

# INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT, TRUST, POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE 2019 INDONESIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

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**Abstract**—The purpose of this research is to analyze the effects of emotional attachment of candidate on voter decisions through mediation of trust and political engagement. The study used a survey method in the 2019 Indonesian presidential election. The questionnaire was distributed to 100 respondents in Pontianak. The results showed that emotional attachments had a positively effect on trust, political engagement and voter decisions. The results of this study also showed that trust affected political engagement and political engagement affected voter decision. However, this study cannot prove the effect of trust on voter decision. This research also proves that political engagement functions as mediation between emotional attachment and voter decisions. Likewise, trust is proved to act as mediation between emotional attachment and political engagement, but it does not act as mediation between emotional attachment and voter decisions.

**Keywords**—Presidential Election, Emotional Attachment, Trust, Political Engagement, Voter Decision.

## I. INTRODUCTION

General elections is one of the ways in the democratic system to select representatives of people who will be seated in representatives' institutions, as well as a form of fulfillment of the rights of citizens in the political field. According to Soedarsono (2005:1) The general election was a minimum requirement for democracy and was held in order to select representatives of the people, regional representatives, and the president to create a democratic government.

Indonesian law has set the rights in the elections, but there is still a number of “whites party” or commonly abbreviated as Abstain which is relatively high even in the Indonesian Presidential election. The data of General Electoral Commission (KPU) shows in the last presidential elections there was a decline in the voter based on the percentage of voter with registered numbers. In 2004, in the first round there were 122,293,844 (79.76%) voter with the abstainers level

of 20.24% and in the second round there were 116,662,705 (77.44%) voter with the abstainers level of 22.56%. In the 2009 elections there were 127,999,965 (74.81%) voter with the abstainers level increased to 25.19%. While in 2014, there were 133,574,277 (70%) voter from the final voter list with the abstainer's level continue to increase up to 30%. This means that in the period of election when there was re-election of a head of state held from 2004 to 2014, there was also a high level of abstain ([www.kpu.go.id](http://www.kpu.go.id)). The increasing factor of abstainers is likely due to lack of engagement and trust in candidates that influence election decisions.

The candidates for the presidential election should find a way to obtain as many votes as possible from the voter so that the number of abstainers can be minimized. The competition between candidate elections for voting vote can use political marketing strategies. Political marketing is the application of marketing concepts and methods into the world of politics (Haroen, 2014:48). The background of this research phenomenon is the rivalry between candidates who competed to get voter. The elected president is the candidate for the election with the highest voters (Surbakti, et al., 2011:9). One of the efforts used by the candidate for the presidential election was a political marketing strategy with emotional attachment as an appeal from candidates to voters and beliefs and politic engagement as a type of communication with voters.

Marketing is required to face competition and to get voters vote. According to Butler and Collins (2001), political marketing is a permanent concept that must be done by a political party, politician, or contestant in building trust and public image. The political marketing strategy in this study could be interpreted as a candidate's action and strategy to attract voters' attention to the intent of choosing the candidate.

The purpose of the research is to describe the relationship between emotional attachment, trust, and political engagement towards the voter decision. The study contributed to the importance of emotional

attachment, trust, and political engagement factors in the presidential elections in Indonesia.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Political Marketing

Political marketing: Experts reveal the definition of political marketing as expressed by Firmanzah (2008:156), that political marketing is a permanent concept that must be carried out continuously by a political party or contestant in building trusts and public images. Political Marketing is a permanent concept that must be done continuously by candidates in building trusts through a long term process.

### B. Emotional Attachment

Emotional Attachment: Emotionally derived from the word of emotion. James (2015) said emotions is a tendency to have a distinctive feeling when dealing with certain objects in the environment. Meanwhile, according to Bowlby (1979, 1980), Attachment is an emotional condition to a specific relationship between a person and a particular object. Based on the theory, Thomson et al., (2005) developed an emotional attachment to brands and defined it as the emotional attachment between consumers characterized by a deep feeling about the connection, affection, and passion for the particular brand he consumed. The concept of emotional attachment to the brand is adopted by an emotional attachment to the candidate, where emotional attachment to the brand is a term in economics or marketing while the emotional attachment to the candidate is more towards politics.

Voters' trust is usually determined by observation of voters against the emotions of candidates from the chosen candidates. Dunn and Schweitzer (2005) state that there is a significant effect on the emotional state of trust. While Brader (2005) states that campaigns reach a portion of their goals by attracting emotions, and the emotional appeal can drive behaviors that are democratically desired. The perception of emotional value of voters with a politician will influence the perception of their rational value and also believe there are their policies and their hopes for sustainable communication and political support (Yang, 2016). The below hypotheses are formulated based on the statements above:

H1: Emotional attachment has positive influence on trust.

H2: Emotional attachment has positive influence on political engagement.

### C. Voter Decision

Decision making is a systematic approach to a problem, the collection of facts and data, the stable determination from the alternatives and taking the actions according to the calculations is the most appropriate action (Syamsi, 1995). Kleindorfer (1993) states that this process is influenced by past, present

and future estimates. According to Siagian (1990), decision making is a conscious effort to choose alternatives and achieve goals. So it can be concluded that the decision making is a process of choosing an alternative and identifying the need to achieve the objectives with the basis of desire, knowledge and experience. Emotions have direct influence on the decision (Kozłowski et al., 2017). This means that voters' decisions in the elections are determined by the emotional attachment of the candidate. Widagdo (2016) states that its practicability, emotional attachment and the work program affect the behavior of the voter. Hypotheses of the explanation is as follow:

H3: Emotional attachment positively influence voter decision.

### D. Trust

Moorman et al., (1993) states that "trust is an individual's willingness to rely on the other party which involved in the exchange because the individual has confidence in the other party. Scholars have identified that trust is a vital issue for political candidates to win the support of voters (Sherman et al., 2008). Thus, trust can be a major issue for politicians to identify how voters recognize these factors. According to Yıldız et al., (2017) there is a significant relationship between trust and the engagement of employment level. The trust created from an engagement is usually stronger, because voters have been engaged in political activities. While Wibowo et al., (2013) stated that there was a positive and significant influence on the decision. Candidates who succeed in convincing voters and are trusted by many voters will also receive more votes at the time of the election. Hypotheses of the explanation is as follow:

H4: Trust positively influence political engagement.

H5: Trust positively influence voter decision.

### E. Political Engagement

Engagement is "*involves turning on a prospect to brand idea enhanced by the surrounding context*". Bakker and Leiter (2010) stated that people who *engaged* have confidence and support the objectives of the organization, have a sense of having, take pride in the organization in which the person is working and have the desire to grow and survive in organization. According to Barrett and Zani (2014), the term political engagement is used to demonstrate individual engagement with political institutions, processes, and decision-making. The attachment of voters to politics made the realization and political literacy that anything they did would affect the administration. It is also expressed by Peltoniemi (2018) stating that such engagement in political interest significantly affects election decisions. Hypotheses of the explanation is as follow:

H6: Political Engagement positively influence voter decision.

Based on the study of the theory and the research model, the conceptual framework obtained is as follows:

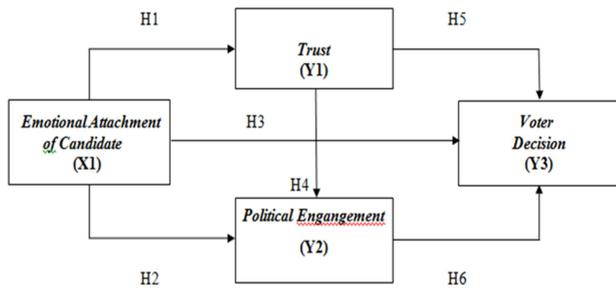


Fig 1. Research Model

III. METHODS

This research is a causality associative research that analyzes the causal relationship between the independent variables (emotional attachment of the candidate) with its dependent variable (voter decision). This research sample is the people of Pontianak. The sample technique in this study is *Sampling Purposive*. Data collection is done with distributing questionnaires directly to the people with 100 samples by survey method and Likert scale. Data analysis techniques on this research is using SEM-PLS, assisted by software WarpPLS 6.0.

IV. RESULT

A. Respondent's Characteristics

The total respondents is 100 people with a ratio of 38 men and 62 women. The respondents were dominated by age over 30 years. A majority of 36% of respondents were dominated by a bachelor degree. The Status of most respondents was as a private employee with 76 respondents or a percentage of 76%. The average respondent is Muslim, which was 48%. Most respondents domiciled in the city of Pontianak with a percentage of 82%. The most media identifier for respondents from the TV was 61%. There were 66% of respondents who watched the debate of the candidate on TV and 92% of respondents were not participating in the candidate campaign in the field. Generally, respondents who were the voters had also voted up to 2-3 times in the election before.

B. Respondent's Responses

The results of the responses from the distribution of candidate emotional attachment variable questionnaires indicate that the average of the overall responses of respondents is 4.19, which is included in the high category, and respondents' responses to the items statement of trust variables indicate a very high average yield of 4.32. While the respondent's response to the political engagement variable statement has an average value that is categorized very high at 4.60, and the respondent's response to the voter decision variable

has an overall average of 4.35 which means it is included in the very high category as well.

C. Goodness of fit test

The third test is goodness of fit test of the model, which uses an index of precision and quality models that include 10 types of index. The accuracy and goodness index of each model has its own referral value criteria compared to the real value of the model's estimated result (Kock, 2015:51).

TABLE 1 INDEX OF PRECISION AND QUALITY MODELS

No	Index	Referent value	Real value	Result
1	Average path coefficient (APC)	P<0.05	P<0.001	Accepted
2	Average R-squared (ARS)	P<0.05	P<0.001	Accepted
3	Average adjusted R-squared (AARS)	P<0.05	P<0.001	Accepted
4	Average block VIF (AVIF)	≤3.3	2.004	Accepted
5	Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	≤3.3	1.981	Accepted
6	TenenhouseGoF (GoF)	small ≥ 0.1 medium ≥ 0.25 large ≥ 0.36	0.558	Accepted
7	Sympson's paradox ratio (SPR)	≥ 0.7	0.833	Accepted
8	R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)	≥ 0.9	0.969	Accepted
9	Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)	≥ 0.7	1	Accepted
10	Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	≥ 0.7	1	Accepted

Source: primary data processed by WarpPLS 6.0, in 2019

D. Hypotheses testing result

Hypotheses testing on SEM-PLS analysis using T-Test with software WarpPLS 6.0, the rule of hypotheses testing decision is done by T-Test. The rule of hypothesis testing is done as follows, when P-value obtained ≤ 0.05 then the hypothesis is declared significant.

**TABLE 2 HYPOTHESIS TESTING RESULTS**

No	Hypotheses	The relationship between variable (Explanatory variables-Response variables)		Coe.	P-Value	result
1	H1	Candidate's emotional attachment (X1)	Voters trust (Y1)	0.773	<0.001	Significant
2	H2	Candidate's emotional attachment (X1)	Voters political involvement (Y2)	0.403	<0.001	Significant
3	H3	Candidate's emotional attachment (X1)	Voters decision (Y3)	0.273	<0.001	Significant
4	H4	Voters trust (Y1)	Voters political involvement (Y2)	0.383	<0.001	Significant
5	H5	Voters trust (Y1)	Voters decision (Y3)	-0.103	0.147	Not Significant
6	H6	Voters political involvement (Y2)	Voters decision (Y3)	0.221	0.010	Significant

Source: primary data processed by WarpPLS 6.0, in 2019

Based on the calculation result using WarpPLS 6.0, in table we get the hypothesis testing result as follows:

The coefficient of the influence of the variable emotional attachment candidate on voters' trust is 0.773 with P-value < 0.001 which means significant because the P-value < 0.05. Thus H1 is accepted, which means that the candidate's emotional attachment significantly affected voters' trust, while the coefficient of the influence of variable emotion of the candidate on political engagement is 0.403 with P-value < 0.001 which means Significant due to the P-value < 0.05. Thus H2 is accepted, which means that the candidate's emotional attachment has significant effect on the political engagement of voters, and the coefficient of variable emotional attachment on the voter decision is 0.273 with P-value < 0.001 which means Significant due to the P-value < 0.05. Thus H3 is accepted, which means that the candidate's emotional attachment has significant effect on voters' decisions. The coefficient of the influence of variable voters trust on political engagement is 0.383 with P-value < 0.001 which means significant due to P-value < 0.05. Thus the H4 is accepted, this means that the voters trust significantly affected the political engagement of the voters, and the coefficient of the influence of the variable voters trust on voters decision is -0.103 with P-value 0.147 which means it is not significant because P-value > 0.05. Thus H5 is rejected, this means that the voters trust has no significant effect on voters' decision, while the coefficient of the influence of variable political engagement on the voters decision is 0.221 with P-value 0.010 which means it is significant because P-value < 0.05. Thus H6 is accepted, and it means political engagement significantly affected decision of voters.

*E. Indirect Effect*

An indirect effect test is the evaluation of the structural model used to determine the magnitude of

the influence of unmeasured independent variable indirectly through the mediation variable on unmeasured dependent variables.

**TABLE 3 INDIRECT EFFECT**

Influence between Variable	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects			Total Effects
		Trust	PE	Trust & PE	
Emotional Attachment → Trust	0.773 (<0.001)				0.773 (<0.001)
Emotional Attachment → Political Engagement (PE)	0.403 (<0.001)	0.296 (<0.001)			0.699 (<0.001)
Emotional Attachment → Voter Decision	0.273 (<0.001)		0.010 (0.460)	0.065 (0.126)	0.348 (<0.001)
Trust → Political Engagement (PE)	0.383 (<0.001)			-	0.383 (<0.001)
Trust → Voter Decision	-0.103 (0.147)		0.085 (0.112)		-0.018 (0.429)
Political Engagement (PE) → Voter Decision	0.221 (0.010)			-	0.221 (0.010)

Source: primary data proceed by WarpPLS 6.0, in 2019

Based on the results of indirect effect calculation, it can be interpreted as follows:

The coefficients of indirect effect of the Candidate's emotions (X1) through Trust (Y1) on Political engagement (Y2) is 0.296, the path coefficient of indirect effect of the Emotional attachment of the candidate (X1) through Political engagement (Y2) towards Voter decision (Y3) is 0.010, and the coefficient of indirect effect of Emotional attachment of the candidate (X1) through Trust (Y1) and Political engagement (Y2) on Voter decision (Y3) is 0.065, while the path coefficient of indirect effect of Trust (Y1) through Political engagement (Y2) to the Voter decision (Y3) is 0.085.

**V. CONCLUSION**

The study concluded that to attract a voter's decision it is good to use the influence of emotional attachment of candidate and political engagement. The research also proves that trusts serve as mediator between emotional attachment and political engagement. However, political engagement does not function as a mediator between emotional attachment and voter decision, and political engagement does not serve as mediator between trust and voter decision. Also, trust and political engagement does not function as a mediator between the emotional attachment and voter decision. An emotional attachment of candidate can increase the engagement of voters, giving candidates the chance to get a lot of voters in this democracy party. Ultimately it affects voters' decisions.

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