Anies' deputy, Sandi focused on job creation and economic development. He adopted a situational leadership approach, tailoring his message to the needs of diverse communities.

#### 6.2. Implementation of Leadership Theory in Regional Election In DKI Jakarta

##### - Transformational Leadership

Anies Baswedan successfully utilized transformational leadership theory by inspiring people through a strong narrative of change. He was able to mobilize the masses with moving speeches, and engage the community in formulating a vision of Jakarta going forward. As stated by Bass (1985), "Transformational leadership encourages followers to exceed their self-interest to achieve common goals." In this context, Anies managed to get closer to voters by emphasizing the values of togetherness and social justice.

##### - Transactional Leadership

In contrast, Ahok's transactional approach focused more on the results and achievements made during his tenure. He succeeded in attracting pragmatic voters, who prioritize real achievements over political promises. Ahok is known for a leadership style that does not hesitate to solve problems despite having to deal with differences of opinion. According to Tuchman (1996), "Transactional leadership emphasizes conditions in which leaders motivate followers with offers of rewards."

##### - Situational Leadership

Sandiaga Uno adopts a situational leadership style. He is able to tailor his approach according to the demographics and needs of different voters. He focused on economic issues, which were particularly relevant to the lower middle class community, and sought to reach out to groups that felt marginalized. Hersey and Blanchard (1982) state that "Effective leadership depends on the situation and the needs of the followers." This approach allowed Sandi to interact with different groups of people and design messages that fit local conditions.

The 2017 DKI Jakarta elections ended with Anies Baswedan's victory. This reflects the effectiveness of the application of transformational leadership theory in motivating and mobilizing voters to vote for a candidate with a vision of change. The use of sensitive issues such as identity, togetherness, and social justice succeeded in embracing votes from various groups. On the other

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hand, despite Ahok's significant achievements during his tenure, his transactional leadership style and firmness in addressing criticism caused him to lose support from some of the more emotional voters.

### 7. WHAT CAN WE LEARN FOR FUTURE CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA LEADERSHIP FOR NATIONAL ELECTION

Future leadership in Indonesia's national elections must be visionary and transformational, with leaders who can inspire national unity and address critical issues such as sustainable development, digital transformation, and global competitiveness. A strong commitment to democratic integrity is essential, requiring efforts to combat money politics, electoral fraud, and political patronage while strengthening institutions that oversee fair elections.

The increasing role of technology in politics calls for digitalization and smart campaigning, where leaders effectively use digital platforms for voter engagement, governance, and combating misinformation. Inclusive and participatory governance should also be a priority, ensuring that policies reflect the needs of all citizens, including marginalized communities.

Ethical and accountable leadership is crucial in tackling corruption and maintaining public trust. Strengthening anti-corruption institutions and fostering a culture of integrity in politics will be key to long-term national progress. Additionally, leadership development programs must be implemented to train future politicians in essential skills such as political communication, crisis management, and ethical governance.

Indonesia's diversity must be seen as a strength rather than a challenge. Future leaders should promote national identity and unity, ensuring that policies bridge social, ethnic, and religious divides. Lastly, adaptability to global economic and geopolitical shifts will be necessary for maintaining Indonesia's competitiveness on the world stage. By embracing these principles, Indonesia can cultivate a new generation of ethical, innovative, and inclusive leaders.

### CONCLUSION

The application of leadership theories such as transformational, service, participatory, and situational can provide a competitive advantage for regional head candidates in Pilkada in Indonesia. Leaders who are able to inspire, build trust, and involve the community in the decision-making process will be more successful in attracting voter support. In addition, these strategies can also help improve the image of democracy and enhance the quality of elections in the country.

Money politics is a serious problem in Indonesian elections, which can threaten the quality of democracy and the integrity of elections. The collective efforts of the government, watchdog institutions and the public are essential to counter this practice and create a fairer and more integrity electoral process.

The case study of the 2017 DKI Jakarta elections shows how important it is to apply leadership theory in a political context. The approach used by Anies Baswedan illustrates how transformational leadership can inspire and mobilize support, while transactional and situational approaches show different ways of attracting voters. The results of this election provide valuable lessons for future regional head candidates on the importance of understanding community dynamics and tailoring leadership styles to the needs of constituents.

### RECOMMENDATION

Based on an analysis of various leadership theories and observations of regional elections (Pilkada) practices in Indonesia, here are several recommendations for regional head candidates:

- **Developing an Inspiring Vision:** Candidates need to establish a clear and inspiring vision that can mobilize voters. This vision should be based on the needs of the community and focus on relevant issues such as social, economic, and environmental development. Transformational leadership should be leveraged to create a compelling narrative, ignite enthusiasm, and encourage active public participation.
- **Implementing Servant Leadership:** Regional head candidates are advised to adopt the principles of servant leadership in their campaigns. This includes a commitment to serving the community, listening to their aspirations, and prioritizing public interests over personal interests. Building this culture of service can strengthen the relationship between leaders and constituents while enhancing public trust.
- **Political Education and Awareness:** Enhancing political education programs for the public is essential, especially at the local level. Voter groups should be provided with a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities, the function of elections, and the impact of their votes.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Transparency and accountability in campaigns and resource management are essential. Regional head candidates must commit to providing clear information about their programs, funding sources, and how funds are utilized. Involving the public in monitoring efforts will build trust and strengthen the connection between voters and candidates.

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- **Utilizing Technology in Campaigns:** Optimizing the use of information and communication technology in campaigns will enhance the reach and effectiveness of the messages conveyed. Social media can serve as an excellent platform for direct interaction with voters, promoting programs, and listening to public aspirations.
- **Community Engagement in Decision-Making:** Regional head candidates should adopt a participatory leadership approach by involving the community in policy and program formulation.
- **Strict Law Enforcement:** In addressing money politics and electoral fraud, firm and fair law enforcement is essential. Candidates and political parties must commit to rejecting money politics and supporting a clean electoral system..
- **Leadership Training for Candidates:** Political parties and non-governmental organizations can develop leadership training programs for aspiring leaders. This training should include communication skills development, conflict management, decision-making, and an understanding of ethics in politics..

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