

Political Participation of Disability Communities in Makassar Mayor Election 2018

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journal.mengeja.id/index.php/JGPI/indexRafika Abrianti Nusdin¹, Nuryanti Mustari , Fatmawati, Ahmad Taufik

Abstract

This study aims to determine the political participation of people with disabilities in the general election of the mayor of Makassar in 2018 and to determine the factors supporting and inhibiting political participation of people with disabilities in the election of the mayor of Makassar. The type of research is descriptive qualitative, which describes the political participation of people with disabilities in the general election of the mayor of Makassar in 2018 descriptively. The data collection techniques used are observation, interviews, and documentation. In this study, there were ten primary informants. Data analysis techniques by analyzing the results of the processed data are interpreted in the form of narration. While the validation of the data using triangulation. The results showed that the participation of people with disabilities in the Makassar mayoral election in 2018 was quite good because their participation was increasing from year to year. The supporting factors of political participation are the community environment and political awareness, and the completeness of the ballot. At the same time, the inhibiting factor is the lack of relevant data regarding the number of people with disabilities who take part in the election.

Keywords

disability; elections; political participation

Introduction

Political participation is the activity of ordinary citizens in influencing the process of making and implementing public policies and determining government leaders ([Nur Wardhani, 2018](#)). The actions referred to include, among others, submitting a criticism, correction of an implementation of a general policy, and supporting or opposing certain candidate leaders. Political participation is the activity of a person or group of people to actively participate in political activities as a form of openness in democracy ([Lowndes, Pratchett, & Stoker, 2006](#); [Teorell, Torcal, & Montero, 2007](#)). Political participation is also called one of the essential aspects of democracy. Therefore, political participation is the activity of citizens who act as individuals intended to influence decisions by the government ([Yustiningrum, Emilia, Ichwanuddin, & Wawan, 2015](#)). Participation will be easier to increase with the help of electronics in socializing the importance of politics ([Whiteley, 2014](#)).

The assumption that underlies democracy and participation is that people who know what is suitable for themselves are the people themselves ([Hartaman, Purwaningsih, & Nurmandi, 2020](#)). Because political decisions made and implemented by the government involve and affect the lives of citizens, the community has the right to participate in determining the content of political decisions ([Leo, 2007](#)). Elections are a decisive event for the Indonesian people's ongoing sovereignty and political battles between political party candidates to win the people's vote ([Habibi & Suswanta, 2019](#)). Elections aim to determine the division of legislative and executive seats in the government of the Republic of Indonesia. The implementation of elections, both legislative and presidential elections, must uphold the principle of equality so that there is no discrimination for persons with disabilities who have political rights in these elections ([Setiawan, 2014](#)). Persons with disabilities often do not get good

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treatment in providing the right to use their votes in elections ([Goggin & Wadiwel, 2014](#); [Sackey, 2015](#)). In the political contestation of persons with disabilities, it is a challenge for the organizers because they must pay special attention to exercise their right to vote ([Pitts, 2012](#); [Shields, Schriener, & Schriener, 1998](#)).

When the mayoral election took place in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, voters from people with disabilities encountered several obstacles. The Braille templates or voting aids for voters with visual impairments provided by the election organizers caused some confusion. The braille numbering system does not read well when voters use it. The deaf and mute also have several experiences that show how electoral procedures ignore their needs or interests. No one provided a sign language interpreter at the meeting when the campaign for the mayoral and deputy mayoral candidates has intensely campaigned through the mass media. Not to mention the Election Manual and all information related to the duties and functions of the General Election Commission (Indonesian: Komisi Pemilihan Umum, abbreviated as KPU) and the Election Supervisory Body (Indonesian: Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum, abbreviated as Bawaslu) to their staff who are still ignorant of the needs of voters with disabilities such as the deaf and speech impaired.

Makassar City itself has just issued a Regional Regulation that guarantees the fulfillment of the fundamental rights of persons with disabilities after the Draft Regional Regulation on disability proposed by the Indonesian Association of Persons with Disabilities in 2009. The Makassar Regional People's Representative Council in 2013, which is now a Regional Regulation Number 6 of 2013, concerning the fulfillment of the rights of persons with disabilities ([Karim, 2018](#)). For people with disabilities in 2018 in Makassar City, based on what was released by the KPU, it reached 2,250 people consisting of; 1,794 people with physical disabilities, 242 people with mental disabilities, and 214 people with physical and mental disabilities (multiple).

Makassar City is one of the regions with a disability community with a permanent voter list for the Makassar City Election, determined by matching and research on the General Election Potential Population Data (Indonesian: Daftar Penduduk Potensial Pemilih Pemilihan, abbreviated as DP4) 1,508,154 people have disability category voters. Data obtained from the Makassar City KPU, the number of people with disabilities who have the right to vote is only a fraction of the total DPT, namely 1,226 people. The provision of guarantees for the participation of people with disabilities is still spatial. It is limited to the regulation of technical implementing instruments, such as KPU Regulation Number 3 of 2009 concerning Technical Guidelines for Voting and Counting Votes at Polling Stations in the general elections for a legislative member, members of Regional Representative Council (Indonesian: Dewan Perwakilan Daerah, abbreviated as DPD) Provincial and Regency/City; and KPU Regulation No. 29 of 2009 concerning Technical Guidelines for the Implementation of Voting and Counting Votes for the Presidential and Vice Presidential Elections.

Indonesia has ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and so far, the parliament is discussing a Draft Law on Disability. Although the KPU implemented the regulation in ensuring that persons with disabilities can vote in the elections, in reality, their political rights are still underestimated. The low awareness and knowledge of the electoral system, stages, and mechanisms have resulted in the voting rights of persons with disabilities being vulnerable to manipulation ([Dewi & Parasatya, 2019](#)).

The KPU of Makassar City promised the accessibility of Polling Stations (Indonesian: Tempat Pemungutan Suara, abbreviated as TPS) for people with disabilities or people with disabilities during the election voting. Makassar City KPU will also make every effort to ensure the implementation of the mayoral election with access for voters with disabilities. All technical obstacles will be encountered and resolved tactically. Based on the description above regarding the participation of people with disabilities, researchers are confident and interested in knowing how much involvement of people with disabilities in the election of Mayor in Makassar City.

Methods

The research used in this research is a qualitative descriptive research type. Qualitative descriptive research is limited to efforts to reveal a problem or the actual state of events. It reveals facts and provides an objective picture of the actual state of the object under study ([Creswell & Creswell, 2017](#)). Data collection techniques used are observation, interviews, and documentation. In this study, In-depth interviews were conducted with ten informants, including those from the general election commission and persons with disabilities. Data analysis techniques by analyzing the results of the processed data are interpreted in the form of narration. Meanwhile, this study uses triangulation. Testing the credibility of data is done by directly checking the data to the research core data source to get a valid conclusion.

Result and Discussion

Political Participation of Disability

Most countries in the world use elections as a means of democracy, including Indonesia, which tends to have a heterogeneous society. All parties have to be accommodating everyone through general elections, including people with disabilities, what they want and aspire to realize a better life. The general election for mayoral candidates and deputy mayor candidates is the first step in forming a just, prosperous, prosperous society, having freedom of expression and the will to gain access to the fulfillment of their rights as citizens. Political awareness of citizens is a determining factor in the political participation of people with disabilities. That related to knowledge and awareness of their rights and obligations. It becomes the measure and level of a person involved in the process of political participation ([Galston, 2001](#); [Zaller, 1990](#)).

There were some reasons for political participation or someone doing political activities—first, rational reasons, namely reasons based on rational acceptance of the values of a group. Second, namely adequate emotional reasons, the reasons based on hatred or joy for an idea, organization, party, or individual. Third, traditional reasons are based on accepting individual behavioral norms or certain traditions of social groups. Fourth, rational instrumental reasons are based on economic profit and loss calculations ([Subekti, 2014](#)). For people with disabilities, the opportunity to participate in the general election of candidates for Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Makassar City is undoubtedly significant because this will be an example for other people with disabilities who are reluctant to participate in increasing political participation of people with disabilities.

1. Organizational Activities

Involvement in political organizations is very important for people with disabilities because they can help in increasing the results of the vote and even winning the election of one candidate for mayor and candidate for Deputy Mayor of Makassar. To determine the political participation of persons with disabilities is through organizational activities or forming or joining existing social organizations or particular organizations for persons with disabilities. The goal is to increase the knowledge of the disabled community about the importance of participating in the Makassar Mayor election.

Community involvement in political organizations is crucial, where the participation of the community in an organization can realize the rights of people with disabilities and further increase public knowledge about the awareness of the importance of using their voting rights. It can also help increase voting results and even win one of the candidates for Mayor of Makassar. Many community organization activities, including people with disabilities who do not understand political organizations, and many people have not been involved. It is increasingly rare for people with disabilities to join even though they consider it important. Still, one of the reasons is the lack of accessibility of political parties to people with disabilities. It makes them not actively involved in the activities of the disability community.

In the activities of political organizations, the involvement of the disabled community can make it easier for political interests to be realized, and community participation in political parties is very important. In addition to increasing public understanding in political organizations, the disability

community also has the opportunity to express their aspirations for democratic activities in the election of mayors. The level of involvement of people with disabilities in organizational activities in the environment, community, and political organizations shows that they are more passive in expressing their opinions directly. They do not have the knowledge and skills to express opinions, which is an obstacle due to their physical limitations, so they choose not to be involved in any organization.

2. Lobby Activities (Engage in Campaign)

Lobby activity is a communication activity carried out by individuals or groups to influence a person's choice to win one of the candidates he will choose later. The election of the Mayor of Makassar is one of the activities on the agenda, namely the election campaign, which is often referred to as the campaign. A campaign is an activity that aims to introduce or convince voters to choose a candidate for a particular mayoral pair. In this case, the teams of candidates who register in the election will as much as possible attract the attention of the voters to get to know the prospective mayor. They also try to draw sympathy from the voters to participate in the mayoral election. Candidate pairs, in general, will not infrequently use creative ideas to extreme action in attracting sympathy from the public. The campaign participants themselves are the general public and include people with disabilities.

The campaign process was carried out by one of the successful teams for prospective mayoral candidates. He introduced the mayoral pair through various communication channels. In contrast, the communication channel carried out was to provide direct socialization to people with disabilities. It introduces and explains the multiple visions and missions that would be achieved from the prospective candidates and advertisements on television and radio to get to know potential candidates from various available facilities. To convince people with disabilities, it is not uncommon for the success team to give political promises to the community, thus making the community more interested in choosing the partner for participation. The involvement of the disabled community in the mayoral campaign is still lacking. Live. Not infrequently, people with disabilities know about potential candidates through the closest people such as friends, family, and several media. Although they are not directly involved in the campaign, they can also get to know some candidates through their immediate environment.

From the analysis of interviews with research informants, it can conclude that people with disabilities are less active in campaign activities due to the lack of friendly access in campaign activities, the form of people's party campaigns, the participation of persons with disabilities. There are still many people who do not know about campaign activities. It is due to the lack of information dissemination to the disabled community. The existence of campaign activities can explain each candidate's public for mayor who participates in the election. However, the lack of public understanding and awareness of the importance of participating in campaigns resulted in people with disabilities being still passive in campaigning.

The things that become obstacles for the community to participate in the election campaign for the mayor are as follows:

1. Some mayoral candidates do not pay attention to the rights of people with disabilities to participate in various political activities held; this is because there are still physical limitations of people with disabilities. They are often not involved in political movements such as campaigns.
2. Lack of accessibility provided to people who have physical limitations.
3. Lack of understanding from the family environment on the importance of participating in campaign activities also makes people with disabilities reluctant to participate in the mayoral election campaign.
4. Lack of awareness and interest of people with disabilities in political matters makes people indifferent to campaign activities.

3. Election Activities

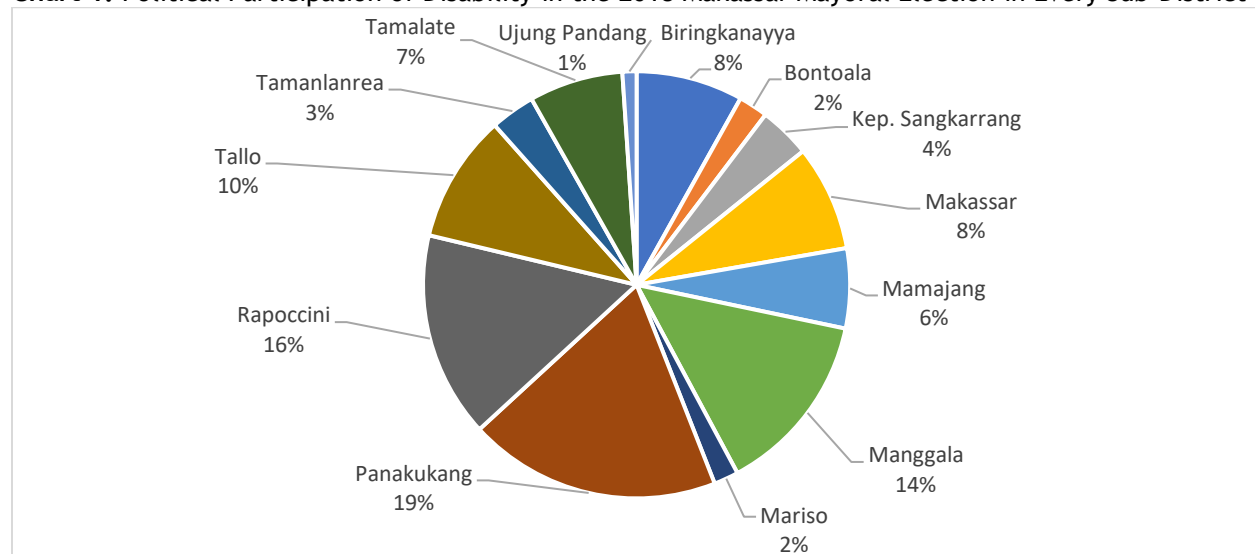
One of the indicators of political participation in the general election is voting. The KPU as the organizer of the general election has a task to carry out general elections. The participation of persons

with disabilities who participate in voting or who cast their votes in the general election for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Makassar is not only about voting, but there are also persons with disabilities who are involved in the TPS implementation committee. There are also those who participate or become volunteers for democracy. From the results of research observations, it was found that the mechanism for the socialization stages carried out by the KPU had not been entirely appropriately realized due to a large number of people with disabilities. They were still not aware of the importance of voting rights in the context of a democratic party. Election activities in the political participation of people with disabilities are expected to run better at the next election. So that people with disabilities or other people with disabilities have no reason not to participate. The knowledge and friendliness of TPS officers can also be an example of increasing participation of people with disabilities in the next election.

In the election process, some conveniences are obtained by people with deaf and mute disabilities in the election of candidates for Makassar Mayor with an interpreter or interpreter debated by candidates. Adequate and make people with disabilities deaf and mute, there is no reason not to exercise their right to vote. Election activities in the political participation of the disabled community can increase the involvement of the disabled community even more because the KPU itself has fulfilled the facilities desired or expected by the disabled community. Cooperation between the KPU and community organizations with disabilities makes it easier or better to understand what disabled people need themselves. The disabled community also plays a critical role in increasing the political participation of people with disabilities because of the relationship between one organization and another. more able to reach members who are considered able to cooperate by the Election Commission. The existence of special attention and the provision of facilities for persons with disabilities in exercising their right to vote makes persons with disabilities more motivated to participate in political contestations ([Mattila & Papageorgiou, 2017](#)).

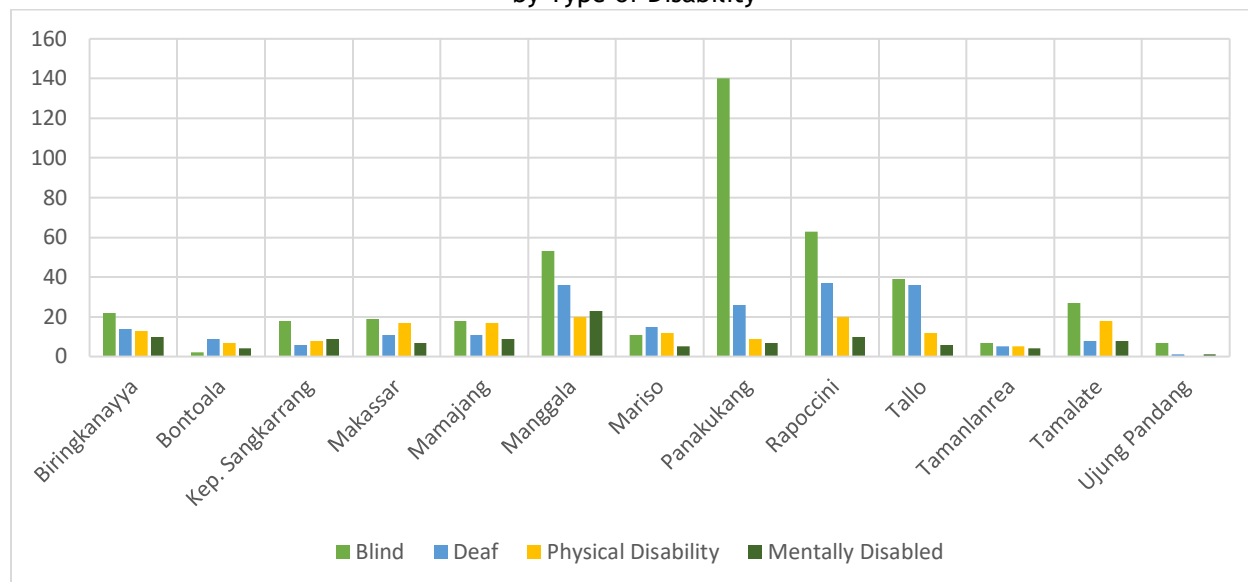
The Makassar Mayoral election, held on 27 June 2018, also included the participation of persons with disabilities who gave their voting rights in the Makassar mayoral election in 2018. People with disabilities in Makassar are scattered in several sub-districts and villages with different disabilities, such as visual impairment. Blind, deaf, and quadriplegic. They exercise their right to vote at the polling station where they live; the following data obtained on the number of persons with disabilities who exercise their right to vote can be seen from the graph below:

Chart 1. Political Participation of Disability in the 2018 Makassar Mayoral Election in Every Sub-District



From the data in Figure 1, we can see that the number of people with disabilities who used their right to vote the most in the 2018 Makassar Mayor Election was in Panakukang District, 19% (215 people). Moreover, only 1 % of voters from people with disabilities are at least in the Ujung Pandang sub-district. In essence, all sub-districts in the city of Makassar have persons with disabilities who exercise their right to vote in the election of the mayor of Makassar.

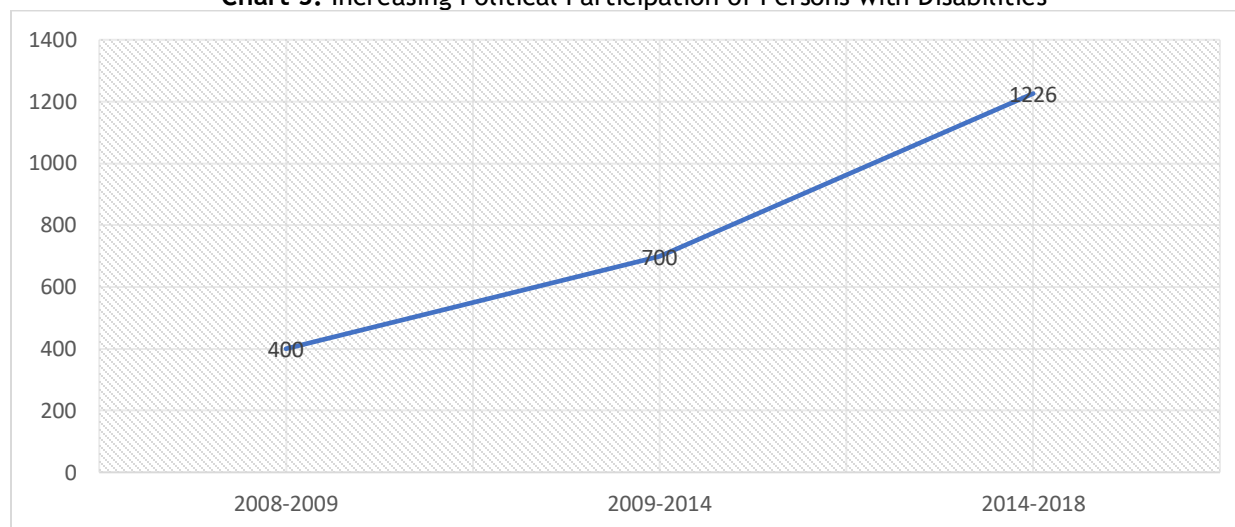
Chart 2. Political Participation of People With Disabilities in the 2018 Makassar Regional Head Elections by Type of Disability



From the data in Figure 2, it can be seen that most disabilities are from the blind; visual impairments are indeed somewhat easier to provide facilities by giving special ballots made of Braille. While at least it comes from mental disabilities. Political participation of people with disabilities in Makassar City is quite good because the government and the Makassar City General Election Commission can handle almost all people with disabilities.

The participation of people with disabilities in the Makassar mayoral election has increased from year to year. The number of people with disabilities who have voting rights in the Makassar mayoral election starting from 2008-2018 is as follows:

Chart 3. Increasing Political Participation of Persons with Disabilities



From the data in Figure 2, it can be concluded that every year the number of people with disabilities (blind, deaf, and speech impaired) who use their voting rights in the Makassar mayoral election is quite large and increasing. This is due to the rising awareness of the disabled community about the importance of using their voting rights in the Makassar Mayor election. The increase in political participation of persons with disabilities shows that the government has given its best to provide special facilities for persons with disabilities. The political involvement of the disabled community is also greatly influenced by the non-discriminatory facilities provided (Bramantyo, 2015). People with disabilities need more attention in order to participate in political activities. Political participation

that increases every year shows the government's seriousness to provide the best service without discrimination to people with disabilities. Political participation that the disabled community has carried out is Organizational Activities, lobbying, Participating in elections. The political involvement has been following the forms of political participation described by [Mochtar & Colin \(2008\)](#), so that this is a good thing at a democratic party that is friendly to the disabled community.

Factors Supporting and Inhibiting

When the system in politics involves and provides equal and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in democracy, this can increase the motivation and optimism of persons with disabilities to participate in politics and support the implementation of democracy. In the context of elections, empowerment and increasing the role of persons with disabilities in national development need special attention and utilization, various obstacles are often encountered by persons with disabilities to participate in practical politics. In this study found the factors that are supporting and inhibiting the process of implementing the Makassar mayoral election, namely;

First, the supporting factor is that in the political participation of the disabled community, there are several supporting factors in the involvement or participation of people with disabilities in the Makassar mayoral election. These factors include the following: (a) Family condition, families have an important position in educating and supporting persons with disabilities in elections. This is due to the personal closeness of families and persons with disabilities in various activities. In addition, friends and neighbors also have a role in providing a positive stimulus for persons with disabilities to understand their rights and obligations as citizens. The involvement of the community environment can provide encouragement and support for people with disabilities to participate in the use of voting rights actively.

Community environmental factors can reduce the level of abstention in people who have physical limitations. Encouragement and family support can provide people with disabilities with opportunities to exercise their right to vote without being ashamed and feeling discouraged by their physical limitations. (b) Political Awareness, political awareness is an internal process that shows the realization of the loyal citizens of the state of the urgency of the state in the life of the state ([Hartley & Branicki, 2006](#)). Considering that the tasks of the state are comprehensive and complex so that without positive support from all citizens, many of the functions of the state are neglected with the political awareness of the community to increase public sensitivity and awareness of their rights.

From the interviews with informants, it can be concluded that one of the achievements of the involvement of people with disabilities in the election of mayors is the level of political awareness. The increasing public awareness of their voting rights will also increase public participation in the Makassar mayoral election process. The involvement of people with disabilities in the political process will also increase the number of votes in elections for mayors, governors, and even presidents; this will significantly increase the number of community participation.

Results of the research conducted by the author, there are still several supporting factors in the election of the Mayor of Makassar, including the following:

1. Completeness of ballots, with transparent polls, when voting, voters will not ask the officers again.
2. Polling close, complete, and safe stations will support voters to vote when voting.
3. Officers and organizers who carry out their respective duties and roles can support the excellent implementation of the election. Because when there are activities that are not appropriate, it will affect other activities.
4. Availability of special facilities or accessibility for people with disabilities, such as templates or letters in Braille, making it easier for people with disabilities to participate in the mayoral election.
5. Assistance and support from TPS officers during the general election can facilitate people with disabilities in exercising their right to vote.
6. The availability of the nearest polling station will also increase the participation of people

with disabilities in participating in the mayoral election. Due to their physical limitations, people sometimes do not participate in participating in the mayoral election.

Second, the inhibiting factor is that in the political participation of the disabled community, there are several inhibiting factors in community involvement in the Makassar mayoral election. These factors include the following; (a) Data collection, one of the factors that caused the low level of participation of persons with disabilities during the mayoral election, including data collection, so far data collection conducted by officers on persons with disabilities, has encountered many difficulties due to the officers' lack of understanding persons with disabilities. There is also a lack of accurate data on people with disabilities scattered in Makassar, resulting in low community participation. Then the total number of people with disabilities is not precise because there are still many areas that have not been recorded. This is what causes the KPU to only focus on registered persons with disabilities.

In addition to data collection, the KPU has not maximized the efforts of the KPU, which has not provided services to people with physical disabilities, so they have to follow long queues with other ordinary people because they are considered capable. There are no obstacles while using a wheelchair or a cane. It is still unfortunate because TPS officers have no special treatment, especially for the physically disabled, because they are considered ordinary people. So they have to follow the queue number just like ordinary people in general. (b) Accessibility, physical limitations are a problem faced by people with disabilities in carrying out activities. Not a few people with disabilities find it challenging to access voting sites or conduct election activities at polling stations so that, in the end, they prefer not to use their right to vote. As one of the completeness in implementing voting rights, TPS has a crucial role because this is where the voters cast their ballots, and if there is no TPS, then the voters cannot carry out the voting. Special facilities per the needs of persons with disabilities to obtain convenience in exercising their right to vote independently.

Conclusion

Awareness of the use of political rights of persons with disabilities is seen from three aspects: firstly, participation in organizational activities where the level of involvement of people with disabilities in organizational activities in the environment, community, and political organizations is a passive opinion. The second is Lobby Activities; most people with disabilities are less active in campaign and lobby activities due to the lack of friendly access in campaign activities. The form of the people's party campaign, the participation of persons with disabilities is also still small. Many people do not know about the campaign activities due to the lack of information delivery to the disabled community. The third is participation indirect election activities. Every year the number of people with disabilities who use their voting rights in the Makassar mayoral election is significant and increasing. This is due to the growing awareness for the disabled community about the importance of using their voting rights in the Makassar Mayor election.

Factors that support the use of voting rights for persons with disabilities are the family environment, completeness of ballot papers, close polling stations, officers and organizers who carry out their duties and roles well, and the availability of unique facilities or accessibility for people with disabilities. In comparison, the inhibiting factors are data collection that is less than optimal and the accessibility of voters from persons with disabilities.

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