



Political Participation of Voters in the Simultaneous Election of Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 at Tabalong Regency

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the characteristics of voters' political participation based on regional zones in Tabalong Regency and analyze the causes of the decline in voter political participation in the 2020 simultaneous elections of Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in Tabalong Regency. The results show that: (1) Political participation of voters at the voting stage of the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 at Tabalong Regency was distinguished by regional characteristics, namely the southern region, the central region, and the northern region. The difference in the level of political participation of voters in the three regions is strongly influenced by: sociological conditions of the community, such as education, income and geography in the accessibility of voting, psychological conditions in the form of easy identification of themes, programs, and candidate figures through information technology. (2) Systematically the political participation of voters in Tabalong Regency has decreased, this phenomenon is caused by (a) the influence of the political pragmatism of voters who expect to get "benefits" economically and instantly, (b) technical election policies during the pandemic in the form of the application of the COVID-19 health protocol.

Keywords: *Political Participation; Voting; Governor and Deputy Governor; Election 2020; Covid-19 Pandemic*

Introduction

Abraham Lincoln called democracy as a government born of the people, by the people and for the people (*government of the people, by the people, and for the people*). The people are placed as the main sovereignty holders (Subekti, 2015: 280). Jimly Asshiddiqie (in Gaffar 2013:61) the concept of sovereignty and power that exists in the people cannot be separated and must go hand in hand with the principle of the rule of law so as to create a democratic state based on law (*constitutional democracy*). Gaffar (2013: 23) states that democracy must involve citizens in the formation of government, either

directly or indirectly. In addition, democracy also means people's control over the government. Election as a parameter of democracy is an integrated component in the government system itself. A government that believes in democratic values will hold general elections in the process of transferring power. Elections are referred to as instruments or means to realize a democratic government.

Elections are the exercise of the people's political rights. To exercise the people's political rights, political participation is required. Political participation is interpreted as an action or movement of citizens who actively participate in political life, namely by electing government officials directly or indirectly, influencing the design of government policies (*public policy*). These activities include activities, such as voting in general elections. The form of participation that is most easily known for its intensity is the behavior of the community in elections, including by measuring the quality of voters who exercise their right to vote (*voter turnout*) compared to the percentage of citizens who are entitled to vote (Budiardjo, 2018: 375).

Political participation is the essence of a democratic process. Political participation of voters is one of the keys to the success of the election. The size of the voter participation will determine the quality of the election. Community participation in practice is indeed diverse. The minimal form of participation from voters or citizens is how people want to come and use their voting rights during elections. In democracies in general there is more and better participation, The high level of participation shows that citizens follow and understand political issues and want to get involved, it also shows that the regime (*government*) formed has a high level of legitimacy.

Data on voter political participation from the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province on December 9, 2020 at Tabalong Regency was only 54.86 percent or as many as 94,029 votes out of a total of 171,407 voters. Meanwhile, the participation of voters using political rights in the 2015 simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan at Tabalong Regency was 110,758 votes or 62.15 percent of the total 178,205 voters.

Meanwhile, data on the political participation of voters at the voting stage for the simultaneous election of the Regent and Deputy Regent of Tabalong Regency in 2018 amounted to 128,656 votes or 76.64 percent of a total of 167,881 voters. And the political participation of voters in the 2019 General Election in Tabalong Regency for legislative candidates for the Regional Representative Council (DPD) South Kalimantan was 146,872 votes or 78.47 percent. As well as the political participation of voters for the President and Vice President of 148,941 votes or 79.57 percent of the total 187,174 voters who are entitled to vote in the 2019 Election. In general, the level of voter political participation which is imaged through the use of voting rights at the voting stage of the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 at Tabalong Regency experienced a decrease in the level of voter political participation.

The following table presents data on political participation of voters in Tabalong Regency in regional head elections and general elections:

Table 1. Voter Political Participation in Tabalong Regency

No	Type of Election	Voter Turnout	Participation	
			Use The Right To Vote	Percentage
1.	Election of Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2015	178.205	110.758	62.15 %
2.	Election of Regent and Deputy Regent of Tabalong in 2018	167.881	128.656	76.64 %
3.	General Election 2019 South Kalimantan Regional Representative Council	187.174	146.872	78.47 %
4.	General Election 2019 (President and Vice President)	187.174	148.941	79.57 %
5.	Election of Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020	171.407	94.029	54.86 %

Source: Certificate of Recapitulation of Vote Counting Results in the 2015 Election, In 2018, the 2019 Election and the 2020 Simultaneous Election (data processed).

Referring to the political participation data of voters in Tabalong Regency at the 2015 election voting stage, the 2018 election to the 2019 election which tends to increase, however, in the 2020 election, which was held under new normal conditions or during the COVID-19 pandemic, the situation was very much different from the previous simultaneous elections. Data on voter political participation at the voting stage for the 2020 South Kalimantan Governor and Deputy Governor Elections in Tabalong Regency did not meet the set participation target and showed a significant decrease in the level of voter political participation. So based on the problems above, there are research questions that want to be studied in depth, namely: 1) What are the characteristics of voters' political participation at the stage of voting for the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 based on regional zones in Tabalong Regency, 2) Why did the political participation of voters decrease at the voting stage of the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 at Tabalong Regency.

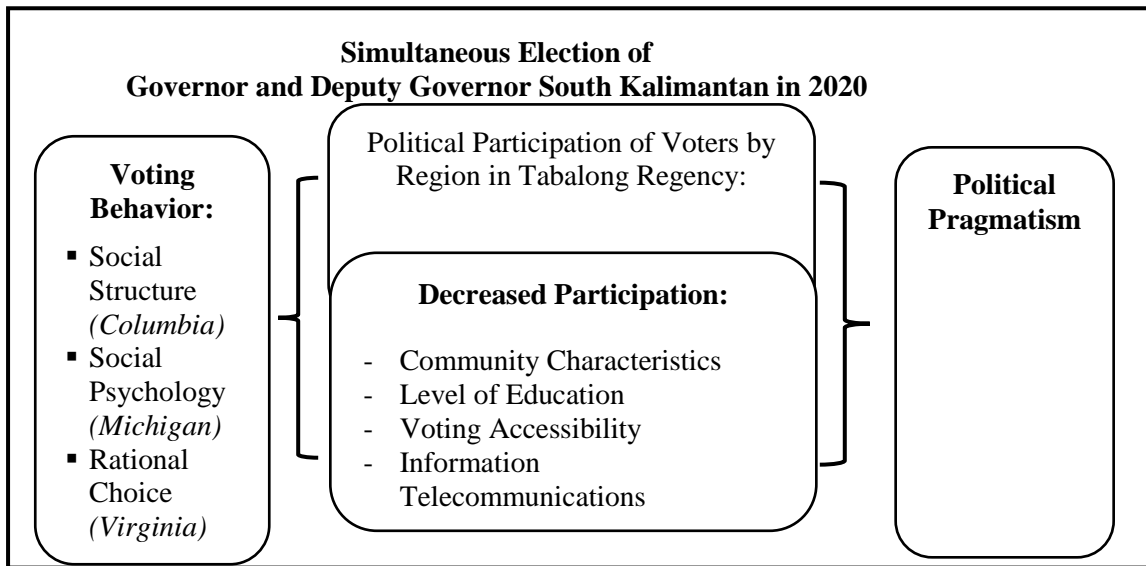
Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach. Denzin and Lincoln (in Moleong (2013: 5) state that qualitative research is research that uses a natural setting, with the intention of interpreting phenomena that occur and is carried out by involving various existing methods. Furthermore, Margono (2009:41) mentions that the use of qualitative methods is based on several considerations: 1) qualitative methods are easier to make adjustments to multiple-dimensional reality, 2) it is easier to present directly the nature of the relationship between researchers and research subjects, 3) have sensitivity and adaptability to the many influences arising from the patterns encountered. While the type of research is explanative. According to Sukmadinata (2012:60-98) explanative research is research that provides an explanation of the relationship between events and meaning, especially according to the perceptions of participants or people who are invited to interview, observed, asked to provide data, opinions, thoughts and perceptions.

This study intends to explain patterns related to phenomena and identify relationships or answer the problem formulation, how are the characteristics of voters' political participation at the voting stage based on regional zones in Tabalong Regency and why voters' political participation decreases at the voting stage of the simultaneous election of the Governor and The Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 at Tabalong Regency based on the theory of voter behavior (*voting behavior*), namely

looking at voter behavior with a social structure approach (sociological) such as education, type of work, income, religion, ethnicity, and area of residence, and social psychological aspects (psychological) such as identification of political parties, perceptions of the candidates or the themes raised and seen from the aspect of rational choice (*rational choice*), and analyzed with the philosophical theory of pragmatism or political pragmatism (voters as political actors), namely in the form of attitudes or actions that make politics a means to achieve personal gain and interest in elections in non-natural disaster situations or during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following is the research framework for the political participation of voters at the stage of voting for the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 at Tabalong Regency:

Figure 1. Research Thinking Framework



The research data was collected by using interview techniques, documentation studies and field observations. In collecting research data, researchers were assisted with instruments in the form of interview guidelines, recorders, cameras and others. In addition, the researcher made field notes writing about what was observed, heard, seen, experienced and felt during the data collection process by the researcher who also acted as a research instrument.

Researchers collected data to several research informants, including: Head of the National and Political Unity Agency, Chairperson and Members of the General Election Commission, Chairperson of the General Elections Supervisory Body, Leaders of Political Parties, Academics and Political Observers, Task Force Team for Handling and Controlling COVID-19, The Election Monitoring Desk Team in Tabalong Regency and several voters in Tabalong Regency. The research data analysis technique uses interactive data analysis, namely data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The data validity test was carried out by source triangulation and data triangulation as well as member check techniques.

Results and Discussion

Roth and Wilson (in Miaz, 2012: 24) explain that political participation includes the act of voting in elections (*voting*), attending general meetings (*campaign*), becoming a member of a party or interest group, communicating with government officials, or members of parliament. The definition described is

the basic theory (*grand theory*) of conventional forms of political participation used in compiling this research, the researcher limits the discussion in the form of political participation in voting (voting) at the stage of voting for the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 at Tabalong Regency. Meanwhile, Herbert McClosky views that political participation is the voluntary activities of citizens in which they take part in the process of selecting rulers either directly or indirectly. So it can be concluded that public participation in general elections is part of the concept of political participation which starts from the notion that sovereignty is in the hands of the people (Budiardjo, 2018: 367-368).

The results of research findings and document analysis show that there are differences in the level of political participation of voters at the stage of voting for the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 in Tabalong Regency. This difference in the pattern of voter political participation can be distinguished based on 3 (three) regions in Tabalong Regency, namely: 1) Southern Region includes Banua Lawas District, Pugaan District, Kelua District, Muara Harus District, 2) Central Region includes Tanta District, Tanjung District, Murung Pudak District and 3) The Northern Region includes Haruai District, Bintang Ara District, Muara Uya District, Upau District and Jaro District.

Political Participation Based on Regional Zones in Tabalong Regency

1. Political Participation of Southern Region Voters

Based on the identification of regional characteristics, geographically the southern region of Tabalong is dominated by lowlands and swamps. There are 1 (one) kelurahan and 40 (forty) villages spread over 4 (four) sub-districts in the southern region of Tabalong Regency including Pugaan District, Muara Harus District, Kelua District and Banua Lawas District, with an area of 231.57 km² or 7.31 percent of the total area of Tabalong Regency. Based on ethnicity, the majority of people in the southern region are indigenous or homogeneous, based on data from the Tabalong Statistics Center, Islam is the majority religion embraced by people in the southern region of Tabalong Regency.

The research findings show that the political participation of voters in the southern region of Tabalong Regency at the voting stage for the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 reached a participation rate of 56.38 percent. The political participation of voters in the southern region of Tabalong Regency forms a better pattern of voter political participation compared to the political participation of voters in the other two regions in Tabalong Regency, namely the central and northern regions. This is influenced by the homogeneity of the social class character of the community, the accessibility of the geographical condition of the voters' residence in voting at the polling station (TPS), the improvement of the quality of the education level of the community, the development of equitable information telecommunication media as well as personal motivational interest and people's critical attitude towards government. As summarized in the data from interviews with the Chairman of the Tabalong General Election Commission, as follows:

"The data on good political participation in the southern region is also influenced by the presence of religious figures who were also visited by candidate pairs yesterday, besides that internet network access in the southern region is much better than in the northern region. The issues that developed in the southern region during the last election related to the profile of each pair of candidates have also become the subject of discussion and discussion among the public, while in the northern region we do not hear about these issues. In this southern region, there are also many political figures who are still considered in society". (Interview, Ardiansyah, S.HI, 16/8/2021).

So it can be concluded that the analysis of the characteristics found in the people (*voters*) in the southern region of Tabalong Regency which forms a better pattern of voter political participation in Tabalong Regency does not match and rejects the theory of voter behavior (*voting behavior*) in the aspect of the social structure approach, which states that Voter behavior in elections is strongly influenced by sociological conditions in the form of aspects of the area of residence (city or village), and social instruments such as socioeconomic status, type of work, religion, and ethnicity. Because based on the characteristics, the southern region of Tabalong Regency is categorized as a rural area with the majority of the population working in the agricultural and commercial/trade sectors.

That the good political participation of voters in the southern region of Tabalong Regency at the 2020 simultaneous election voting stage is very strongly influenced by aspects of the social psychology (psychological) approach, in the form of voter identification of local community leaders, party leaders and religious leaders around who associate themselves with candidates candidate, as well as voter perceptions or evaluations of the candidate's track record as well as themes and programs disseminated through information telecommunications media so as to create personal motivation and a critical attitude of the community in making political decisions or choices accompanied by improvements in the quality of public education levels, thereby increasing voter political participation in the southern region of Tabalong Regency.

While the theory of rational choice approach in the form of consideration of obtaining broad benefits supports research findings in the southern region of Tabalong Regency, especially those related to improving community welfare and regional or regional development identified by voters based on work programs launched by candidates. So that it affects the choice and good political participation of voters in the southern region of Tabalong Regency in voting.

2. Political Participation of Central Region Voters

Geographically, Tanjung, Tanta and Murung Pudak Districts are located in the central part of Tabalong Regency, with an area of 628.32 km² or 14.77 percent of the total area of Tabalong Regency. There are 9 (nine) kelurahan and 30 (thirty) villages spread over 3 (three) sub-districts in the central region. Administratively, Tanjung and Murung Pudak sub-districts are the center of government and at the same time the capital of Tabalong Regency. As the district capital, various community activities and population density are concentrated in this area, with the characteristics of a multi-ethnic and heterogeneous society. The central region of Tabalong Regency has the greatest potential in the mining, trade, agriculture, plantation, fisheries and government sectors. Based on this potential, the people in the central region of Tabalong Regency have a fairly good level of income and welfare and at the same time make the central region have a very dynamic level of population fluctuations.

The results of research findings on voter political participation in the central region of Tabalong Regency including Tanjung, Tanta and Murung Pudak Districts at the voting stage of the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 in Tabalong Regency showed a pattern of voter political participation that was lower or more declining than southern region voter political participation, but still better than the political participation of voters in the northern region of Tabalong Regency. With the political participation rate of voters in the central region of Tabalong Regency of 56.05 percent or 40,283 voters from a total of 71,873 voters.

This is strongly influenced by the quality of human resources and the support of the social-structure of the community, especially those related to work and income as well as a good level of public education, including the influence of the area of residence (urban), which can be interpreted that voters in the central area of Tabalong Regency have the convenience of channeling political rights to polling stations (TPS) and are influenced by the views of voters' rationality in the form of considerations of obtaining benefits from the programs offered by prospective candidates for the welfare of the wider

community so as to lead to participation and voters' political interest in channeling political rights in voting.

Aspects of social psychology (psychological) also have an influence on the political participation of voters in voting in the central region of Tabalong Regency, namely in the form of voter identification of the vision, mission and campaigned programs, personal assessment of the candidate's figure or campaign themes proclaimed, as well as voter identification of local figures (religious leaders or political figures) associated with voters as representatives or part of certain community groups which is also interpreted as a form of support for candidates, where these symbols quickly spread through the rapid development of mass media and the modernization of information technology among urban communities in particular, thus making it easy for the public to access various information about political contestation and political issues, including information about the track records of candidates. As the result of an interview with the Head of the General Elections Supervisory Board of Tabalong Regency, that:

“People in this central region have many professions as employees in government, private companies, and traders and entrepreneurs as well and on polling day it is a holiday so the opportunity and opportunity to participate in exercising their right to vote is there. Then in the midst of this, the level of public education is also very good and also has broad access to mass media and social media so that various information related to the election process and profiles of candidate pairs can be easily known by the public”. (Interview, Hirsan, S.Pd, 2/9/2021).

In addition to the two aspects of the approach to voter behavior in the form of sociological and psychological aspects, the political participation of voters in the central region of Tabalong Regency is also influenced by the aspect of rational choice of voters, where voters have considerations of profit and loss, especially those related to policies in work programs launched by the candidate, whether it can provide broad benefits or not for voters in social life. However, the analysis in the context of rational choice does not fully exert a strong influence on the political participation of voters in the central region of Tabalong Regency, the research findings reveal that some voters in the central region show symptoms of political pragmatic attitudes or actions in the 2020 simultaneous elections, namely the consideration of voters getting benefits instantly (quickly) from the political process that takes place due to habits (culture) and the experience of the emergence of gifts and lure by candidates in each election.

The research findings are in accordance with what was revealed by Manik et al., (2015:8) which states that voter political pragmatism refers to behavior to participate or not participate in the political process due to material incentives. In a pragmatic attitude, voters commodify their participation in the political process. Voters trade their positions to be exchanged or traded for something material.

So based on the research findings and analysis of the characteristics of voters in the central region of Tabalong Regency, it supports the theory of voter behavior that voter political behavior is closely related and influenced by aspects of the social (sociological) structure of society in the form of education, type of work, income, religion, ethnicity, and geographical conditions of the area of residence (urban). This finding is reinforced by the opinion of Gabriel A. Almond (1965) that political education in the family, school, social circle and workplace environment, the influence of the development of the mass media and personal relationships with political figures form a behavior which in turn affects a person's participation in politics (Miaz, 2012:43). Furthermore, it supports the findings of the research on voter political participation in the central region of Tabalong Regency. Mas'oe (2011:49) reveals that modern society cannot live without broad, fast and generally uniform communication ... in addition to providing information about political events, the mass media also conveys directly or indirectly the values held by society. Certain symbols are conveyed with emotional context. Therefore, a controlled mass media system is a powerful means of influencing and shaping political beliefs.

3. Political Participation of Northern Region Voters

Viewed from the topography, the northern region is an area with highlands and mountains, where the Meratus Mountains stretch from north to south east. There are 51 (fifty one) villages spread over 5 (five) sub-districts in the northern region of Tabalong including Muara Uya District, Bintang Ara District, Haruai District, Upau District and Jaro District. Referring to the data that the northern region of Tabalong Regency has an area of 2,776.57 km² or 78.19 percent of the total area of Tabalong Regency. The biggest potential in the northern region is the plantation sector, agriculture, mining and livestock, forest and tourism potential.

Based on social conditions, the people of the northern region mostly work as farmers and planters, benefiting from forest products such as wood, rubber gardening and various other plantation crops. The northern region of Tabalong Regency is known as the development of transmigration areas and is a crossing route between provinces, so it is multi-religious and multicultural and heterogeneous in character, consisting of multi-ethnic groups, including ethnic Banjar, Dayak, Javanese, Madurese, Sasak, Bugis and Ende Flores.

Based on the research findings, data on voter political participation in the northern region of Tabalong Regency at the voting stage showed the greatest decline in political participation compared to the other two regions, namely the southern and central regions. The average political participation of voters in the northern region of Tabalong Regency only reached 52.19 percent.

That the declining political participation of voters in the northern region of Tabalong Regency at the voting stage of the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 was greatly influenced by various obstacles and limitations of voters such as barriers to access to information, sociological conditions of the community, and geographic conditions of people's residences with remote work location, thus causing the absence of opportunities or opportunities as well as personal motivation of voters to be able to channel political rights at the voting stage in the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan in 2020. This condition was expressed by the Head of Domestic Politics who carried out monitoring at the voting stage through the 2020 Simultaneous Regional Election Desk Team at the National Unity and Political Agency of Tabalong Regency, through the following interview:

“Based on the data we have, Jaro sub-district shows the lowest voter turnout. So it can be concluded that the condition of the community's residence is sufficient to determine the level of voter participation, the Jaro sub-district and the northern region are generally scattered or scattered and not concentrated in one point, for example, the villages of Dambung, Hegar Manah, Salikung, that's quite far. This means that the people who live in the village when they want to go to the polling station take time, travel distance and the difficulty is quite high. It is different from those in the city, of course, it is easier and it clearly determines the level of voter participation between those who live in the city and in the village”. (Interview, Rudi Noor Erwan, S.Sos., M.Si, 5/7/2021).

The results of the research on the characteristics of voters in the northern region of Tabalong Regency who are generally rural communities and sociologically rely on their income from agricultural, plantation and forest products, with the quality of the community's education level being still low, very influential on the quality of political knowledge so that there are considerations of profit and loss in channeling political rights. In addition, geographical conditions are also an obstacle for the community in voting at the polling station as well as limitations in access to communication media through information technology so as to form a pattern of voter political participation which has the largest decline in Tabalong Regency.

So based on research findings on voter political participation in the northern region of Tabalong Regency with regional characteristics and voter behavior have a close relationship and support the theory of voter behavior (*voting behavior*), that the political behavior of voters in the northern region of Tabalong Regency is strongly influenced by sociological aspects of society in the form of education, type of work, income, religion, ethnicity, and geographical conditions of the area of residence (rural). In addition, social psychology (psychological) aspects also play a role in shaping the pattern of declining voter political participation in the northern region of Tabalong Regency due to barriers to access to telecommunications information so that voter identification of the candidate's figure, campaign themes and programs that are appointed and socialized by candidate candidates are not voters can do it easily and evenly.

The research findings show that voter behavior in the northern region of Tabalong Regency is not in accordance with rational choice theory, which assumes that voters basically act rationally when making choices in elections. In this context, the political participation of voters in the northern region of Tabalong Regency is strongly influenced by low political interest and the emergence of attitudes and symptoms of voter political pragmatism towards politics and government, including the 2020 election of Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan in Tabalong Regency.

Where in the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan in 2020 in Tabalong Regency, there was no distribution and provision of the lure of assistance, either in the form of goods or money from candidates or political parties in the election process. So in this condition, it is assumed that voters do not get a "benefit" from the ongoing political process. So that when this is not obtained, voters prefer to do individual routines such as going to the garden, tapping rubber, and other routines that generate income for themselves and their families rather than participating in channeling their political rights to polling stations.

Supporting these findings, Azwar (2016: 237) states that political pragmatism is essentially a benefit, so the lure of giving material or money politics in political pragmatism is defined as "benefits" obtained by individuals (voters) or certain groups. The benefits in question can be situational, can change according to situations and conditions. Furthermore, Hamid (2020: 60) explains that the attitude of voters in the form of rational choices and pragmatism in politics tends to be identical, because these two approaches are driven by the real interests of voters, especially those concerning material interests and welfare. Which one is profitable, and is able to fulfill its interests and provide benefits to individuals, will of course be chosen (participate).

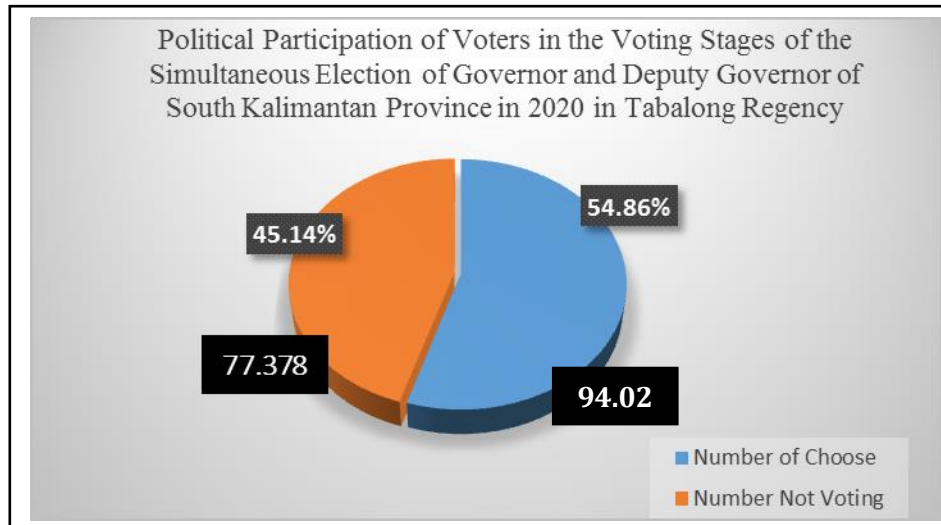
This finding is in line with the study of Alan S. Zuckerman in his book "*Doing Political Science*" (in Budiardjo, 2018: 378) that social and economic factors affect the attitude of voters in political participation. Furthermore, Surbakti (2019:170) revealed that the factors that also influence a person's political participation are direct socio-political environmental factors in the form of situations, namely the conditions that directly affect the actor when they want to carry out an activity, such as weather, family conditions, space conditions, the presence of other people, group atmosphere, and threats in all their forms. Therefore, political participation is closely related to the understanding of the political education of the community or the voters themselves.

The Decline of Voter Political Participation in the 2020 Simultaneous Elections in Tabalong Regency

Being an undeniable condition, that systematically the number of voters' political participation at the voting stage of the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 in Tabalong Regency decreased compared to data on the political participation of voters in the previous general election and election. The limit or indicator used is the target of voter participation set by the General Election Commission (KPU) of South Kalimantan Province, which is 79 percent

participation in the 2020 simultaneous election voting. The following is the percentage of voter political participation data at the voting stage for the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 in Tabalong Regency which only reached 54.86 percent or 94,029 participation from a total of 171,407 voters:

Figure 2 . Percentage of Voter's Political Participation



The decline in voter political participation in the 2020 simultaneous elections of course has a cause, the following section reveals the findings of the research which are the main causes of the decline in voter political participation at the voting stage of the 2020 simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in Tabalong Regency.

1. The Influence of Voters' Political Pragmatism

The decline in voter political participation in Tabalong Regency is because most voters in Tabalong Regency are still influenced by political habits or culture expecting the lure of promises and gifts from candidates and political parties, either direct assistance in the form of gifts or money politics. In other words, voters expect instant "benefits" in every struggle for popular political support in the election of executive (regional heads) and legislative (DPRD) leaders in elections. So that when the award is not made by candidates or political parties at the stage of voting for the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 in Tabalong Regency, it becomes a consideration for voters not to participate in channeling their political rights.

This condition is also exacerbated by the quality of voters who do not have adequate political information and low political interest, so that they are more susceptible to making promises and the lure of assistance from candidates and political parties as a consideration in the use of their right to vote. Thus, the less interested a citizen is in politics, the more likely it is for voters to make money politics and the lure of providing assistance as the main goal in voting in regional head elections.

Awareness and commitment of voters in political participation will be really tested in the 2020 simultaneous elections. The presence of voters at polling stations is solely to express their political rights directly, and the right to vote without pressure or the lure of receiving monetary or other material rewards is one part of realizing democracy. Meanwhile, the socio-economic conditions of the community that felt difficult in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic triggered the emergence of considerations of profit and

loss among voters in voting at the voting stage for the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 in Tabalong Regency.

These findings are supported by the study of Muhtadi (2020:128) that an important component of the political attitude of voters is trust in political institutions (*political trust*). People who have low political trust are believed to have difficulty trusting democratic political institutions, so they tend to build transactional relationships with political parties and candidate pairs. Furthermore, Muhtadi (2020:108) explains that sociological variables such as education and voter income often have a strong relationship. Voters with low levels of education usually have lower incomes than those with higher education and vice versa. As a result, those who are less educated are more exposed to vote-buying in this context, considering the profit-and-loss motive in voting.

Thus, the above analysis is in line with the study by Frank Lindenfeld (1964) (in Hamid, 2020:71) that the main factors that encourage someone to participate in political life and activities are financial decisions, that low economic status causes a person to feel eliminated from political life, and the person concerned will become apathetic. According to him, this does not happen to people who have economic ability. The condition or behavior of the voters is also influenced by political culture and the habits of voters receiving gifts, the lure of assistance, either in the form of goods or gifts and even political money by political parties and candidates in every election. Conditions that have become an experience and a common political event in society, while this did not happen at the stage of voting for the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 so that it became one of the causes of the decline in voter political participation at the stage of voting for the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 at Tabalong Regency. As summarized in the data from interviews with the Head of the National Unity and Politics Agency which states that the political culture of the people who expect gifts and lure is still happening among the people:

"Because of the habit of the lure of aid and political money, people are used to when political contestants receive the lure of assistance from pairs of candidates, because in the last 2020 election there was no such thing, unlike the 2015 election and the 2018 regent election. People think the election was tasteless. That's the first cause of low voter turnout". (Interview, Ach. Rahadian Noor, S.STP., M.Si, 13/8/2021).

That the experience or political culture for voters in the form of gifts (gifts or money politics) from candidates and political parties in every political process has been "consciously" accepted by voters as a truth that provides instant "benefits" for an individual (voters). This is in accordance with the philosophical concept of pragmatism which provides the view that pragmatism as a criterion for the truth of teaching is in the form of "benefits". A theory or hypothesis is considered pragmatism if it brings a result. In other words, a theory is true if it works. Thus pragmatism can be categorized into a discussion of the theory of truth (Mustaqim, 2012:14).

Supporting these findings Almond and Verba (1972) explain that a person's political behavior is formed by the experience, involvement together to reject or accept any political object or event. Therefore, political behavior is defined as the activities of every citizen related to the political situation and development of a region or country. Political behavior is based on the state of a society that is inseparable from political culture. Furthermore, Lawrence et al (2003) revealed that humans are assumed to be rational voters who are able to anticipate any consequences that may arise from existing choices, From these choices, the voter makes the choice that provides the greatest benefit (rational) for him (Miaz, 2012:45-47).

2. Technical Policy for the Implementation of the COVID-19 Health Protocol

The government through the Election Organizer has maximized the 2020 simultaneous elections which took place during the COVID-19 pandemic so that they can be carried out properly by issuing various policy and regulatory frameworks and preparing strict COVID-19 health protocols. In this context, the government has carried out its functions in the form of regulatory, service, and protection functions for the governed (society). However, other impacts arise due to the implementation of health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic, namely many people who have limitations in work (economy) so that it is difficult to earn income and eventually people are unemployed, then appears apathetic attitude or behavior which results in a decrease in public interest in political participation so that they choose not to exercise their right to vote.

The holding of elections during the COVID-19 pandemic has become an obstacle for people to freely channel their political rights. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has also affected public political activities at the stage of the 2020 simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in Tabalong Regency, especially those related to political activities such as the stages of socialization and campaigns carried out by candidates. The COVID-19 pandemic also provides a multiplier effect on the socio-economic and political life of the community in general and in Tabalong Regency in particular.

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only created a public health crisis, it has also significantly disrupted people's economic activities, so that it has an impact on the political activities of voters in terms of participation in channeling political rights. In situations or social conditions that are completely limited, resulting in individuals as political actors making adjustments in carrying out a political activity and considering which interests take precedence, whether to prioritize economic interests or political interests.

The results of the study revealed that the transmission of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak was not a condition that the public (voters) worried about and feared during the 2020 simultaneous election voting stages in Tabalong Regency. However, the strict application of the COVID-19 health protocol and technical policies related to setting the time schedule for voter attendance at the polling station (TPS) so that voters do not crowd when exercising their right to vote in order to avoid the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak have caused a decline in voter political participation at the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan in 2020 in Tabalong Regency. As data from an interview with the Head of the Tabalong Health Service who is also the Spokesperson for the Tabalong Regency COVID-19 Handling and Control Task Force, that:

"The main reason for low participation in Tabalong is because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but people are not afraid of contracting the corona virus outbreak, it's not that, but the situation or condition of this pandemic that makes people difficult and has socio-economic impacts, both in terms of work and people's income. Secondly, because it is indeed limited and has to carry out strict health protocols and there is an arrangement for attendance at the polling station, this clearly affects participation. So it's not a direct pandemic, but because of the circumstances of the impact of the pandemic that have caused voter turnout to decline." (Interview, dr. Tafikurrahman Hamdie, M.Kes, 31/8/2021).

The research findings above are supported by Nimmo's explanation (in Miaz, 2012: 24) that someone's involvement in political participation is influenced by official opportunities because they are supported by policies made by the state, opportunities related to social resources and economic resources to engage in political participation, personal motivation underlying political activities, whether intentional or unintentional motives, rational or emotional, psychologically or socially inspired, self-directed or external, thought or not thought. Furthermore, Surbakti (2019:168) states that a political action and

decision is not only determined by the functions attached to the institution that issues the decision, but also influenced by personality and behavior in the form of: desires and drives, perceptions and motivations, attitudes and orientations, hopes and aspirations, fears and experiences of individuals who make decisions.

The implementation of the strict COVID-19 health protocol in the 2020 simultaneous elections aims to provide opportunities and protection for the public or citizens who meet the requirements to be able to participate in channeling their political rights in voting. Even though it has been regulated in such a way by the Government together with the Election Organizer, in reality this condition cannot be denied is still an obstacle for voters, which is also influenced by a lack of motivation and encouragement that comes from within the actor (voters), the absence of sufficient opportunities or opportunities in the midst of narrow conditions in the socio-economic aspects of the community due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, thus giving rise to sociological, psychological considerations and even rationality considerations that tend to be pragmatic by voters by looking at the experiences that have been experienced.

Conclusions and Suggestions

The conclusions of the research are that: (1) Voters' political participation at the stage of voting for the simultaneous election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Kalimantan Province in 2020 in Tabalong Regency is distinguished by regional characteristics, namely the southern region, the central region, and the northern region. The difference in the level of political participation of voters in the three regions is strongly influenced by: sociological aspects of society, such as education, income and geographical conditions in the accessibility of voting, psychological aspects such as the ease with which voters identify themes, programs, and candidate figures through information technology. (2) Systematically the political participation of voters in Tabalong Regency has decreased, this phenomenon is caused by (a) the influence of the political pragmatism of voters who expect to get "benefits" economically and instantly in the implementation of elections, (b) the existence of a technical election policy during the pandemic in the form of the implementation of the COVID-19 health protocol.

Suggestions from the author: (1) there needs to be a concrete, collaborative and sustainable effort between the Regional Government and Election Organizers in Tabalong Regency through planned activities in increasing voter awareness and political education in the implementation of regional head elections, (2) Political parties need to maximize their roles and functions through political education to the public as a learning process and understanding of the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of every citizen in the life of the nation and state, so as to increase voter political participation in the process of forming a democratic government in Tabalong Regency.

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