Islamic Politics and Local Electoral Support in an Urban Setting:
The Case of the Prosperous Justice Party

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ABSTRACT

In this article, the author seeks to explain the relationship between the types of urban areas in Java and the patterns of electoral support for the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in these areas in the local parliamentary elections in 2014 and 2019. The data in this article were obtained through three techniques, namely online interviews, use of secondary data published by the Central Bureau of Statistics, and literature studies. The results of this study show that based on the composition of their socio-political organizations, urban areas in Java can be arranged into three types, namely (1) dominated by one nationalist or traditionalist Islamic social-political organization, (2) dominated by two social-political organizations based on nationalism and traditionalist Islam or vice versa, (3) not dominated by one or more socio-political organizations, or in other words, tend to be fragmented. In areas dominated by one or two socio-political organizations, either nationalist or traditionalist Islam or a combination of the two, support for PKS tends to be low or moderate. Meanwhile, in regions with fragmented socio-political organizations, PKS tends to gain moderate or high electoral support.

Keywords: *Prosperous Justice Party, Islamic party, Urban area, Electoral support.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Several previous studies have argued that electoral support for the *Prosperous Justice Party* (PKS), the Islamic party considered to be the most successful in present-day Indonesia, tends to be concentrated in urban areas [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7]. While in some cases this argument is in agreement with the actual situation, others have shown that it has not been consistent. For example, in the city of Depok in West Java, PKS indeed won significant electoral support in multiple general elections [8] [9], but in other areas, e.g. Jepara [10] [11], which is also urbanized, that is not the case.

In my opinion, the cause of the inconsistency is that these previous studies did not pay attention to the diversity of the composition of the socio-political organizations in various urban areas. Yet, this is one aspect that has also helped shape the level of electoral support for PKS. For example, socio-political organizations in Depok City [8] [9] tend to be fragmented, thus providing opportunities for all parties, including PKS, to gain significant electoral

support. However, such opportunities are rather narrow in Sidoarjo [12] [13], which is dominated by the Nahdliyin or in Surakarta [14] [15], which is dominated by nationalists.

Based on a critical review of these previous studies, this research argues that urban areas tend to vary based on the composition of their socio-political organizations. These variations can be classified into three types of urban areas, namely those dominated by one socio-political organization (single dominant), dominated by two socio-political organizations (dyadic dominant), and not dominated by any socio-political organizations (fragmented). Each of these types plays a role in creating a certain pattern of electoral support (low, moderate, high) for the PKS. In urban areas with single dominant or dyadic dominant types, electoral support for PKS tends to be low or moderate. Meanwhile, in fragmented areas, the support achieved by PKS has centered on a moderate or high pattern.

2. METHODS

This study focuses on the electoral support that PKS has received in two (2014 and 2019) elections for members of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) at the city/district level (also known as legislative elections, abbreviated *pileg*) in 46 urban areas in Java. Electoral support is indicated by the number of DPRD seats gained at the city/district level by PKS in the 46 regions. There are three data collection techniques used in this study, namely online interviews, secondary data, and literature study.

The following is a description of the three data collection techniques. Online interviews were conducted to avoid direct physical contact between the researcher and data sources (informants) given the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. There were 16 informants interviewed in this study, who consisted of two categories, namely researchers and local political activists. From the interview, data were obtained about (1) the composition of the socio-political organizations in 46 urban areas, which were then arranged into three types, namely single dominant, dyadic dominant, and fragmented, (2) the relationship between the type of urban area and the pattern of electoral support for PKS. Data are also obtained from a literature study.

"Bekasi City in Numbers 2020", contains information on the number of PKS seats in the DPRD in each urban area in the 2014 and 2019 legislative elections. As there are 92 profiles of urban areas dating from 2018 and 2020, while the number of pages allowed for this paper is limited, I do not include each title in the References section. Based on the processing of the second secondary data, by calculating the mean, standard deviation, ±½ standard deviation, interval from the number of seats gained by each party, electoral support patterns to PKS in the 46 regions are obtained, namely high, moderate or low.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Types of Urban Areas in Java

Table 1 shows the types of urban areas in Java based on the composition of their socio-political organizations. These types include single dominant, dyadic dominant, and fragmented. The single dominant type is found in urban areas that are dominated by one socio-political organization, consisting of a nationalist single dominant and traditionalist-Islam single dominant. In the nationalist single dominant subtype, the dominant socio-political organization in an urban area is based on a nationalist ideology. This subtype can be found in Klaten, Sukoharjo, Surakarta, Semarang, Yogyakarta,

Table 1. Types of urban areas in Java

Single dominant	Dyadic dominant	Fragmented
Nationalist: Klaten, Sukoharjo, Surakarta, Semarang, Yogyakarta, Madiun, Kediri, Blitar	*Nationalist-Traditionalist Islam:* Cirebon District, Banjar, Tegal, Surabaya, Malang, Batu	Jakarta Special Capital Region, Serang, Tangerang, South Tangerang, Tangerang District, Cilegon, Bogor, Bandung, Bekasi, Bogor District, Sukabumi, Bandung District, Cirebon, Bekasi District, Depok, Cimahi, Salatiga, Magelang
Traditionalist Islam: Tasikmalaya, Probolinggo, Pasuruan, Sidoarjo	*Traditionalist Islam-Nationalist:* Jepara, Pekalongan, Kudus, Mojokerto, Jombang	

This study makes use of two types of secondary data published by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS). The first type of secondary data [16] [17] [18] [19] [20] [21] contains information about whether a region is categorized as urban or rural. Based on the processed secondary data of the first type, it was found that 46 cities/districts in Java are categorized as urban.

The second type of secondary data, namely the profiles of 46 urban areas in 2020 and 2018, such as

Madiun, Kediri and Blitar. The socio-political organizations that are influential in the traditionalist Islam single dominant subtype are those based on traditionalist Islamic orientation, such as Nahdlatul Ulama. Urban areas that reflect this subtype are Tasikmalaya, Probolinggo, Pasuruan and Sidoarjo.

The dyadic dominant type, namely urban areas controlled by two socio-political organizations, includes the nationalist-traditionalist Islam and the traditionalist Islam-nationalist subtypes. In the first

subtype, the nationalist nuance is more pronounced than traditionalist Islam, while in the second subtype it is the opposite. The first subtype is found in Cirebon District, Banjar, Tegal, Surabaya, Malang and Batu. Meanwhile, those that show the characteristics of the second subtype are Jepara, Pekalongan, Kudus, Mojokerto and Jombang.

The fragmented type is characterized by the absence of one or more dominant socio-political organizations in an urban area. In such a region, power is distributed among various socio-political organizations based on various grounds, such as religion, ethnicity, ideology, social class, and so on. The urban areas of the fragmented type are Jakarta Special Capital Region, Serang, Tangerang, South Tangerang, Tangerang District, Cilegon, Bogor District, Bandung District, Bekasi District, Bogor, Sukabumi, Bandung, Cirebon, Bekasi, Depok, Cimahi, Salatiga and Magelang.

3.2. Types of Urban Areas and Patterns of Electoral Support

As can be seen in Table 2, there are indications of a linkage between the type of urban area and the pattern of electoral support for PKS. In urban areas with a single dominant type, either nationalist or traditionalist Islam, electoral support for PKS tends to be low or moderate. In these areas, referring to the average number of PKS seats in the DPRD, this party is in the order of 2-7. However, the gap between the number of seats held by PKS and the winning party is

these areas, the DPRD is controlled by the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP). A similar phenomenon is found in areas where the power of traditionalist Islam is highly influential, namely Tasikmalaya, Sidoarjo and Pasuruan. In these areas, the United Development Party (PPP), which contain elements of traditionalist Islam, and the National Awakening Party (PAN) dominate the parliament. The existence of these dominant socio-political organizations appears to make it difficult for PKS to gain significant electoral support in these areas.

Low or moderate electoral support for PKS also occurs in urban areas with dyadic dominant types, both nationalist-traditionalist Islam, such as Cirebon District, Banjar, Tegal, Surabaya, Malang and Batu, and traditionalist Islam-nationalist subtypes, which includes Jepara, Pekalongan, Kudus, Mojokerto and Jombang (Table 2). Similar to urban areas with a single dominant type, PKS in urban areas with dyadic dominant type also ranks 3-7 in the DPRD and the gap between the number of PKS seats and the winning party is very large too. In these areas, electoral support is centered on parties representing nationalist forces, such as the PDIP, Golongan Karya (Golkar), the Great Indonesia Movement (Gerindra), and traditionalist Islam, such as PKB. It is not easy for PKS to gain significant support in the midst of these two dominant forces. Moreover, despite the apparent differences, traditionalist Islam and nationalist parties in fact have common ground in several aspects of ideology and culture, which allows

Table 2. Type of urban areas and patterns of electoral support for PKS

	High	Moderate	Low
Single dominant	-	Klaten, Sukoharjo, Surakarta, Semarang, Kediri, Madiun, Yogyakarta *(Nationalist)*	Klaten, Sukoharjo, Kediri, Blitar, Madiun *(Nationalist)*
	-	Tasikmalaya, Sidoarjo, Pasuruan *(Traditionalist-Islam)*	Sidoarjo, Probolinggo *(Traditionalist-Islam)*
Dyadic dominant	-	Cirebon District, Banjar, Tegal, Malang, Batu, Surabaya *(Nationalist Traditionalist-Islam)*	Banjar, Malang, Batu *(Nationalist Traditionalist-Islam)*
	-	Pekalongan, Kudus, Jombang *(Traditionalist-Islam Nationalist)*	Jepara, Jombang, Mojokerto *(Traditionalist-Islam Nationalist)*
Fragmented	Bogor District, Bandung District, Bekasi District, Bogor, Bandung, Bekasi, Depok, Cimahi, Jakarta, South Tangerang	Bogor District, Bandung District, Bekasi District, Bogor, Sukabumi, Bandung, Cirebon, Bekasi, Depok, Cimahi, Magelang, Salatiga, Jakarta, Serang, Tangerang, South Tangerang, Tangerang District, Cilegon	Sukabumi, Tangerang District

very large. This is found in areas with a nationalist base, such as Klaten, Sukoharjo, Surakarta, Semarang, Kediri, Madiun, Yogyakarta and Blitar. In

their supporters to exchange options.

Table 2 presents data that PKS tends to receive moderate or high electoral support in fragmented

urban areas. In these areas, on average, PKS ranks 1-6 based on the number of seats it holds in the DPRD. The gap between the number of seats held by PKS and the winning party is not too far. This is found in all cities and districts in Jakarta, some cities and districts in Banten and West Java, as well as Magelang and Salatiga in Central Java. In areas where there are no dominant socio-political organizations, every political party, including PKS, has the opportunity to consolidate power in order to gain significant support. At this point, relying on the strength of its Islamic ideology [2] [22] [6] [5] [7] [23] [24], organizing and social services [3] [25], and the poor performance of other Islamic parties [26], PKS has been relatively successful in taking advantage of this opportunity.

4. CONCLUSION

This study shows that urban areas in Java show a diversity in the composition of their socio-political organizations. At least three types of urban areas have been mapped, namely single dominant, dyadic dominant, and fragmented. The single dominant type includes nationalist single dominant and traditionalist Islam single dominant subtypes. The dyadic dominant type includes the nationalist-traditionalist Islam dyadic dominant and the traditionalist Islam-nationalist dyadic dominant subtypes. The fragmented type is not further classified into subtypes. There are indications that each of these types and subtypes plays a role in creating a pattern of support (high, medium, low) for PKS. In regions with single and dyadic dominant types, PKS tends to receive low or moderate levels of support. Meanwhile, in fragmented areas, PKS received moderate or high levels of support.

The discussion of urban area variation as described above was not found in previous studies that attempted to link urban areas with support for PKS. This raises a question on why varied levels of support for PKS are found between different areas, despite sharing an urban character. It is hoped that this study will fill the gap left by these previous studies.

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