ISLAMIC PARTIES BETWEEN PRAGMATISM VS. IDEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLE: THE CASE OF 2017 JAKARTA GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION

Ari Ganjar Herdiansah*, Widya Setiabudi, Danis Saputra, Anugrah Saputera
Department of Political Science, Padjadjaran University, Jatinangor 45363, Indonesia.
Email: *ari.ganjars@unpad.ac.id, w.setiabudi@unpad.ac.id, danis.saputra@ucmmk.com, asaputera@ucmmk.com

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Abstract

Purpose: This article seeks to analyze how Islamic parties act in the event of electoral competition filled by religious issues. On the other side, this article also tries to show the electoral impact of each Islamic parties’ decision on the candidates.

Methodology: The study conducted through the interview with several Islamic parties’ figures and examining the exit poll survey.

Result: The result reveals that even though there was a sensitive issue, the decision of Islamic parties was not solely stirred by the constituent expectation. Other factors such as elites and the organization’s interests were also influenced the decision-making process. However, the impact of its decision on electability indicates that religious issue was prominent, except for PAN. PKB and PPP that support Ahok-Djarot tend to have lessen rate, while PKS got higher electability. The case of Jakarta shows that the constituent principle or ideological is still significant if there are sensitive religious issues. In cases where religious issues have an outburst of support from the roots of the masses, Islamic parties are likely to benefit as long as there is a strong bond between the party’s decision and its supporting root militancy.

Applications: This research can be used for universities, teachers, and students.

Novelty/Originality: The 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election was highlighted by the issue of Islam blasphemy by Ahok, the powerful candidate. The issue became a national concern and invited thousands of protesters from various Islamic groups to Jakarta. Interestingly, not all Islamic parties against Ahok. In the final round, PKB and PPP chose to back Ahok-Djarot while PKS and PAN supported Anis-Sandi, a favorable candidate to them who feel disrupt by Ahok.

Keywords: Islamic party, democracy, election, ideology, pragmatism.

INTRODUCTION

The ability of Islamic parties to compete in democratic electoral systems has long been a concern, especially around whether a party who carries religious principles and symbols (Islam) can achieve their goals in a democratic political system. Some researchers take a skeptical view of the mixture of religion and politics. Tibi and Vaeezi, for example, consider that the existence of an Islamic party in a democratic system can give way to anti-democratic figures at the national level, which in turn will endanger democracy itself. The involvement of Islamic parties only legitimizes authoritarian rule in Muslim countries such as those taking place in Yemen, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, Malaysia, and Nigeria due to its minimal democracy. However, Bubalo et al considered democracy and elections had encouraged Islamic parties to loosen their militancy as they become more interested in the power that can reach openly as prevail in Indonesia (Lobão, J., & Pereira, C. 2016; Machado, A. D. B., Souza, M. J., & Catapan, A. H. 2019).

The problem to be explained in this article is how Islamic parties manage the issues of religion and identity, which are already embedded in their domain, in an election context. This issue is important to be studied because Islamic parties still have an interest in maintaining their constituents even though they continue to be inclusive. On the one hand, there is a tendency that Islamic parties are responding to the open and plural competition by promoting pragmatic issues and escaping Islamic agenda such as the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in Turkey. They prefer the claims of being a conservative party rather than an Islamic party, although they often struggle for Islamic issues. On the other hand, the Islamic party is also acting on ideological issues that are growing in its mass roots. It happened to the Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) in Malaysia responded to the Islamic awakening movement triggered by the events of the Iranian revolution in the 1980s; the party then emphasized the importance of ulama’s leadership.

Indonesia has a particular condition in which people are moving towards modernization due to the rapid development in the past two decades. But to some extent it sparked the revival of religious consciousness among the middle class. This condition is a challenge for Islamic parties to act strategically while keeping sympathy from their constituents. Considering the average strength of their votes, they were compelled to join the party coalition with the highest votes number. They play the role of a decisive "client" party in the patronage relationship of the political system. In this article, Islamic party refers to the parties that represent Muslim communities and interests both expressed formally or symbolically (Zare, Z. 2015; Bakhshandeh, M., Sedropshahan, N., & Zarei, H. 2015). Currently, there are four parties that consistently gain important votes in every election; National Awakening Party (PKB), National Mandate Party (PAN), United Development Party (PPP), and Prosperous Justice Party (PKS).
Most of the Islamic parties are tend to join the large government coalition since the 2004-2009 and 2009-2014 period and get the portion of the minister as the reward. In the period 2014-2019, PKB, PAN, and PPP continued to support the Jokowi-Jusuf Kalla government, whereas the PKS decided to be outside the government. The tendency is hard to understand from the coalition forming theory that explains the factor of coalition size, ideological distance, and methods as the basis for cooperation among its partners. As none of these factors become the main pattern of the coalition of Islamic parties, they aim to gain the maximum political offices. However, party coalitions also form dilemmatic situations since Islamic parties should face the intersection between pragmatic interests (the votes and government positions) and ideological principle as perceived by their constituent. For example, the PKS in 2008, when they declared as open parties to expand supporters and segments of voters, many cadres and sympathizers disagreed with the idea. Those who oppose the open party orientation believe that an Islamic party should maintain the symbols and atmosphere of Islamic life. Similarly, in PAN, some of its young cadres felt the party orientation was getting away from the Islamic orientation. Although they realize that PAN formally was not an Islamic party, their root base comes from the largest Islamic organization, Muhammadiyah, who thought the party should act friendlier to Islamic issues. Those who objected by the diminution of the Islamic nuance then established the Nation Sun Party (PMB) (Novikova, I. N., Popova, L. G., Shatilova, L. M., Biryukova, E. V., Guseva, A. E., & Khukhuni, G. T., 2018).

In the context of a dilemmatic situation between the interests of the party and the fulfillment of constituent ideological expectations, this article seeks to analyze how Islamic parties act in the event of electoral competition which filled with religious issues. An important event that tested the responses of Islamic parties was in the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election. In that case, there is an issue of Islam defamation by Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or known as Ahok due to his slip of tongue speeches in Kepulauan Seribu in September 2016. Hundreds of thousands to millions of people came from various parts of the country to protest in Jakarta. They demand that the government be fair in processing Ahok's law. The blasphemy issue by Ahok was also highlighted by the national mass media approximately from September 2016 to March 2017, when Ahok was finally sentenced to two years in prison. The 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election took two rounds because the first round did not produce the winner who had more than 50 percent vote. The first round followed by three candidates, namely Agus-Silvy (backed by Democrat Party, PKB, PPP, and PAN), Ahok-Djarot (carried by PDIP, Golkar Party, PKPI, Nasdem Party, and Hanura Party), and Anis-Sandi (supported by Gerindra Party and PKS). There was no Islamic party carried Ahok-Djarot in the first round. Interestingly, in the second round, PKB and PPP decided to give support to Ahok-Djarot, which many Islamic groups opposed. While PAN joined the Gerindra Party and PKS to support Anis-Sandi. The analysis of this study focuses on the explanation of the dynamics of PKB, PPP, PAN and PKS decisions that support each of the candidates when most of their mass base was not sympathetic to Ahok.

In the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial event, none of the candidates openly used the issue as a means to attack the Ahok-Djarot. In fact, the blatant blasphemy issue took place at the grassroots level, although there was the possibility of political interference from all the candidate's teams that try to influence public opinion without revealing their identity. Therefore, this study does not intend to make the blasphemy issue a focus, instead, it looks at how the Islamic parties determining decisions to support or engage candidates while most of Islamic groups oppose Ahok. The explanation will reveal the answer to the question whether Islamic parties still pay attention to their constituents while they also have demanding interests? On the other side, this article also tries to show the electoral impact of each Islamic party's decision to the candidates. The blasphemy issue was, however, quite influential on the party's image in society. For example, PDIP as the first party bears Ahok-Djarot suffered defeat in many 44 regions from 101 areas in the simultaneous elections held on February 2017. Although no official evidence, observers seem to agree that the effect of Ahok has had an impact on the PDIP credibility in the eyes of Muslim voters. That fact is a reflection that the decision of supporting Ahok might not be right for the electability of Islamic parties.

The problem of political interests and ideological principle requiring a discussion of how the Islamic political parties considering issues into their political decision's domain. The issues that are considered as a principle or have a moral element can be the reason behind constituents' political support. The moral element could be decisive that drives a cynical view of the constituent to the political opponents because the issue represents the value at which makes it relatively different toward others. Religious issues can be regarded as a moral tone, not because of its value or substance in politics, but its existence lies in the psychological of the citizens. Moral issues are rooted in the belief systems of citizens especially regarding their identity and religion that provide fundamental values. Regarding the electoral impact experienced by political parties in its policies, Tavits showed that the party's efforts to harmonize its policies according to the preference of mass root issues do not always have a positive impact on the election results. She revealed that in 23 democratic countries over the past 40 years the shift in party decisions on pragmatic issues is related to increased vote numbers, and on the contrary, decisions on ideological issues have an impact on the decline in the number of votes. In conclusion, the clash between the electorate and the party is not necessarily the key to the parties neither electoral success nor downturn.

METHOD

The analysis focused on the responses of Islamic parties about issues of identity, party electability, and the results of the exit poll about 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election. The analysis of this article was built through interviews with some of the Islamic party figures, documents and news reporting during the election event. The effort was made to examine the variation in responses from Islamic parties linked to their positions on different candidates' coalition. The study also
identifies the change of responses of Islamic parties on identity issues in the first and second rounds. The interpretation was conducted on the election results of parties’ electability when the election of the governor of Jakarta took place. The survey results are drawn from Indikator and PolMark where the survey institutions have a good track record and validity of the survey results. Exit poll survey was interpreted to examine the linkage of choice to the candidate with the political party. With these methods, it is expected to explain how Islamic parties address religious issues, between taking advantage or trying to shape public opinion in another direction. Also, it is also projected to answer how the impact of party policy in bringing candidates to the electability and support of the roots of the masses.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. The Rationality of the Islamic Party

The discussion about the orientation of Islamic party action is related to the contradiction between the religious and political realms that represent the dogmatic and practical world that has been believed to be difficult to unite. The democratic system demands rationality in determining the action and which is in line with the pattern of pragmatic action, i.e., consideration based on the situation and conditions that or faced by the organization. Democracy is also considered increasingly relevant to the plural society because it prioritizes rational systems, such as capacity and competence compared to traditional things such as ethnicity, religion, and other traditional identities. Those characters are challenging for Islamic parties which demanded to be inclusive and concerning its particular constituent at the same time.

Almost all Islamic parties were built on traditional religious groups or organizations where its figures served as the key to their existence and fragmentation as well. Consequently, traditional characteristics colorized the organizations’ culture. However, the series of clash between the parties’ figures had been degrading institutional quality and internal solidarity of the parties. In turn, it dampened their credibility in the eyes of the public. Another shortcoming of the Islamic parties is their strategy that relies on religious issues and their supporting identity, while professionalization is lacking. That is why Islamic parties are considered not to have a clear platform, especially to question the policy so that they are less trusted by voters. On the other hand, nationalist parties are more promising in offering party programs and platforms (Nisawa, Y. 2018).

Regardless of their organizational performance weakness, it is believed that the Islamic parties are still able gain mediocre votes because the national economic condition is not stable yet. So, when the economy was down, Islamic party got many votes and conversely the nationalist had peak votes when economic condition was better. However, such assumption was disrupted by the fact that Islamic parties’ voters mainly came from middle class who experienced better living conditions. It suggests that there are aspects other than economic problems that attract more voters to anchors their choice to the Islamic party. The ideological expectation of the ummah, such as the implementation of Islamic values on politics and government, are also features that need attention. So, when the Islamic parties try to overcome various problematic situations related to their institutional weakness by taking strategic steps, open themselves to a more flexible and open to alternative choices, those efforts are not certainly driven their votes turn out. The PKS, for example, is seen using a moderate, inclusive approach by adjusting to free competition so that they are open to working with other parties. However, the tendency towards open parties had provoked severe friction within the party. The quite similar phenomenon also prevail in PAN, because basically, those parties stand to fight for the aspirations of its own associated groups.

The democratic rules of the game have encouraged Islamic parties to become interest-oriented. It is in line with the political cartelize which occurred in the post-Suharto period. Political parties seek to simplify the pattern of competition by organizing cooperation between them. After the election and party power structures have been mapped, the parties then work together to manage governance based on the hierarchy of their vote numbers. The increasing of party operating costs encourages them to rely on state resources. This tendency is also experienced by Islamic parties, so in the context of their political government they do not look different from other parties. This model of analysis was applied in the 2004 and 2009 elections, when Islamic parties, on the other hand, began to be more compelled to engage in pragmatic coalitions with secular nationalist parties, especially in the government building. The ideological principles no longer give relevance in achieving the objectives, hence the orientation of interests was prominent.

The tendency of an Islamic party to become pragmatist in the democratic system seems unavoidable. However, pragmatism is not necessarily in line with the meaning of partisanship towards the policy. As disclosed by Permata, Bubalo & Fealy, and Hasan the pragmatic action of Islamic parties in Indonesia is more interpreted as a tendency to be open to all forms of cooperation to achieve the electoral goals and elite’s interests, primarily to obtain public office, although it must ignore the ideological expectations of its constituents. But on the other hand, the strategic moves of the Islamic parties should not be read as their movement abandoned the ideology and Islamic issues altogether. Islamic parties still need votes from their main constituents, namely various Islamic groups moreover every time facing the election Islamic friendliness acts also expressed by secular parties. The situation forced Islamic parties to act rationally, by performing the best strategy to achieve their interest as well as preserving main support from Islamic groups and organizations.

2. The Case of 2017 Jakarta Gubernatorial Election
The 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election is put as a case to see how the response of Islamic parties when faced with a dilemmatic situation between ideological interests and ideological principles. The thing that makes this case unique is the emergence of religious defamation by the strongest candidate, Ahok, which makes the Islamic parties required to consider the psychological condition of their constituents. The impact of fallacy in decision-making may be extensive, as the issue has become a national concern. The 2017 Jakarta Gubernatorial election becomes a magnet of national political attention. There is a presumption that Jakarta as a benchmark of national politics mainly associated with the elections and the 2019 presidential election. It was at least evidenced by the victory of Jokowi as governor of Jakarta in 2012 which helped him in the 2014 election victory.

Jakarta's political contest is quite interesting because there was a figure of Ahok, the incumbent as the most potential candidate. Most of the citizens believed that he was capable of carrying out a duty to fix Jakarta. The level of resident satisfaction with Ahok's performance was quite high, around 70 percent. Based on the survey of Lingkaran Survei Indonesia (LSI), in March 2016 Ahok electability is still the highest of 53 percent. While the results of the survey Saiful Mujani Research Center in October showed electability Ahok still superior that is about 45 percent compared to other candidates who average below 20 percent. However, the lack of good relationship Ahok with the political parties makes the determination of his nomination stalled. He then strategized to raise bargaining positions through independent channels and gain considerable support. But at the last Ahok decided to move forward with Djarot Saiful from PDIP.

The bad political relations of Ahok also prevail with the hard-line Islamic groups such as Front Pembela Islam (FPI). From the beginning of his reign, FPI had staged a demonstration against Ahok, who often touches on his Chinese ethnic background and religion. At the same time, FPI and several other Islamic groups also frequently raised public issues such as the alleged corruption cases at Sumber Waras Hospital and the reclamation of Jakarta bay. The culmination of Ahok's opposition and Islamic mass organizations was triggered by Ahok's dangerous speech on September 3, 2016, in Kepulauan Seribu, where he was in his conversation offensive to Al-Maidah 51. The conversation was recorded and then uploaded by the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta on YouTube. The video then becomes viral in social media like Facebook and Twitter and instantly sparked the anger of Muslims. Some Islamic organizations, among others, FPI, MUI South Sumatra, Muhammadiyah Youth Leadership Center on behalf of Anti-Penance Forum of Religion then reported Ahok to Police Headquarters and Metro Jaya Police Department. The various Islamic groups then urged the police to process Ahok immediately. The protests took place on the streets of Jakarta in a row, on October 28, 2016, November 4, 2016, December 2, 2016. The main Islamic organizations, such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, Persis, and MUI have expressed the opinion that Ahok's actions were categorized as defaming Islam.

With the issue of blasphemy, the opposing camps in the elections are automatically patterned, namely Ahok-Djarot against the other two camps Agus-Silvy and Anis-Sandi. The quarrel between the Anis-Sandi and Agus-Silvy was hardly seen. This opposition formation was easily observed at the level of the success team and the support masses at the grass-root, while the candidates appeared to be cautious and avoid direct discourse of blasphemy. Some statements were refined to avoid the impression of religious issues exploitation but still touched Ahok-Djarot, such as portraying Ahok as an arrogant, rude, and vicious to the poor. This pattern was certainly detrimental to the Ahok because his opponents become united and dominant.

In the first round, Agus-Silvy got the lowest vote, which was only 17.02 percent. While Ahok-Djarot received 42.99 percent of the vote and Anis-Sandi 39.95 percent of the vote. Unexpected results are shown by Anis-Sandi because they were initially underestimated as their low electability from various surveys. Ahok-Djarot was predicted to win more than 50 percent of the votes turned out to be missed. Based on the regional election rules in Jakarta, if no candidate gets a vote more than 50 percent then the second round of elections should be held. Facing the second round, the parties who in the back of Agus-Silvy repositioned their support. As a result, the Democrat Party was non-partisan, although they tend to support Anis-Sandi in an obscure way as friction between the camp of Yudhoyono and Megawati increasingly heightened. Therefore, based on the results of first-round surveys, the electorate Agus-Silvy was indicated to vote Anis-Sandi in the second round. The other supporter of Agus-Silvy, PAN, then joined the Anis-Sandi coalition along with the Gerinda Party and the PKS. The existence of PAN together with the Gerinda Party and PKS strengthens the impression of political competition between the Prabowo-Hatta camp with Jokowi-Jusuf Kalla in 2014.

The other ex-supporter of Agus-Silvy, PKB, and PPP, surprisingly decided to back Ahok-Djarot even though dominant Islamic groups and organizations condemn Ahok. There are several reasons why PKB and PPP chose to support Ahok-Djarot. The rational set forth by both parties are inseparable from the national political context, the rivalry of Islamic party elites in the social and political sphere, and constituent considerations. Ahok's coalition of supporters consists of parties that join Jokowi-Jusuf Kalla's government, such as PDIP, Hanura Party, Nasdem Party, Golkar Party, PKB, PKPI, and PPP. Therefore, it is reasonable to examine the position of PKB and PPP regarding the national political context. In the dynamics of PPP, there was a severe internal conflict that splits the party board into two leading camps namely Djan Faridz and Romahurmuzi. In the first round, the Romahurmuzi faction supported Agus Silvy while Djan Faridz backed Ahok-Djarot. In the second round, the Romahurmuzi faction turned to support Ahok-Djarot as an expression of his support for Jokowi-Jusuf Kalla's government. PPP considerations, both of the two camps are pragmatic, they prioritized to win the hearts of government for the decree of PPP board from the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. The faction of Romahurmuzi holds that the Ministry of Law and Human Rights Decree was an important requirement in line with the
Political Party Law. The practical reasons that make PPP were not led to support the Anis-Sandi which represents the government's opposition groups. On the other hand, there was also a hope that two conflicting camps could be united as they had similar interests to support Ahok-Djarot. The PPP considered that the party’s recovery was at the top of all priority.

In the PKB camp, their support for Agus-Silvy in the first round was influenced by three factors, namely his elite proximity to Yudhoyono, the reluctance of the clerics and his supporters to join Islamic hard-liners, and the dislike of the ulama against the figure of Ahok. PKB was part of the Yudhoyono-Budiono government coalition (2009-2014), and their central elites still had an emotional and political interest ties with Yudhoyono. The mass supporter and top figures of PKB toward PKS and other Islamic hardliner groups have long been reportedly lacking in harmony. The discourse was suspicious that the PKS would eventually want to establish an Islamic state and the hard-liners would make Indonesia become intolerant. Regarding Ahok case, the ulama associated with PKB generally gave a negative impression. Ahok's frontal communication style and several times issuing controversial policies, such as takbir carnival banning in Jakarta, were also perceived negatively by the clerics. Therefore, in the first round PKB more inclined to build a new axis by supporting Agus-Silvy. Beyond these matters, the PKB also put a bit of pressure on Jokowi by pointing out the resistance as at that time the cabinet reshuffle issue in which the ministers' quota of PKB would be reduced was intensifying. The PKB's vote power in the 2014 election, which is 9 percent, becomes its own capital so that they have a higher bargaining position to Jokowi's government. In the end, the cabinet reshuffle plan was not done, and in the second round, PKB shifted its support to Ahok-Djarot as a meaning of they were strengthen the support to Jokowi as well as to secure a portion in the government.

Although the elites of PPP and PKB support Ahok-Djarot, there was a fear that their supporters would not follow its decision. However, PKB was not too concerned about it because they believe the Ahok’s blasphemy issue would not have a long impact until 2019. While the PPP was more concerned with an internal solidity that they previously hoped to achieve through the same support for Ahok. It can be said that the decision of PPP and PKB was due to their great interest in Jokowi's government. On the other hand, they are also not impressed with the PKS and Islamic hard-liners grassroots that tend to exploit the blasphemy issue which generating spaces for intolerant figures at the national political sphere. Thus, the rational choice of PPP and PKB falls on the final round was for Ahok-Djarot.

On the other side, the Anis-Sandi camp was dominated by parties outside the government, namely the Gerindra Party, and PKS. Specifically PAN, they have indeed expressed their support for Jokowi-Jusuf Kalla's government, but his position in the government is not so significant. PAN senior figure, Amien Rais, even became a central critic of Jokowi-Jusuf Kalla government. Amien Rais's move against Ahok-Djarot from early on had influenced PAN's stance, which in the second round deflected its support solidly to the Anies-Sandi. The urban Islamic group which is a loyal PAN constituent with the figure of Amien Rais as the Muhammadiyah Muslim figure was seen as the decisive aspect of the support of PAN's solid masses to choose the Anis-Sandi. The PAN's support also considers the fact that in the second round, the issues played in the middle-voters segment mixed between religious, diversity, and social justice. On these issues, the Anies-Sandi felt promising by imaging themselves as humanists and religious leaders, pro to the poor, against prostitution and refused reclamation. The Islamic parties that joined the Anis-Sandi coalition also gained solid support from Islamic groups that almost all opposed Ahok. Through Amin Rais, PAN has always been vocal on reclamation issues in Jakarta Bay that are considered to be marginalizing local fishers. The compatibility of anti-reclamation issues further solidifies support for Anis-Sandi.

The choice of PKS to carry Anis-Sandi is not as complicated as other Islamic parties. PKS initially chose not to join the Jokowi-Jusuf Kalla government coalition. In addition to strong opposition from its mass roots to Jokowi's government, non-governmental positions serve as a momentum for improving the party's solidity torn apart by internal conflicts. The decision of the PKS to work with the Gerindra Party was the best option that can achieve maximum support from their mass rooted militancy. Opposing to the power of government in the hope of PKS supporters and sympathizers that seems unegotiable. Thus, the PKS expected to regain their supporters’ trust.

3. The Impact of Candidacy to Islamic Parties’ Electability

On April 19, 2017, the second round of voting was won by Anis-Sandi with 57.7 percent of the vote, while Ahok-Djarot won 42.3 percent. The victory of Anis-Sandi was beyond the public presupposition because from the outset Ahok-Djarot always leads an excellent electability survey rating conducted by SMRC, PolMark, and Indikator. However, Ahok's popularity made people feel confident that he would win the election. Actually, Ahok-Djarot's 43 percent vote in the first round had indicated that they were likely to lose the second round. Therefore, the majority of Agus-Silvy voters predicted would shift to Anis-Sandi. The PKB and PPP that support Ahok-Djarot did not seem to be very concerned about the outcome, as their primary goal was to save interest in the government. However, there are consequences for the decision to support a highly unpopular candidate among his constituents. Below is a table of exit poll survey results during the second round of voting which shows the consistency of party voters against candidate choice.

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<th>Table 1: Supporting Base of Political Party to Candidates. Modified on a survey by Indikator (2017)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Political Party</strong></td>
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<td>Ahok-Djarot</td>
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Based on the results of the exit poll conducted by the Indikator above, almost all Islamic party’s voters vote for Anis-Sandi. PKB voters are among the least to pick Anies-Sandi, while the voters of the PKS were the dominant who vote for Anies-Sandi. Among the Islamic parties, political parties that experienced the largest voter division were PPP and PKB. The fact shows that the Islamic parties voters prefer candidates based on preferences that did not come from the party of his choice. In fact, this phenomenon is not unique to local elections in Indonesia, where party voters and candidate voters are usually different. However, in the case of Jakarta 2017 showing voter partiality to the candidate of his party's election is clearly visible regarding Ahok’s blasphemy issue driven by Islamic groups.

![Electability Islam Party when the election of Governor Jakarta 2017](image)

**Figure 1:** Electability Islam Party when the election of Governor Jakarta 2017, Source: modified from the results of PolMark Indonesia (2017).

From the figure above, PAN’s electability is very low with a gain of only 1.7 percent. When compared with the vote in the 2014 election in Jakarta, PAN did not get a significant vote in Jakarta which is only about 1.8 percent. On the side of Ahok-Djarot supporters, PKB won electability at 3.5 percent, whereas in the 2014 election in Jakarta they won 5.66 percent of the vote. The PPP has a significant decrease in electability, reaching only 2.5 percent in 2017, while they get 9.43 percent of the vote in the 2014 election in Jakarta. From the party electability result around the 2014 Jakarta gubernatorial, the PKS whose candidate choice matches the expectations of the constituents has a positive impact on its electability. However, the same symptoms are not experienced by PAN. The lack of voters in Jakarta may be a factor limiting the flexibility of PAN. These results describe that the constituent's expectations or ideological principles of Islamic party voters still have a significant influence on the decision to elect their party in the election. From the case of Jakarta 2017 gubernatorial, the loyalty of voters to the Islamic party turned out to be quite unstable when faced with a sensitive religious issue.

**CONCLUSIONS**

This article shows that when Islamic parties are dealing with a high religious issue, they are still prioritizing their interests in government without ignoring ideological principles. These findings reaffirm that Islamic parties in Indonesia have been swept along by the flow of multi-party democracies, where consideration is no longer based solely on ideological issues. However, the case of Jakarta shows that the constituent principle or ideological is still significant if there are sensitive religious issues. In cases where religious issues have an outburst of support from the roots of the masses, Islamic parties are likely to benefit as long as there is a strong bond between the party's decision and its supporting root militancy. However, it does not take effect on the electability of PAN. It might be their exposure to religious issues was less strong comparing to PKS and its electoral performance is constantly weak from previous local election. When publicly PKB and PPP explained that their decision to support Ahok-Djarot because their incumbent performance seen as a pragmatic policy, the results of this study contradict the assumption that political parties who favor pragmatic issues tend to be supported by its constituent. PKB and PPP are good examples to show these symptoms. However, the electability result is only based on exit poll survey outcome, not an actual election. Therefore, there is still about two years ahead for PKB and PPP to restore the confidence of the voters after their electability was being punished in the 2017 Jakarta exit poll survey.

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