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Split Ticket Voting in the 2019 Simultaneous Presidential and Legislative Elections in West Sumatra

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Abstract. This study analyzes the phenomenon of split ticket voting in the 2019 Simultaneous Elections in West Sumatra. The method used is a quantitative approach with primary data sources in the form of a survey of people's socio-political preferences, as well as secondary data from academic literature. The dependent variables in this study were split ticket voting, while the independent variables included party-ID, candidate personalization, and identity politics polarization. The results of the analysis show that these three variables significantly affect the tendency of voters to divide their choices between legislative candidates and presidential candidates. The findings also show that high levels of ideological identification tend to lower the likelihood of split ticket voting, while weak ideological ties to political parties reinforce this phenomenon. Therefore, this research confirms the importance of parties maintaining their ideological foundations to strengthen voter loyalty and reduce fragmented electoral behavior. Therefore, this research confirms the importance of parties maintaining their ideological foundations to strengthen voter loyalty and reduce fragmented electoral behavior. The implications of this study suggest that strengthening ideological alignment within parties and improving voter education on political identity can serve as strategic approaches to minimize inconsistent electoral behavior and enhance democratic consolidation in multi-party systems.

Keywords: Split Ticket Voting; Party-ID; Polarization of Issues; Identity Politics; Candidate Personalization

INTRODUCTION

General elections are the main instrument in democracy to ensure the periodic circulation of power through legitimate and orderly mechanisms (Cutts et al., 2020; Kusdarini et al., 2022; Sturgis & Jennings, 2020; Syafei & Darajati, 2020). According to Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan (1996), democracy is considered to have been consolidated when there has been at least two changes of power through honest and fair elections. Until 2019, Indonesia has carried out four changes of power through presidential elections, but the expected quality of substantive democracy has not been fully achieved. Elections are not just a formal procedure, but must contribute to improving governance and public services. Therefore, the evaluation of the implementation of elections is a must to identify systemic weaknesses and improve democratic mechanisms.

One of the important phenomena in elections is *split ticket voting* (STV), which is the behavior of voters who divide their political choices between legislative candidates and executives from different parties in one simultaneous election (Idrobo, 2021; Kelbel et al., 2016; Villegas Bauer & Juncosa, 2024). This phenomenon reflects the complexity of people's political preferences and indicates a lack of synchronization between choices for political parties and executive candidates. In the context of the 2019 Simultaneous Elections in Indonesia, STV became a prominent phenomenon, especially in West Sumatra, where significant differences were found between the votes of coalition parties and the presidential candidate pairs they carried.

The assumption regarding the low rate of *split ticket voting* in the United States is based on two main factors. First, the strong *party-ID* among American voters causes political choices to tend to be consistent between the legislature and the executive. Second, the high presidential

threshold system in Indonesia is also a source of *split ticket voting*. The provision of a threshold of 20 percent of the House of Representatives seats or 25 percent of the national valid votes encourages political parties to form coalitions pragmatically, not based on ideological proximity, resulting in a transactional coalition. Unlike the United States, which has two dominant parties—Democrats and Republicans—each of which consistently nominates a presidential candidate, in Indonesia, not all parties have cadres to be carried as presidential candidates. As a result, party sympathizers often face dilemmas, for example, *Golkar Party* voters who have to vote for a presidential candidate from *PDIP* such as *Joko Widodo*, or *PPP* supporters who, in the 2014 presidential election, chose the *Prabowo-Hatta* pair, but in 2019 had to support the *Jokowi-Ma'ruf* pair because of the decision of the party elite. The discrepancy between the decisions of the party elite and the preferences of grassroots voters has the potential to trigger *split ticket voting*.

In the context of the coalition of parties carrying presidential and vice-presidential candidates, the 2014 election showed that the *Joko Widodo-Jusuf Kalla* pair was carried by a coalition of minority parties with a total support of around 37 percent of the parliamentary votes—including *PDIP*, *NasDem*, *PKB*, and *Hanura*. Nevertheless, the pair managed to obtain 53 percent of the national vote, which reflects a positive *split ticket vote*, namely, voter support exceeding the formal strength of the supporting party coalition. On the other hand, in the 2019 election, the *Jokowi-Ma'ruf Amin* pair was carried by a large coalition that controlled around 60 percent of the parliamentary seats. However, their vote tally only reached 54.5 percent, indicating an imbalance between the strength of the party coalition and voters' choices, and indicating a negative *split ticket vote*.

According to Ramlan Surbakti, the *coattail effect* did not show a significant influence in the 2019 Simultaneous Elections. This can be seen from the discrepancy between the number of votes of the coalition party supporting the *Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin* pair and the votes obtained by the pair themselves. The ten parties that officially supported *Jokowi-Ma'ruf* won 62.01 percent of the vote in the legislative election, but the pair only got 55.50 percent of the vote in the presidential election. This means that around 6.51 percent of coalition party voters voted for the *Prabowo-Sandi* pair.

In contrast, the *Prabowo-Sandi* coalition of parties only won 37.98 percent of the vote in the legislative election, but the pair obtained 44.50 percent of the vote in the presidential election. This phenomenon shows that the votes for the *Prabowo-Sandi* pair are greater than the accumulated votes of the supporting parties. Provisional allegations show that some voters of the *Jokowi-Ma'ruf* coalition party, especially from *PPP*, *NasDem*, and *Golkar*, switched to supporting the *Prabowo-Sandi* pair in the presidential election. Estimates show that there was a vote shift of 6.52 percent from the coalition supporting *Jokowi-Ma'ruf* to *Prabowo-Sandi*. This confirms that there is a significant *split ticket voting* between election levels.

A similar phenomenon can also be seen in the comparison of the results of the 2014 and 2019 elections. In 2014, the *Prabowo-Hatta* pair was carried by a large coalition, but only obtained 47 percent of the votes, while *Jokowi-Jusuf Kalla*, who was supported by a minority coalition, actually won with 53 percent. On the other hand, in 2019, *Prabowo-Sandi* obtained 44.50 percent of the vote even though it was only supported by a small coalition. Meanwhile, *Jokowi-Ma'ruf*, who was carried by the majority coalition, was only able to win 55.50 percent

of the votes. This fact strengthens the argument that the strength of party coalitions is not always in line with voters' preferences in presidential elections.

This cross-time comparison indicates that voter loyalty to political parties is weakening, and that the factor of candidate personalization and ideological disagreement between party elites and the voter base are important variables that drive *split ticket voting*. Therefore, the effectiveness of party coalitions in mobilizing voter votes needs to be further examined within the framework of complex electoral behavior.

The selection of the topic of *split ticket voting* in the 2019 Simultaneous Elections between the legislature and the president is based on an interesting phenomenon that has not been studied in depth, especially in West Sumatra. Some pre-election survey results show a tendency for voters to split votes between legislative and presidential candidates from different parties. These early indications raise important questions about the consistency of voters' political choices and prompt researchers to test a number of hypotheses.

First, this study aims to find out the extent to which party identification (*party-ID*) as a representation of ideological affiliation affects the tendency of *split ticket voting*. Second, this research also examines how the polarization of ideological issues plays a role in shaping voters' decisions to divide their choices in simultaneous elections. Doubts about whether voters consciously planned vote sharing or simply responded to campaign situations became an important basis for designing the right empirical approach.

To illustrate, a voter might vote for the *Gerindra Party* in a legislative election, but vote for *Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin* in the presidential election—a tangible form of *split ticket voting*. This study specifically takes the case of West Sumatra because in this region the difference between the votes of *Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin* supporters and the *Prabowo Subianto-Sandiaga Uno* supporters is very striking. Data from several survey institutions before April 17, 2019, reinforce the potential for considerable *split ticket voting* in the region.

The strengthening of ideological components—including *party-ID*, polarization of issues, candidate personalization, and the design of simultaneous elections—has a significant effect on the votes of candidate pairs. In West Sumatra, *Prabowo-Sandi* won 85.95 percent of the votes, while in East Nusa Tenggara *Jokowi-Ma'ruf* received 88.57 percent. The disparity between campaign strategy and vote results suggests that voters' ideological orientation is more decisive than campaign narrative. Although *Jokowi* is intensely campaigning in West Sumatra, his vote gain remains low; the same goes for *Prabowo* at *Jokowi's* base. Strong ideological polarization in both regions is the dominant factor in electoral behavior.

Despite its significance, research on *STV* in the Indonesian context—particularly with a regional focus like West Sumatra—remains limited. Most existing studies focus on national-level trends or emphasize clientelism and patronage without deeply exploring ideological and psychological dimensions. This creates a critical research gap regarding how identity politics, ideological polarization, and candidate personalization influence voter behavior. Thus, this study introduces a novel perspective by integrating multiple explanatory variables—*party-ID*, issue polarization, identity politics, and candidate personalization—within the context of a simultaneous electoral system. It investigates whether voters in West Sumatra consciously split their votes due to ideological misalignment or other sociopolitical factors, and tests the hypothesis that weak ideological identification correlates with higher rates of *STV*.

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The objectives of this research are to examine the extent to which ideological variables influence *split ticket voting*; to analyze the role of identity polarization in shaping electoral decisions; and to assess the interaction between party loyalty and candidate-centered voting in the 2019 elections. This study also aims to test whether ideological proximity still acts as a determinant of straight-ticket voting in contemporary Indonesian politics.

The benefits of this research are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it contributes to the growing literature on electoral behavior in hybrid democracies by offering empirical insights from a non-Western context. Practically, it provides valuable implications for political parties, electoral institutions, and democratic reform advocates by highlighting the importance of ideological clarity, candidate consistency, and electoral system design in fostering informed and stable voter behavior.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach by utilizing primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through a field survey conducted face-to-face using a questionnaire in West Sumatra Province from April 25 to May 3, 2022. The survey population includes all Indonesian citizens who are domiciled in the province and are 17 years of age or older. A sample of 800 respondents was selected through a multistage random sampling technique, with a balanced gender distribution (50% males and 50% females), and a margin of error of ±4.89% at a confidence level of 95 percent.

Interviews were conducted by professional interviewers using a face-to-face method. To ensure the validity of the data, quality control was carried out on 20 percent of the sample through revisits or verification of respondents (*spot check*). *Split ticket voting* statistical data were obtained through crosstab analysis between party choice and presidential choice in the 2019 Simultaneous Election. Meanwhile, secondary data were collected through a literature review of books, journals, articles, and relevant research reports. This approach was chosen to gain a strong empirical understanding as well as to test the theoretical relevance to the phenomenon of *split ticket voting* in the field.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The selection of the topic *of split ticket voting* in the 2019 Simultaneous Elections in West Sumatra is based on preliminary findings from various pre-election surveys that show a tendency for voters to split votes between legislative and presidential candidates from different parties. This phenomenon is interesting to study because it reflects the potential inconsistency of political preferences in one electoral momentum.

This study aims to test and prove the extent to which four main variables—*party-ID,* polarization of issues, identity politics, and candidate personalization—influence voters' decision to do *split ticket voting*. The key question to be answered is whether the vote-sharing behavior is done consciously and planned from the start, or is it a spontaneous response to the political situation faced by voters. For example, a voter can vote for the Gerindra Party in the legislative election, but vote for the Jokowi-Ma'ruf pair in the presidential election, or vice versa. Cases like this are a strong indication of the occurrence of *split ticket voting* in West Sumatra.

Concept Of Split Ticket Voting

Split ticket voting (STV) is the behavior of voters who split votes between candidates from different parties for legislative and executive positions in an election cycle. For example, a voter chooses the Golkar Party for the House of Representatives, but chooses a presidential

candidate from the Democratic Party. This phenomenon is common in elections with multiple electoral systems, such as simultaneous legislative and presidential elections in Indonesia.

In the context of the 2019 election, STV is reflected in a situation where the number of votes of the presidential and vice presidential candidate pairs exceeds the combined votes of the supporting parties. This shows that there are voters who choose a certain pair of presidential candidates, but choose a legislative party from the opposing coalition.

According to Gretchen Helmke (2009), STV can be studied at various levels of analysis, including between voters, between parties, between types of elections, and in the context of different electoral systems. In comparative research, STV is generally studied through *ticket splitting* between legislative and presidential elections in one ballot. Early studies in the United States show that voters often split their ticket of choice between the Democratic and Republican Parties in presidential and congressional elections (Carmines & Ensley, 2004a).

Research on *split ticket voting* in the United States focuses on the causes of voters voting for different parties for legislative and presidential candidates. One of the main factors driving this behavior is the increasing ideological polarization between political elites. Studies during the period 1972–2004 showed that voters with inconsistent ideological positions—such as moderate, populist, and libertarian voters—were more likely to split *ticket voting* than conservative voters.

One illustration of this phenomenon is when voters vote for the Democratic Party for the House of Representatives, but support a Republican presidential candidate. Moderate voters tend to see *split ticket voting* as a way to balance power between the liberal and conservative camps. Consistency of the issue is also an important factor, where voters vote based on the suitability of their attitude towards the issue, not just party loyalty. Burden and Helmke (2009) define split *ticket* as a situation when voters support different parties in different election contests in an electoral cycle.

Ideological Perspectives In Indonesian Politics

In the context of Indonesian politics, the ideological dimension plays an important role in shaping voter preferences, as it does in other Muslim-majority countries. One of the central issues that forms polarization is the position of religion, especially Islam, in the public sphere. The 2019 Presidential Election shows that ideological factors significantly influence voting behavior, where ideological identification is an important foundation in the political orientation of citizens (Fossati, 2019). This study is important to examine the reasons behind the tendency of voters to do *split ticket voting* (STV) in the 2019 Simultaneous Elections in West Sumatra. Early hypotheses suggest that ideological preferences—which include *party-ID*, issue polarization, identity politics, and candidate personalization—as well as the design of simultaneous elections are the main factors driving STV. The focus of this study is to prove whether voters' decisions to divide votes are influenced by ideological orientation or other sociological considerations.

In the Indonesian context, the explanatory variables of STV need to be expanded, because ideological factors such as *party-ID,* polarization of identity issues, and candidate personalization cannot be separated from a simultaneous electoral system. One important finding indicates that voters split the ticket because they did not have a strong psychological attachment to a particular political party.

Furthermore, referring to Edward G. (2004), the high level of ideological polarization between political elites also increases the tendency of voters to divide their choices between presidential candidates and legislative parties. The case in West Sumatra reflects how polarization between partisan elites has a direct impact on voters' electoral behavior (Carmines & Ensley, 2004b). Previous research has identified two types of ideological voters: populists who are liberal on economic issues but conservative on social issues, and liberals who are

economically conservative but socially progressive. Voters with inconsistent ideological orientations are more likely to split *ticket voting* than those with stable ideologies.

In the context of elite polarization, such as between the Republican and Democratic Parties in the United States, economic and social issues are mapped in a liberal-conservative spectrum. Moderates have a higher *rate of split-ticket voting*, although this trend decreases as the polarization of the political elite increases sharply.

This phenomenon shows that both politicians and voters increasingly align their political choices with ideological preferences, including in the Indonesian context where the issue of the role of Islam in the state is the main distinguishing point (Fossati et al., 2020). The polarization of the issues that clash includes short-term political pragmatism in every presidential election contest.

The balancing *model* in *ticket splitting* proposed by Fiorina (1996) explains that the farther the ideological distance between the party and the voters, the higher the likelihood of *split ticket voting*. Conversely, voters' ideological proximity to parties tends to lower the tendency to split votes between presidential and legislative candidates.

Furthermore, the greater the diversity of ideologies within the party body, especially in parliamentary membership, the greater the expectation of differences in choices between the legislative and executive institutions. This means that voters tend to split their support if they feel that the balance of power needs to be maintained through the distribution of votes across parties and institutions.

McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal (2006) say that ideological polarization has two main characteristics: first, the most liberal members of the Republican Party remain more conservative than the most conservative Democrats; second, almost all elite conflicts can be explained within the liberal-conservative ideological spectrum. This elite polarization has an impact on *split ticket voting*, when voters divide their votes based on preferences on economic and social issues.

Non-ideological voters tend to vote based on issues they consider important, rather than on specific policies. They are easily influenced by media framing. On the other hand, ideological voters have a more consistent and structured policy stance (Petrocik, 1996). Most voters are pragmatic and instrumental, more interested in solutions to problems than ideology. They judge parties based on their ability to solve actual issues, with the heterogeneity of issues as the basis of preferences.

The influence of candidate framing is not evenly impacted; Some voters consider factors that have escaped the public's attention. But overall, voter decisions are shaped by directional choices, where once an election agenda is set, partisan control is often ignored in favor of candidates who are perceived to be capable of solving problems.

Candidate Personalization

Voters sometimes consider the party more than the candidate, although under certain conditions the candidate's appeal becomes dominant. This emphasizes the role of contextual factors in shaping voting behavior, not just individual characteristics.

A study in New Zealand Karp et al. (2002) shows that *split ticket voting* can be triggered by a misalignment between party and candidate preferences. In Japan, Burden (2009) found that candidate characteristics play an important role in explaining STV practices, especially in systems that encourage individual-based selection.

In the context of a mixed electoral system, strategic voting is also a key factor. Voters tend to split votes when candidates from the party they support are deemed to have no chance of winning in district constituencies (SMDs). Recent studies show that strategic defections are more often carried out by voters with higher levels of political knowledge, especially when the preferred candidate is not competitive (Karp et al., 2002).

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Differences in voter behavior can be explained through an analysis of the information cues used when choosing a party or candidate. Gestures that emphasize party identity—such as names or logos—have proven to be significant in reducing the tendency to *split ticket voting*. Conversely, when voters' attention is more focused on the characteristics of the candidate, *the split ticket voting* rate tends to increase significantly.

Carolina Plescia (2021) found that voters differentiate votes for parties and candidates. National issues and party identity have more influence on party choices, while candidate characteristics and local issues have more influence on candidate votes. Voters who like the candidate tend to vote for him, but if the candidate is from an unpopular party, the preference for the party is more decisive.

Voters with strong *party-ID* generally vote by party, not candidate. Barry C. Burden points out that vote splitting can be triggered by the quality of candidates or the desire to avoid wasting votes on weak candidates (*necessary split ticket*). Thomas L. Brunell (2009) added that in a mixed system, parties remain dominant in general elections, but candidates are more important in local elections.

Studies in Japan confirm that what is more decisive is the focus of voters: whether they vote based on the candidate first or the party. Even if the candidate is not in line with the preferred party, the preference for figures can still encourage *split ticket voting* (Brunell & Grofman, 2009).

The weakening of party attachment causes campaigns to become more candidate-centered, so voters are more likely to vote for candidates from different parties. Jacobson (1997) noted that candidates with experience and strong funding are better able to attract cross-party voters. Voters tend to choose the most visible or attractive candidate, regardless of party affiliation. In contests with low levels of competition, this condition often triggers *split ticket voting* (Burden & Kimball, 2004).

Studies in the 1988 and 2000 elections showed that Democratic and Republican voters used different indicators in evaluating candidates. Democratic voters tend to vote based on sympathy for the candidate, while Republican voters prioritize the perception of the candidate's personal virtues in making choices. The Barker & Lawrence (2006) literature shows that the personal qualities of candidates are becoming an increasingly dominant factor in presidential elections. Previous research has confirmed that perceptions of competence (such as intelligence and experience) and character (integrity and empathy) have a significant effect on voter preferences.

Unfortunately, most studies do not differentiate between candidate character types and often combine them in a single index. Findings from the 1988 and 2000 elections in the United States indicate that Democratic voters place more emphasis on the aspect of empathy or compassion, while Republican voters tend to prioritize moral values in evaluating candidates (Barker & Lawrence, 2006). These findings show that value prioritization has a significant influence on shaping voters' perception of ideal candidates. Liberal Democratic voters tend to look for compassionate candidates, while conservative Republican voters prioritize moral virtue.

Republicans, in particular, tend to judge candidates based on religious background, reputation for integrity, moral principles, and personal discipline. The following table will illustrate the dominant factors that influence voters' decisions in choosing presidential and vice presidential candidate pairs.
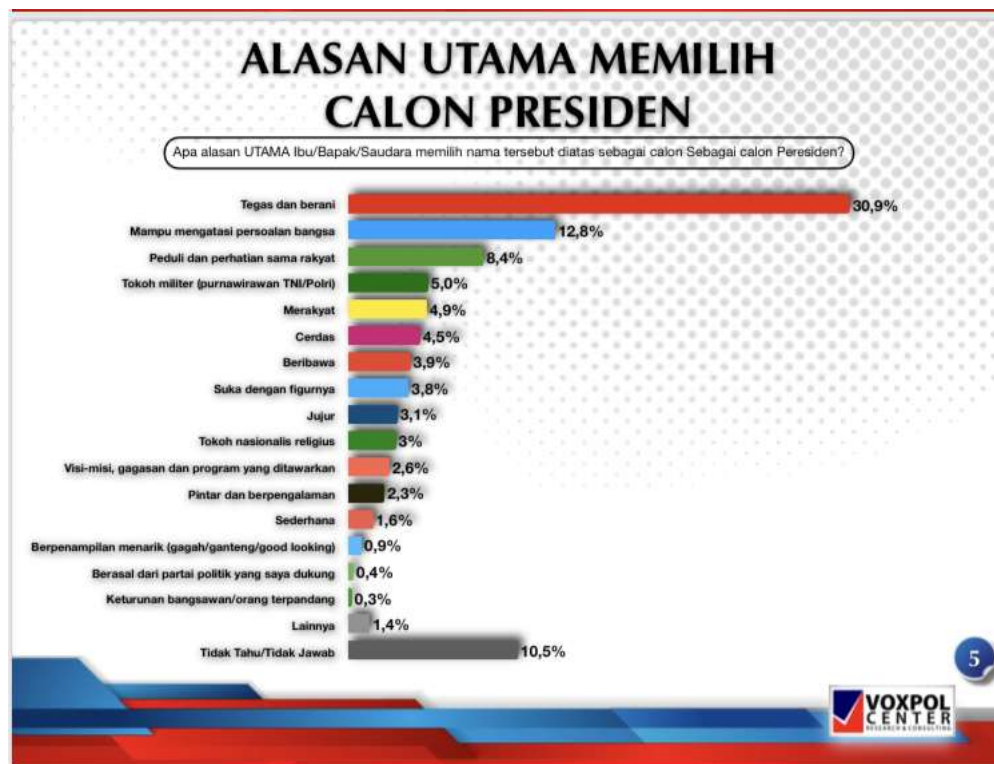
Figure 1. Personalization of Candidacy
Source : Researcher

PARTY ID

Muhammad Asfar's dissertation on voting behavior in legislative elections develops an omni approach with a structural model that identifies four determinants of political party choice. His findings show that *party-ID* has a direct and indirect influence on party choice, through the mediation of issue preferences and political competence.

These results differ from the findings of Gaffar, Kristiadi, and Mallarangeng, which reject the influence of sociodemographic variables such as economic class, age, gender, and religion, as embraced by the Colombian school. In addition, Asfar's research also challenges the main thesis of the Michigan school of thought that places *party-ID* as subordinate to personal preferences and issues.
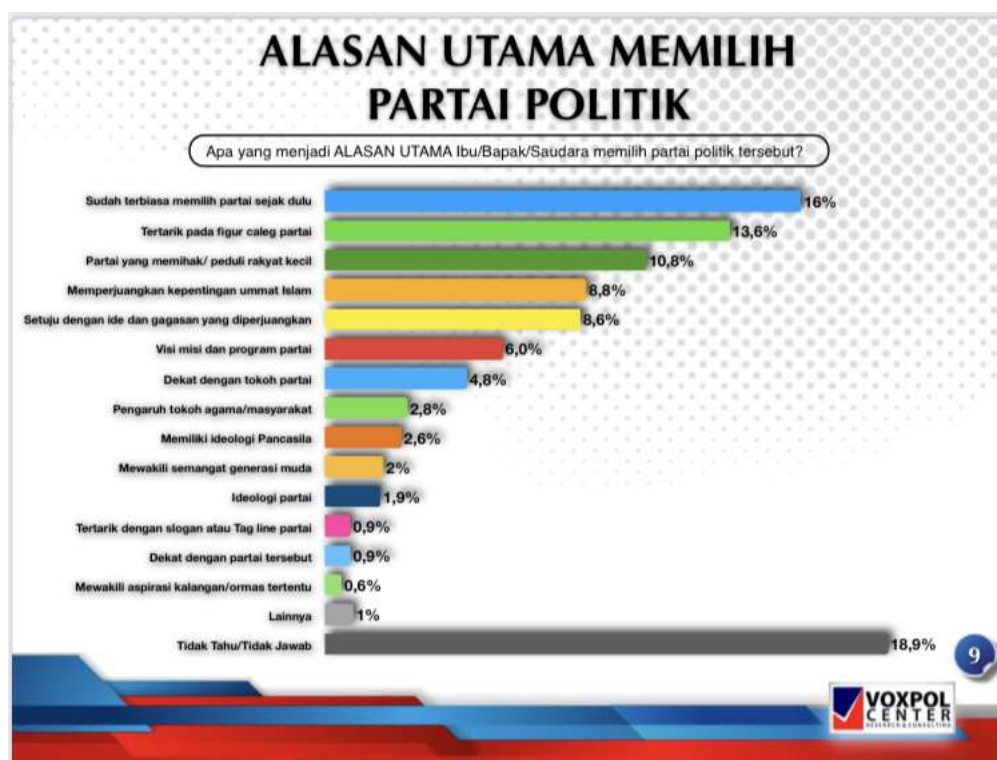
Figure 2. Reasons to Choose a Party
Source : Researcher

This study explains that *split ticket voting behavior* is influenced by sociological, psychological, and rational factors. Sociologically, variables such as socio-economic status, ethnicity, family traditions, age, gender, occupation, and place of residence also influence voters' multiple choices.

From the psychological side, referring to Miller and Shanks (1996), factors such as political information, emotional attachment to the party (*party-ID*), issue orientation, and candidate orientation have a significant influence in encouraging voters to divide their political choices. Meanwhile, the rational approach (Surbakti in Asfar, 1992) emphasizes that voters consciously consider issues and calculations of benefits before making different choices between parties and presidents.

This research complements previous studies by examining more specifically the influence of psychological factors on voter behavior, especially in the context of the relationship between ideological parties and ideological voters in *split ticket voting* in the 2019 Presidential Election.

The theory *of party identification* itself emerged as a response to the low level of knowledge, involvement, and consistency of voters' political attitudes in the 1950s–1960s (Heath & Sarah-K., 1988). Although voters appear to be less politically engaged, a classic study by Campbell et al. (1960) shows that many voters have a stable attitude toward political parties. The term *party identification refers to long-term psychological loyalty to the party, which is often inherited from the family environment.*

Party-ID helps voters overcome the limitations of political information and serves as a guide in assessing issues, candidates, and the party's relationship with social groups. This attachment is affective and similar to identification with social or religious class (Social Identity Theory). This explains why some voters remain loyal to certain parties even though

they vote for candidates from other parties. After its introduction in the US, *the concept of party-ID* was adapted to various democracies. However, in multiparty systems, measures of party loyalty often face conceptual challenges due to differences in partisan connotations in different cultural and political contexts.

Social environment, such as parental background, ethnicity, religion, and social class, provide early political cues for individuals. Adolescents and young adults tend to adopt party preferences from parents, friends, and co-workers, which strengthens *party-ID* early on.

Party identification then becomes part of a relatively stable network of social identities throughout life. Research shows that *party-ID* tends to strengthen with age. For example, a 2012 U.S. National Election Study found that 48% of citizens under the age of 30 have *a party-ID,* compared to 60% of the age group over 60. This pattern is also found in many established democracies (Dalton, 2015).

A different situation occurs in new democracies, such as in Eastern Europe, East Asia, and Africa, which have undergone transitions since the late 1980s. In these countries, the experience of democracy is still relatively new, for both parents and children, so party ties are not yet rooted in social and family traditions.

Parents do not yet have partisan values that can be inherited through political socialization, while the existing political parties are still new and constantly changing. As a result, *party-IDs* tend to be weak and unstable. Research shows that party loyalty in new democracies takes time and tends to be formed slowly if the party system becomes established and social groups begin to develop strong political affiliations. Thus, the level of partiality in a new democracy may take a generation or more to achieve such stability as in an established democracy.

Polarization of Issues and Identity Politics

Ownership of issues refers to voters' perception of the party that is considered the most competent to handle certain issues. When an issue becomes dominant in an election, the party that "owns" the issue tends to gain electoral advantages (Petrocik et al., 1989; Seeberg, 2016). For example, the Green Party is synonymous with environmental issues, while the left-wing party is associated with social welfare. Voters rely on party information as a heuristic in assessing competence on issues, especially when the information available is limited (Walgrave et al., 2012; Rahn et al., 1994).

Asfar's (2019) structural model identifies "issue preference" as one of the key determinants of party choice, in contrast to the theses of Gaffar, Kristiadi, and Mallarangeng which reject the influence of economic class, religion, and other demographics. Asfar's findings also challenge Michigan's school view of the subordination of issues in party identification.

In the 2019 election, polarization of issues overlapped with identity politics and became the main strategy in the campaign. Religious narratives and identity symbols are used to consolidate support, replacing a focus on programmatic issues such as welfare and development. As a result, there is significant social division and disrupts national cohesion. Identity issues are capitalized to attack political opponents, strengthen voter bases, and frame opponents through religious and cultural sentiments, not policy platforms.

The 2019 Presidential Election campaign should be a space for the public to assess the candidates' ideas and programs rationally. However, instead of displaying a programmatic narrative, the campaign is dominated by the capitalization of SARA issues, identity politics, disinformation, and hate speech. This phenomenon not only clouds public discourse, but also deepens social polarization and encourages political apathy, including the strengthening of the call for golput.

The question is, does this polarization occur naturally or is it the result of pragmatic transactional political engineering? Indications indicate that identity mobilization in

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The 2014 and 2019 presidential elections left a socio-political residue that is still felt today. Cases of violence against social media activists like Ade Armando are clear evidence that polarization does not stop in the political space, but has permeated the roots of society. In this context, political elites, the media, and civil society have a great responsibility to reduce the politicization of identity through counter-narrative and public education, in order to maintain social integration and the quality of democracy.

In constituencies, voters tend to vote for the candidate they consider to be closest personally or ideologically. The phenomenon of *split ticket voting* is more likely to occur in districts with extreme ideological lines, where there are striking differences between local and national candidates (Frymer, 1994). Fiorina (1996) adds that voters' knowledge of a candidate's ideological position encourages voters to divide votes in order to balance ideological power— for example, by voting for extreme candidates at one level and moderate candidates at another.

However, this argument can be challenged. *Split ticket voting* is not solely due to the need for ideological balance, but it can also occur because voters are unable to distinguish the ideological position of the candidate, especially in legislative contests. This means that the vague or inconsistent ideological representation of the candidates is also a trigger for vote splits.

Split Ticket Voting West Sumatra

Split ticket voting does not only occur at the national level, but is also evident at the local level, such as in West Sumatra Province. Data shows a high proportion of voters from the coalition party supporting Jokowi-Ma'ruf Amin who actually voted for the Prabowo-Sandiaga Uno pair in the 2019 election. For example, 9.8% of PDIP voters voted for Prabowo-Sandi. Similar phenomena occurred in other parties: Golkar (81.2%), NasDem (80%), PPP (95.7%), PKB (88.9%), Hanura (85.7%), PKPI (100%), and PBB (100%). These findings reinforce strong indications of split ticket voting in West Sumatra, even among voters of government coalition parties.

Figure 3. Data Split Ticket Voting Voxpol Center Voting Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin Coalition
Source : By Researcher

Split ticket voting also occurred among voters of coalition parties supporting Prabowo Subianto-Sandiaga Uno. Data shows that some voters of the coalition party actually voted for the Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin pair in the 2019 presidential election. A total of 3.9% of Gerindra voters, 5% of PKS voters, 6.3% of Democratic Party voters, and 30.5% of PAN voters expressed support for the presidential candidate pair from the opposing camp. These findings indicate that voters' loyalty to party choices is not always in line with the choice of presidential candidates they support.

Figure 4. Data Split Ticket Voting Voxpol Center Voting Prabowo-Sandiaga Uno Coalition
Source : By Researcher

In this context, it is important to understand whether the voter's decision to split *ticket voting* was a conscious action from the beginning or occurred spontaneously. For example, voters might vote for the Gerindra Party for the legislature but vote for the Joko Widodo–Ma'ruf Amin pair for president, which is carried by the PDI-P coalition, or vice versa. The study is intended to complement shortcomings in previous research while also posing new challenges to existing approaches. First, in terms of approach, this study offers a new reading of *split ticket voting* by exploring the way of thinking and perception of voters when dividing their choices. This study also uses several theoretical approaches to identify the variables that contribute most to predicting the occurrence of *split ticket voting*.

This study aims to test the contribution of each variable of the five approaches simultaneously to comprehensively explain the phenomenon of split ticket voting. The main focus of this research is to link the ideological aspect with the polarization of identity politics

that strengthened in the 2019 Simultaneous Elections. In this context, the incumbent presidential pair Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin, who is supported by bureaucratic forces, security forces, logistics, and coalition parties, continues to have difficulty gaining significant votes in regions such as West Sumatra, which is actually a strong base for the Prabowo-Sandiaga pair.
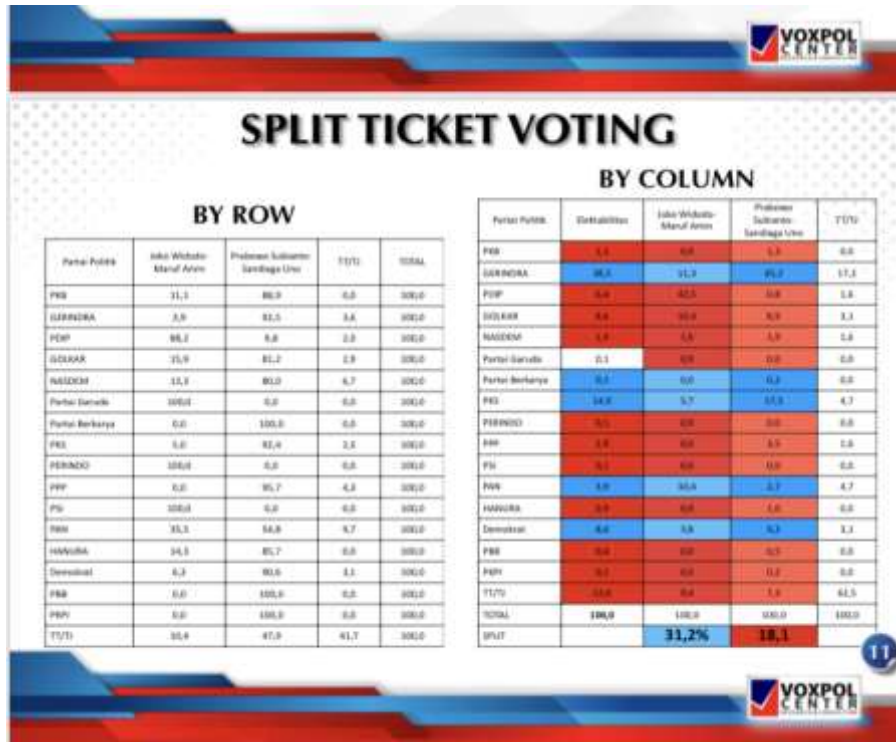

Figure 5. Data By Column STV
Source : By Researcher

Ideological polarization is seen not only to affect the success of the campaign, but also to point to the mismatch between campaign strategy and the final outcome of the election. On the other hand, areas such as Central Java, which Jokowi visited minimally, actually gave a significant victory. This shows that ideological divisions are able to negate the effects of logistics, party machinery, and candidate figures in influencing voter choices.

The main hypothesis in this study is that the low Party-ID rate increases the tendency for split ticket voting. The independent variable is split ticket voting, while the dependent variables include Party-ID, polarization of identity politics, and candidate personalization. The advanced hypothesis states that the higher the level of ideological identification of voters, the tendency to do straight ticket voting increases, because the choice of party and candidate tends to be ideologically aligned.

In this context, charismatic figures such as Jokowi and Prabowo play the role of ideological representations of voters. Strong ideological attachments make voters ignore material factors such as logistics, pressure, and programs. Therefore, this research offers novelty by examining whether ideology is still relevant in explaining voter behavior in the contemporary era.

If a party with a strong ideology shows consistency in voter behavior in the form of low split ticket voting, then it can be concluded that ideological variables remain essential in shaping political choices. On the other hand, if ideological parties also experience split ticket voting, then this indicates a shift in the meaning of ideology among voters. Thus, this study

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seeks to test the validity of the classical theory of ideological loyalty, as well as to challenge the assumption of the "end of ideology" as put forward by Daniel Bell.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that ideology remains an important variable in explaining voter behavior, especially in the context of *split ticket voting* in the 2019 Presidential Election in Indonesia. The findings show that voters who have a high ideological affinity to the party tend to vote straight ticket, while voters with weak *party identification* are more susceptible to *split ticket voting*. This shows that *Party-ID* and the ideological orientation of voters play a significant mediating role in determining the consistency of choices between legislative and executive elections. The polarization of issues and *identity politics* that is strengthening in regions such as West Sumatra seems to be able to negate the effectiveness of campaign strategies, development programs, and even the physical presence of figures in the electoral area. In many cases, voters ignore logistical factors, party machinery, and political pressure when their ideological preferences have been firmly established. On the other hand, regions such as Central Java show high ideological loyalty to candidates even with a lower intensity of campaigns. These results reinforce the hypothesis that the lower the *Party-ID* level, the higher the likelihood of *split ticket voting*. On the contrary, strong ideological attachments—both through parties and the personalization of charismatic candidates such as *Jokowi* and *Prabowo*—are able to suppress voters' tendency to divide votes. Thus, in the context of simultaneous elections, ideology remains an important determinant in electoral preferences, while refuting the classical assumption of the fading of ideology in contemporary politics.

Future research could benefit from a comparative regional analysis to examine whether similar ideological patterns and *split ticket voting* behavior occur across other provinces in Indonesia. In addition, integrating qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews or focus group discussions may enrich the understanding of voter motivations behind *split ticket* behavior. It is also recommended that electoral stakeholders, including political parties, reinforce ideological consistency and clarity to foster stronger *Party-ID* among voters. Finally, future studies should consider the impact of media framing and misinformation on *split ticket voting*, particularly in an era of digital political communication.

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