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The Relevance of Muslim Identity Voters in Elections in Banjarnegara Regency

Munadi Munadi*

Universitas Sains Al Qur'an, Indonesia

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Abstract

General elections (elections) in Indonesia are often influenced by identity factors, especially religious identity. This article explains the relevance of Muslim identity voters in the context of elections. This study shows that religious identity plays a significant role in influencing the behavior of Muslim voters. Muslim voters tend to choose candidates who represent Islamic values and symbols, such as religious appearances and support for religious issues. This study uses experimental survey data that compares voters' responses to candidates with religious and secular appearances, this is closely related to genetic theory in human anthropology as a central actor in the electoral cosmos. The results showed that Muslim voters were more likely to support religious-looking candidates, such as religious-looking women and secular-looking men who supported religious issues. In addition, this article also discusses identity polarization that plays a role in encouraging voter participation. Identity polarization makes elections emotional and religious identity is one of the main factors in choosing candidates.

INTRODUCTION

Democracy is a system of state that generically has the meaning of *vox populi vox dei* or from the people, by the people, and for the people many of the philosophers and figures from various madhhabs commented or responded to the system, for example from Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, defined democracy as "the government of the people, by the people, and for the people" (government of the people, by the people, and for the people). Lincoln presented this definition in his 1863 Gettysburg Address. Lincoln also believed that democracy should be based on the principles of equality, justice, and freedom, as Aristotle once said, believed that democracy is about freedom, and that freedom is the principle of democracy. He believes that freedom allows citizens to share power with each other within their own country. from their opinions, we can conclude that in a democratic system there are opinions that have 2 different sentiments or stigmas against them. this perspective certainly arises due to the dynamics of society that is increasingly complex. In a democracy, leaders are elected by the people, either directly or indirectly, this process is the end of something old as well as the beginning of something new for the people, so it is not uncommon for this leadership change process to be considered as a democratic party by various circles. Because indirectly it is the people who substantially hold power over the democratic government. Ironically, in this study, there is often an anomaly in the electoral cosmos which indicates that most voters exercise their right to vote because of the background of religious identity and not the meritocracy system.

Majority. The application of leader elections in democratic systems in various parts of the world has different dynamics. In homogeneous countries, for example, preferences in choosing leaders are more focused on what issues he brings, for whom he is interested and how he will run his leadership wheel once he is elected. Meanwhile, in countries with heterogeneous populations, identity factors such as ethnicity, religion, race, skin color, age, appearance, culture, and language are primordial aspects that greatly determine a person's partiality towards the candidate leader he will choose (Maarif, 2012; Xiaomei, 2014). The involvement of primordial aspects in democracy to direct separation based on a certain identity is called identity politics.

The polemic that then emerged was whether the practice of identity politics was good or bad in democracy in Indonesia? Related to this, there are differences of opinion among academics, where some say that identity politics is an indicator of primordiality because choosing leaders is not based on capacity but on the basis of identity, while others say that it is good because elected leaders will prioritize the interests of the people as the majority group

In the 2009 elections, we can see that the support of the contested group came from the Javanese ethnicity and Muslims as the majority. As presented in the following table:

Table 1. Population composition of Banjarnegara by religion

Kecamatan	Islam			Kristen			Laki-la
	Laki-laki	Perempuan	Jumlah	Laki-laki	Perempuan	Jumlah	
1. Susukan	25 809	26 146	51 955	71	80	151	
2. Purwareja Klampok	19 153	19 500	38 653	506	548	1 054	
3. Mandiraja	31 258	31 775	63 033	179	168	347	
4. Purwanegara	32 734	33 355	66 089	340	367	707	
5. Bawang	26 588	26 579	53 167	46	45	91	
6. Banjarnegara	30 968	30 585	61 553	364	400	764	
7. Pagedongan	16 923	16 870	33 793	13	9	22	
8. Sigaluh	14 325	13 723	28 048	15	13	28	
9. Madukara	20 185	19 711	39 896	78	67	145	
10. Banjarmangu	20 141	19 621	39 762	16	14	30	
11. Wanadadi	14 201	14 428	28 629	4	4	8	
12. Rakit	22 829	23 114	45 943	6	7	13	
13. Punggelan	35 868	35 766	71 634	7	8	15	
14. Karangkobar	14 060	13 515	27 575	51	49	100	
15. Pagentan	17 090	16 609	33 699	3	9	12	
16. Pejawaran	20 105	19 441	39 546	7	7	14	
17. Batur	18 456	17 876	36 332	23	17	40	
18. Wanayasa	22 722	21 630	44 352	8	4	12	
19. Kalibening	19 920	19 771	39 691	8	8	16	
20. Pandanarum	9 938	9 893	19 831	2	4	6	
Kabupaten Banjarnegara	433 273	429 908	863 181	1 747	1 828	3 575	

Source : BPS Banjarnegara Regency

Based on the results of the 2020 Population Census, the population of Banjarnegara is known to be 1,017,767 people.then it can be concluded that the majority and almost 90% of the population are Muslim and have very high partisanship towards candidates who are actually religious which are carried by parties with religious ideologies without a meritocracical system.

METHOD

The method used in this study is a descriptive type qualitative method, which aims to accurately describe the characteristics of an individual, situation, symptom or a certain group in society. This method is used because it is considered in accordance with the purpose of the research, which is only limited to efforts to describe why identity politics is still relevant to be used and how the form of identity politics used by Muslim voters in elections is previous. All data was obtained from the results of internet searching and library studies to find data on things or variables to be researched, both in the form of books, news pages, and journal articles and web sites. Online media is the main source of data because it is more accessible, the content is short and easy to understand, and more interactive be-

cause it is accompanied by a comment column from its readers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Identity Politics and Political Identity

Politics in terminology is the art and science of government or the art and science of government, this emphasizes to us that politics is something abstract because everything contained in it is increasingly complex because it is related to society.literally identity politics and political identity have the same meaning, both are rooted in the same concept, namely identity.both variables both place a person in political attitudes and orientations certain that can be concluded that they have a tendency to certain entities or similarities according to their background.

In practice, when we look at the political dynamics of late, the term identity politics is quite widely discussed, this is as we know, for example, when there is an issue regarding the intervention of certain religious organizations that are used as vehicles to achieve certain goals by accommodating the masses massively. Identity politics is fundamentally different from mainstream politics that has returned to popularity in the post-reform era. Stream politics refers to socio-cultural groups that develop from the cultural division of Javanese society in the style of Geertz (santri, priyayi, and abangan) and then transform into political organizations by adhering to the same ideological direction and position.

Reproduction of Identity Politics in Online Media

Mass media such as newspapers, news, television, or certain social media are now a vehicle that many people enjoy, from the national scale to the regions this game has been dominantly carried out, the use of mass media is an impressive weapon because it has inclusive implications. according to the data in the evaluation of media mentors in Banjarnegara Regency, the level of influence generated from mass media or social media in supporting campaigns is very large, The data index reached 87%.

Based on a search conducted on several national online media, it was found that the reproduction of identity politics that affects the tendency of Muslim voters to vote affiliation in elections is divided into three typologies, including: 1) clashes between Islam and "kafir" (adherents of other religions), 2) reviving indigenous and non-indigenous sentiments, and 3) reproduction of identity politics through negative campaigns and black campaigns. These three typo-

logies were obtained from the results of internet searching on 38 news pages that displayed information related to the 2018 North Sumatra Governor Election. The following is an explanation.

Black Campaigns and Negative Campaigns

The election is also colored by negative campaigns and black campaigns. This negative campaign by Ahmad (2008: 2) is interpreted as true information but is negative in nature related to the candidate's identity (can be suspected corruption, character, past history, family, etc.) which is based on facts, while black campaigns are not based on data and facts (hoax). These two types of campaigns are usually carried out by certain elites to impress a good self-image by creating a bad image to their opponents. In this practice, the role of the media is very important, especially in conveying political messages to constituents or voters. Further

Information in both black and negative campaigns basically greatly influences people's preferences to choose which candidate they trust as a leader. However, both black campaigns and negative campaigns only succeed on figures who are not well known by the community. In addition, this form of campaign also only affects swing voters. If the public knows the figure of the figure well, black campaigns and negative campaigns will only inspire sympathy and further strengthen the character of the figure in the eyes of their voters.

CONCLUSION

Seen as a strategy to realize a certain goal, identity politics is still relevant to be applied in Indonesia. Considering that in a democracy the fate of a nation is determined by the majority of votes, it is natural that the interests of the people must be prioritized to build a nation with a stronger cultural background. However, when viewed from a different perspective, the practice of identity politics should be avoided because it is considered to threaten pluralism and multicultural democracy in Indonesia. For Muslim voters, identity politics is still relevant to be used in general elections, both at the regional level and at the national level. The choice that is considered rational is to choose people with the same identity background, namely sons

regions and Muslims. They see that in recent years the ongoing leadership is impartial to Muslims as the majority group, so it is very important to choose leaders of the same religion .

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