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Engaging the Electorate: Understanding Voter Dynamics in the 2020 Riau Islands Governor Election within Tanjungpinang City

Kustiawan

Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji

Email: kustiawan@umrah.ac.id

Nazaki

Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji

Email: nazaki@umrah.ac.id

Suryadi

Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji

Email: suryadi@umrah.ac.id

Rido Kurniansyah

Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji

Abstract

This research aims to determine the dynamics of voter participation in the 2020 Riau Islands Governor election in Tanjungpinang City, a case study of the factors that cause women to be interested in voting for certain candidates and programs. The voter participation rate in the 2020 simultaneous local elections in the Riau Islands increased by 10% compared to the previous governor elections for the Riau Islands. The level of political participation in the regional elections in the Riau Islands rose to 67.8% when compared to the previous regional elections in the Riau Islands. This study used a qualitative design method with a descriptive approach, namely using findings that were not obtained through statistical procedures or other forms of calculation and were carried out in natural settings. Theoretically, political participation, in the context of voter participation in this study (Huntington & Nelson, 1994). The research results show that the dynamics of voter participation in the 2020 Riau Islands Governor election in Tanjungpinang City, a case study of the factors causing women to be interested in voting for certain candidates and programs, is because gender is the main key to voters, with the highest total number of voters in Tanjungpinang city. Factors that cause women to be interested in choosing certain candidates and programs are the KPU's socialization of women, good relationship patterns between agencies including regional government, police, KPU and others, the quality of candidates for governor and deputy governor, awareness of women to exercise their political rights, then socio-economic levels, women's education, and the delivery of political information from the mass media also influence people's political participation.

Keywords: Dynamics Voter Participation, Governor Election, Female Voter

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dinamika partisipasi pemilih pada pemilihan Gubernur Kepulauan Riau Tahun 2020 di Kota Tanjungpinang, studi kasus faktor penyebab perempuan tertarik memilih kandidat dan program tertentu. Tingkat partisipasi pemilih pada pilkada serentak tahun 2020 di Kepri meningkat 10% dibandingkan dengan pilkada Kepri sebelumnya. Tingkat partisipasi politik pilkada di Kepri naik menjadi 67,8% jika dibandingkan dengan Pilkada Kepri sebelumnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode desain kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif yaitu menggunakan temuan-temuan yang tidak diperoleh melalui prosedur statistik atau bentuk perhitungan lainnya dan dilakukan dalam setting alamiah. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif yang terus berkembang (snowball) secara purposif hingga data yang terkumpul dianggap memuaskan atau mubazir. Secara teoritis, Partisipasi politik, dalam konteks partisipasi pemilih dalam penelitian ini menggunakan teori Huntington dan Nelson (1994:4) bahwa partisipasi pemilih adalah kegiatan politik rakyat pemilih secara pribadi dalam proses politik pemilu dan pilkada, dalam konteks mempengaruhi kebijakan dan keputusan pemerintah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dinamika partisipasi pemilih pada pemilihan Gubernur Kepulauan Riau Tahun 2020 di Kota Tanjungpinang, studi kasus faktor penyebab perempuan tertarik memilih kandidat dan program tertentu adalah karena Gender sebagai kunci utama pemilih, dari jumlah total pemilih terbanyak di kota Tanjungpinang. Faktor penyebab perempuan tertarik memilih kandidat dan program tertentu adalah adanya sosialisasi oleh KPU terhadap perempuan, Pola hubungan yang baik antar instansi baik dari pemerintahan daerah, kepolisian, KPU dan lain-lain, Kualitas calon gubernur dan wakil gubernur, Kesadaran perempuan untuk menggunakan hak politiknya, kemudian taraf sosial ekonomi, Pendidikan kaum perempuan, dan penyampaian informasi politik dari media masa juga menjadi pengaruh dalam partisipasi politik masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: Dinamika Partisipasi Pemilih, Pemilihan Gubernur, Pemilih Perempuan

INTRODUCTION

Voter participation is a very important instrument in electoral democracy because one of the manifestations of upholding democracy in a country is the level of political participation in the context of high voter turnout (Dassonneville & Hooghe, 2017). The higher voter participation, the more democratic the implementation in a country (Syawaluddin, 2022; Syawaluddin 2023). Indonesia is one of the countries that has succeeded in proving to the world the realization of democracy by successfully holding direct regional head elections as mandated in Law Number 1 of 2015 as amended by Law Number 10 of 2016 concerning the election of governors, regents, and mayors. The election of Regional Heads and Deputy Regional Heads is to elect Regional Heads and Deputy Regional Heads in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. The direct impact of local elections has implications for decentralization, which is the process of implementing democracy (Viana, 2022). The spirit of electoral democracy is voter participation, and mutual agreement in achieving common goals (KPU, 2020).

Unfortunately, for Indonesian women's participation is still below 30%. It is important to increase women's participation so that political decision making is more accommodating and substantial. Apart from that, strengthening democracy which always provides ideas regarding pro-women in the public sphere. With the establishment of the Grand Design

Presidential Decree on Women's Representation in the world of politics in Indonesia, it can be a breath of fresh air for all women who want to participate directly in representing the aspirations of women (Yusnita & Anisyah, 2023). According to Ramadhan, Izomiddin & Zalpa (2022), income and employment influence the participation of women due to the educational factors that determine the high and low participation.

Elections are a form of political participation which every citizen has the right to participate in general elections. Likewise with men, women's political participation is important for achieving gender equality in the political field, and for increasing public life, but unfortunately their participation and representation in national and provincial legislative institutions, and in all government-institutions is still low. Many laws have been created to increase women's political participation. For example, the most recent being Law No. 5 of 2012 concerning the election of members of the DPR, DPD and DPRD. Another picture that complements this is the issue of quality. The low level of women's political participation in Indonesia has basically caused by several factors, including the awareness of political parties to provide opportunities for women to participate in politics. The next factor is the quality of the women themselves, where most women do not yet have the qualities to serve as people's representatives in parliament. The final factor is patriarchal culture which results in women's position still being an accessory in the political world. This can be seen from women candidates in the North Luwu. These two things underlie the strengthening of women's identity. Even though there is a balance in women's participation in the contestation, there are still interpretations which consider that women are not worthy to be leaders because historically North Luwu has never been led by women, while also assuming that women do not have the skills to lead the heterogeneous society in North Luwu (Gustiana, 2017).

Voter participation and voter voting behavior in Indonesia is diverse and complex. The decision to vote for a voter is not necessarily based on a candidate from a certain identity being elected by the majority of his identity (Rohmaniyah et al., 2023). In voting behavior in the 2018 Jambi mayoral election, there are three models/approaches. *First*, a sociological model/approach in which voting behavior is determined by a person's sociological background. The sociological background referred to includes age, region of origin of a person (for example: Java, Outside Java), place of residence of a person (for example: city, village), gender, race and ethnicity, employment status, socio-economic status, and religious orientation. Second, party identification model/approach, namely a sense of closeness to a particular political party. The last one is the rational choice model/approach in which a person's voting behavior is determined based on subjective evaluation of various conditions (political-social economy) at the individual and societal levels (Hartati & Pratiwi, 2019). Religion and ethnicity which fuel identity politics are important factors in regional head elections (Muhtadi, 2018). This religious and ethnic factor actually occurs in various elections in Indonesia by looking at the personal qualities of the candidates. This happened in regional head elections using the mobilization of tribal symbols, voter considerations, and candidate strategies (Aspinall, 2011).

As Meliala and Nurdiansyah argued that the factors that influence voter behavior in choosing candidates are (1) No matter how well the candidate prepares various resources and large funds to seize the existing voter market share, it will never work well if it is not supported by careful planning. and the right strategy to win the competition; A wise candidate is a candidate who is always responsive and sensitive to various changes in the political landscape in a country; (3) The key to a candidate's success lies in the loyalty of his followers, therefore a candidate must get to know his followers more closely, what are his dreams and hopes for the future (Meliala & Nurdiansyah, 2019). What factors influence voters are also studied by Barton, Castillo, and Petrie (2014), which was the most effective

way to influence voters is through direct communication rather than by changing the substance of the message itself. Voters are more concerned with candidate visits and actions than their campaign rhetoric. Researchers have looked up and down for a study or article discussing how the quality of candidates affects turnout but comes up empty, even in the case of Indonesia. Therefore, the scientific community views this work as original (McAllister, 2016).

Voter participation in the Governor election in the Riau Islands has open and rational voter behavior. The ethnic Malay community in the Riau Islands is open-minded by choosing candidates who are considered representative of the Malay people. The selected candidate can also prove that he is a qualified person and can successfully lead the Malay ethnic group forward (Kustiawan & Samin, 2020). Previous research in political participation can be reviewed through Dwi Haryono's argued that voter participation is both active and passive in political life, in the sense that the model of choosing leaders, either directly or indirectly, will influence government policy. This results in public policy placing the main priority in the election study model. Political participation in a democratic country is an indicator of the implementation of the highest legitimate state power by the people (popular sovereignty), which is manifested by their involvement in the democratic party. The higher the level of political participation indicates that the people follow, understand, and involve themselves in state activities. On the other hand, low levels of political participation generally indicate that people have little appreciation or interest in state issues or activities (Haryono, 2019).

Elections for governors in Indonesia have been carried out directly since Law no. 22 of 1999 concerning Regional Government. Where people's political participation is involved in the election, then political participation is 64.23% in Indonesia. With regard to voter participation which is the focus of the author's research, according to Miriam Budiarmo, political participation is the activity of a person or group of people in order to participate in the political process by influencing government policy, the right to elect state or regional leaders directly or indirectly (Hemay & Munandar, 2016). Simultaneous regional head elections in 2020 in Indonesia totaled 271 regions that held regional elections at the same time as the Covid 19 outbreak. One of the 271 regions that held simultaneous regional elections was the Riau archipelago province by holding elections for the governor and deputy governor and five regencies.

The empirical phenomenon in this study is that the increase in voter turnout in the 2020 elections in Indonesia increased by 74.23%, of 2,055,320 registered voters and 1,525,571 who gave their right to vote. An increase of 4.52% from the 2015 election participation rate which amounted to only 68.71%. Implementation of simultaneous local elections in the Riau Archipelago, based on the level of voter participation in the simultaneous regional elections in the 2020 Governor Election, it increased in the Riau Islands in 2020 to 10% compared to the previous Riau Islands Pilkada (see table).

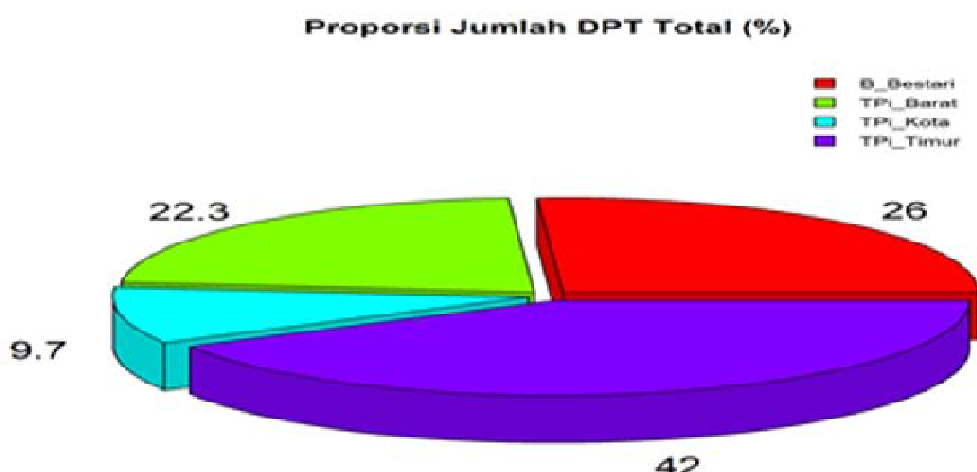
Table 1. Voters' Political Participation in the 2005-2020 Riau Islands Governor Election

No	Election Period	Choose	Absolutely
1	2005-2010	51,97%	48,03%
2	2010-2015	53,15%	46,85%
3	2015-2020	55,41	44,59%
4	2020-2025	67,80%	32,20%

Based on the table above, it can be understood that the level of political participation in the regional elections in the Riau Islands increased to 67.8% when compared to the previous elections, namely 51.87% (2005), 53.15% (2010), 55.41% (2015). Meanwhile, the target for simultaneous voter participation in 2020 nationally is 77.5%. The level of voter participation in general elections and local elections experienced fluctuations in the level of attendance of a voter present at the TPS, political volatility was low, and there were many invalid votes. These problems in the context of elections and local elections really need to be analyzed for the causal factors to find out the root causes in order to improve better management of elections and regional elections. Complex problems related to increasing voter participation in the implementation of the 2020 simultaneous local elections, which intersect with the Covid-19 outbreak, have left new challenges and factors affecting the quality of the regional elections.

Simultaneous local elections in the Riau Islands particularly in 2020, reviewing the electoral process, identifying key issues before, during and after the election, and assessing voter turnout. Overall, this paper further develops our understanding of the dynamics of voter participation in the 2020 gubernatorial election in the city of Tanjungpinang. Dynamics of voter participation in the 2020 Riau Islands gubernatorial election in Tanjungpinang. Based on DPT data from the Tanjungpinang City KPU, they are as follows.

Bagan 1. Proportion of Total DPT (%)



Source: KPU, 2020

In total, the proportion of DPT in Tanjungpinang City is East Tanjungpinang 42%, Bukit Bestari 26%, West Tanjungpinang 22.3%, Tanjungpinang city 9.7%. Based on the total proportion of DPT, the most numerous proportions in total are East Tanjungpinang sub-district. It means that, East Tanjungpinang is the largest number of voters. So, candidates who can get votes in this area, can win the election for governor.

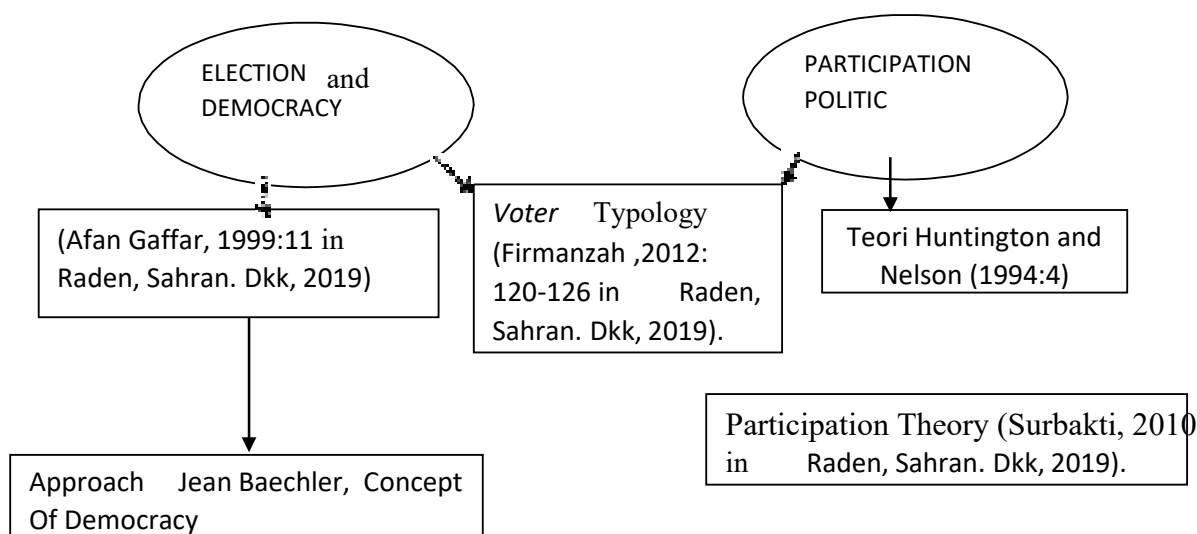
RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses qualitative methods, namely research that intends to understand phenomena about what research subjects experience, for example behavior, perceptions,

motivations, actions, etc. which are used in an effort to fully understand problems in the field by digging deeper into data and information from the field. Qualitative methods are used to obtain in-depth data, data that contains meaning, namely data that is a value behind the visible data. According to Arikunto and Sugiono, descriptive research aims to collect information about existing symptoms and phenomena according to what they were at the time the research was conducted. (Sugiono, 2010). Based on the thoughts and concepts of Suharsimi Arikunto and Sugioyono, this study will describe and to see the problem for what it is by describing facts related to TPS where voters were not present, then voter behavior and factors that influence voter participation in the 2020 Riau Islands gubernatorial election in Tanjungpinang.

Qualitative research methods can be understood as strategies and research techniques used to understand society, problems or symptoms in society, by gathering as many detailed and in-depth facts as possible (David & Julia, 1991). The qualitative approach starts from the ontological view that the existing reality is diverse and this research intends to describe the diversity of views as understood by each informant (Cresswell, 2014). The data collection technique was carried out using a qualitative method that continues to develop (snowball) purposively until the data collected is considered satisfactory or redundant.

Thinking Framework



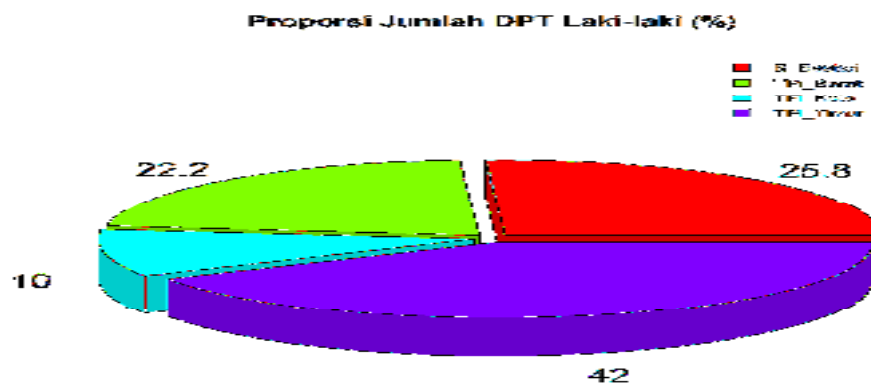
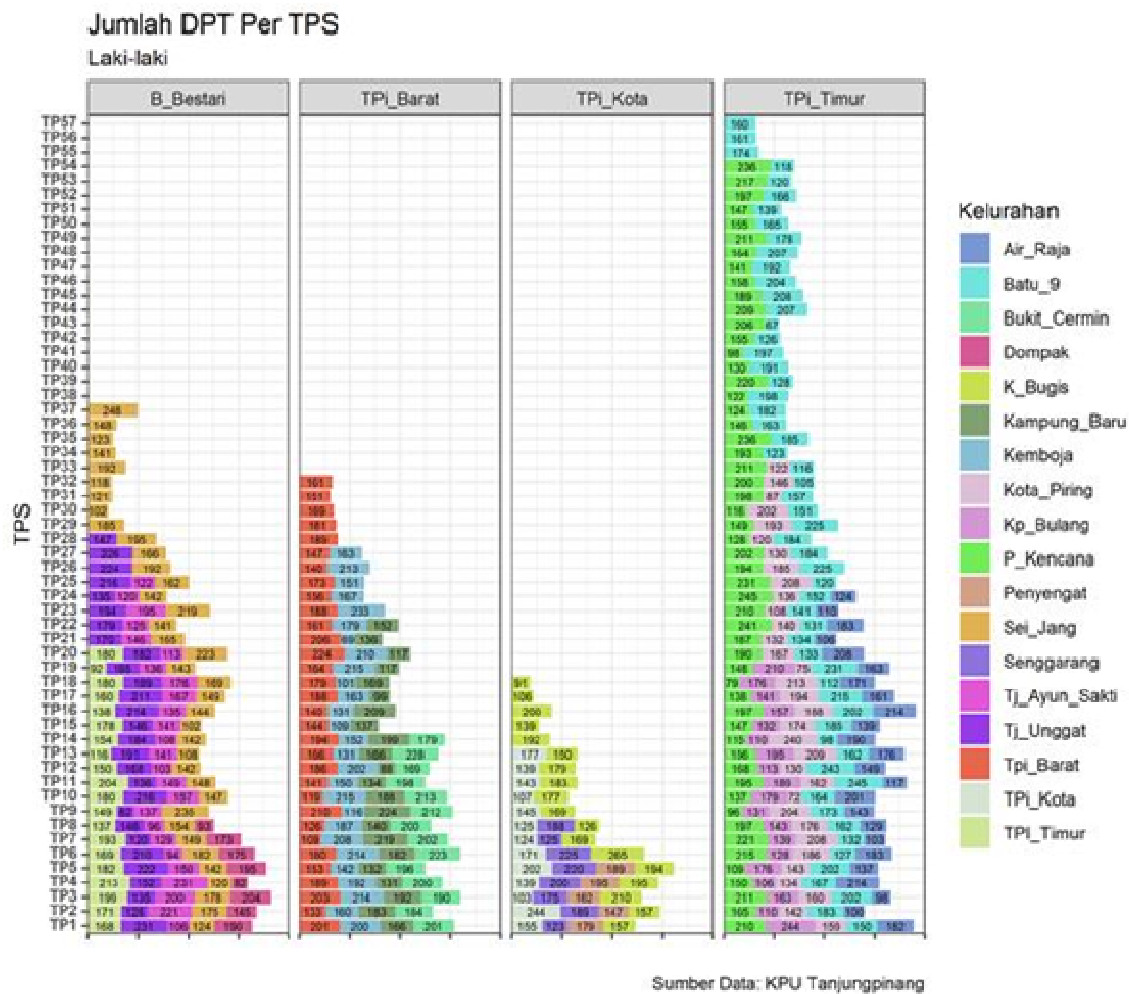
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Based on the results of research related to the dynamics of voter participation in the 2020 Riau Islands gubernatorial election in Tanjungpinang, several findings were found in the field, seen from the final voter list (DPT) data for all Tanjungpinang cities and the results of the votes for the Riau Islands gubernatorial election in Tajungpinang were female voters more than male voters. So there are several issues that were found in this research on voter dynamics in Tajungpinang in 2020, as follows:

Gender as a voter key

The following is data on DPT results in the Tanjungpinang city area in the East

Tanjungpinang, Bukit Bestari, Tanjungpinang City, and West Tanjungpinang sub-districts as well as the results of the 2020 Riau Islands Governor Election.

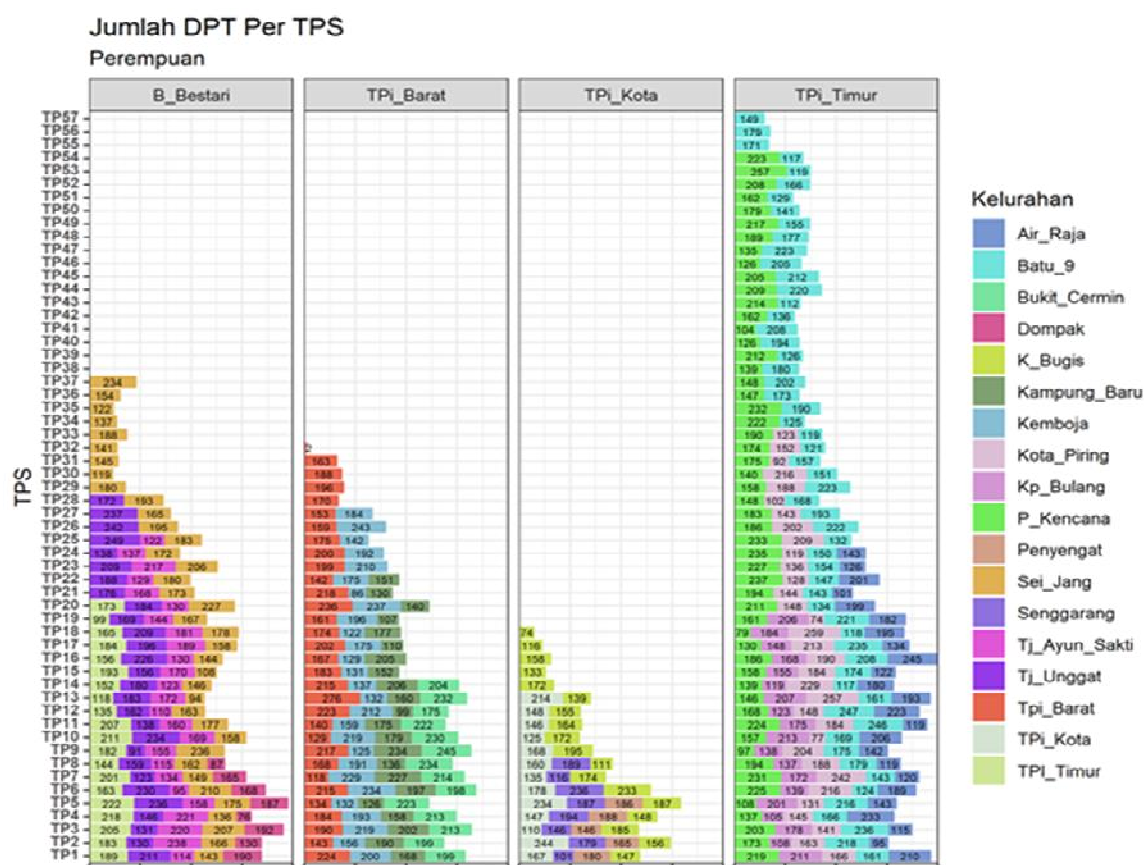


Source: KPU, 2020

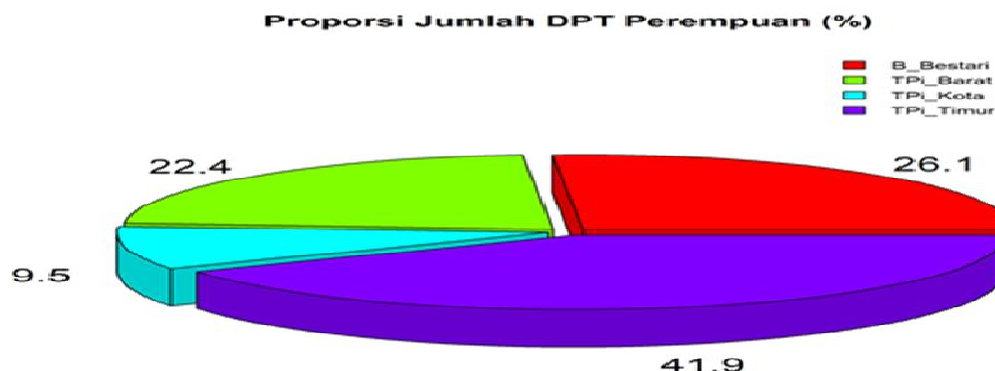
DPT male Per TPS and Proportion of DPT male (%)

Based on DPT data for men per TPS in Tanjungpinang City, the number of DPT men in East Tanjungpinang sub-district was the highest of the three other sub-districts, namely the DPT

for men per TPS in East Tanjungpinang Sub-district there were 30,770 people (42%), Bukit Bestari sub-district 18,923 people (25.8%), Tanjungpinang City sub-district 7350 people (10%), West Tanjungpinang sub-district 16,233 people (22.2%). As seen in the graph below. The data above is the proportion of the number of male DPT (%) in Tanjungpinang. Judging from the percentage of the largest number of male DPT in East Tanjungpinang sub-district. How about the number of women's DPT in the Riau Islands Governor election in 2020 can be seen in the graph and data below in table bellow



DPT Women Per TPS and Total Proportion of Women



Source: KPU, 2020

Based on the number of female voters in Tanjungpinang City, it exceeds the number of male voters. There are 76,078 female voters. While male voters amounted to 73,276 people. If counted, there are around 2,802 people, the difference is that there are more women voters. Of the total number of female voters, the largest number of female voters in East Tanjungpinang District, namely 31,914 people (41.9%) with a difference of 1144 people from male voters, Bukit Bestari sub-district, 19,892 people (26.1%) with a difference of 969 people of male voters, West Tanjungpinang sub-district 17,064 people (22.4%) with a difference of 831 people. From male voters, Tanjungpinang Kota sub-district 7,208 people (9.5%) with a difference of 142 people, more male voters. However, most of the 3 sub-districts of Tanjungpinang Timur, Tanjungpinanag Barat, Bukit Bestari, and Tanjungpinang Kota have more women voters. In fact, most polling stations were dominated by women voters, such as in East Tanjungpinang there were 57 polling stations, Bukit Bestari 37 polling stations, West Tanjungpinang had 32 polling stations, Tanjungpinang City had 18 polling stations. When analyzing the findings in the field in the data on the large number of female voters in the 2020 Riau Islands Pilgub, then in the context of the 2020 Riau Islands gubernatorial election, female voters will determine the victory of the candidate pair's votes. The pair of candidates who can win the hearts of women can be said to have pocketed half the victory. This is because female voters are the focus of the candidate pair campaign, especially focusing on issues related to women such as the issue of longer days off from work for women, compensation for pregnancy, a friendly atmosphere at work for women so that women are made comfortable at every job. During the 4 (four) year span of the next gubernatorial election, women voters are still the key to winning candidate pairs in the local elections. Because the candidate pair must offer programs that are pro-women in every age group. In attracting the attention of women, they can do programs for their children, such as cooking demonstrations and others.

One way is to encourage the political participation of women voters. One way is to encourage the political participation of female voters. To realize genuine participation, the public must receive complete and adequate communication messages and information about policy steps related to the interests of the community. For this reason, candidate pairs must be diligent in communicating their programs, especially those related to women's needs. To realize pure participation, the community must receive complete and adequate communication messages and information about policy measures relating to the interests of the community. For this reason, candidate pairs must be diligent in communicating their programs, especially those related to the needs of women. One of them is to encourage the

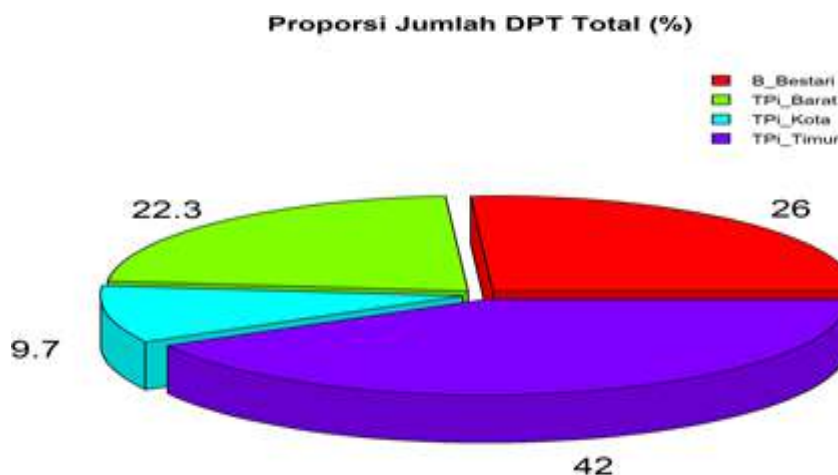
political participation of women voters. To realize pure participation, the community must receive complete and adequate communication messages and information about policy measures relating to the interests of the community. For this reason, candidate pairs must be diligent in communicating their programs, especially those related to the needs of women.

Socialization for women voters about the success of women's struggles supported by candidate pair programs in the legal, social and political fields, both on a national and international scale. The point is strengthening the prevention of oppression, protection and increasing accessibility to public spaces, for women, not the boundaries of the struggle for gender equality.

The second step is to attract the hearts of women, maximizing agents of political socialization. The first agents of political socialization are the family, the second is school, the third is association groups, the fourth is work groups, the fifth is religious groups, the sixth is leisure groups, the seventh is mass media, the eighth is social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and others. And ninth, direct political contacts. These political socialization agents were formed by volunteers, cadres of supporting political parties, and supporting mass organizations, to socialize the figure of candidate pairs and their programs on the bases of women voters who cast ballots.

Another step that can be taken, candidate pairs must understand the political culture in an area. Quoting the opinion of Alan R. Ball, political culture is an arrangement consisting of attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and community values related to the political system and political issues. This means that candidate pairs who want to win the hearts of women voters must understand the local political culture. Even though they are Malay, the original people are ethnic Malays, but the people of the Riau Islands, especially Tanjungpinang, are a heterogeneous society and are fishermen. Nevertheless, the influence of Malay culture in Tanjungpinang City is still attached to the majority of residents.

Proportion of Total DPT (%)

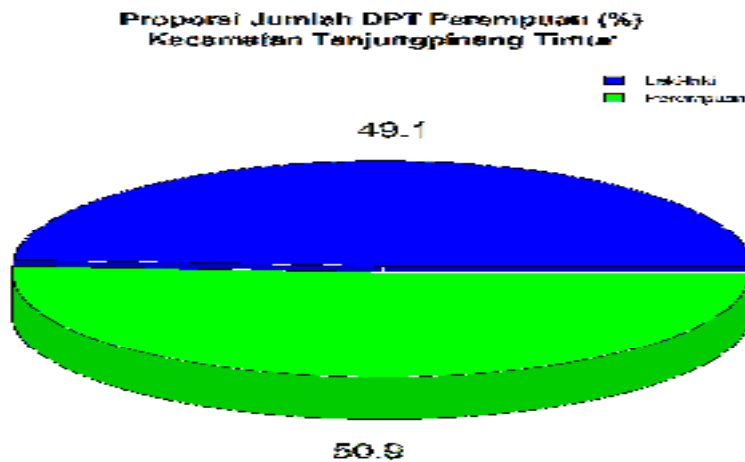


Source: KPU), 2020

In total, the proportion of DPT in Tanjungpinang City is East Tanjungpinang 42%, Bukit Bestari 26%, West Tanjungpinang 22.3%, Tanjungpinang city 9.7%. Based on the total proportion of DPT, the most numerous proportion in total is East Tanjungpinang sub-district. The meaning of East Tanjungpinang is the largest number of voters in Tanjungpinang. So that candidates who can get votes in the East Tanjungpinang sub-district can win the gubernur election in Tanjungpinang.

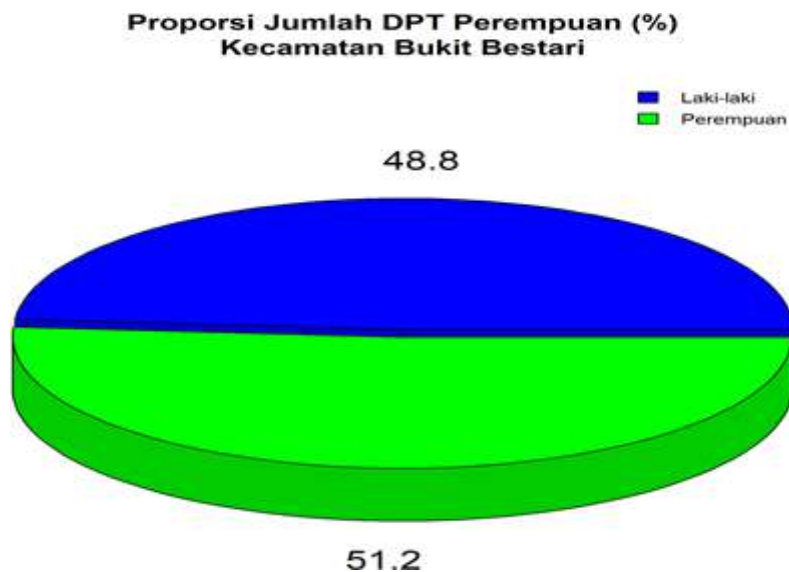
Proportion of Female DPT (%) Tanjungpinang City per District

Bagan 2. Proportion of Women's DPT Tanjungpinang Timur



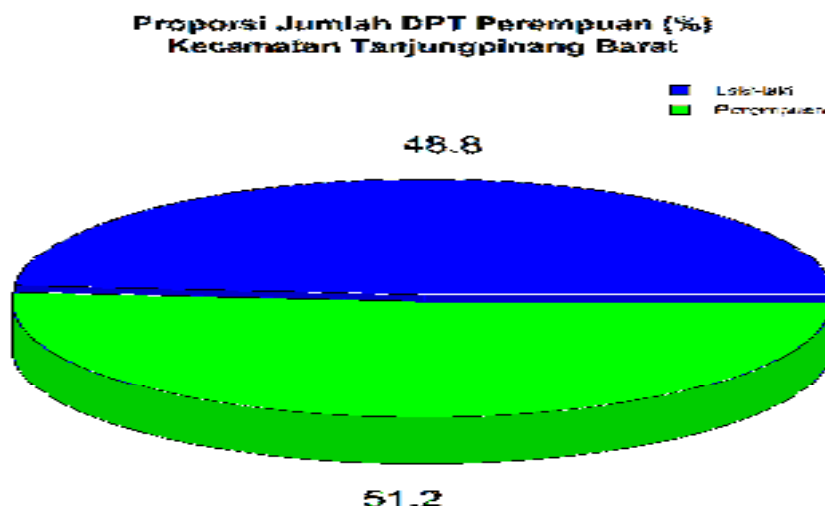
Source: KPU, 2020

Proportion of Women's DPT Bukit Bestari



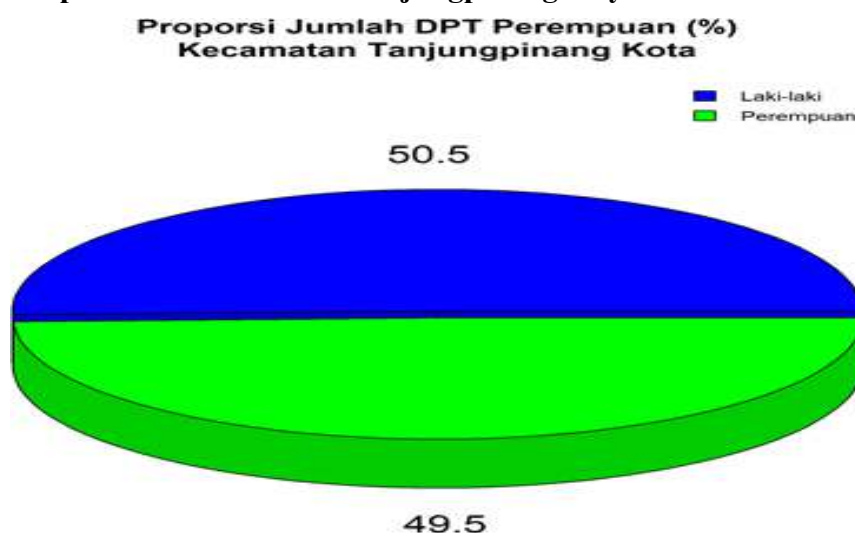
Source: KPU, 2020

Proportion of Female DPT Tanjungpinang Barat



Source: KPU, 2020

Proportion of Female in Tanjungpinang City



Source: KPU, 2020

Based on the proportion of the number of female DPT in Tanjungpinang City, the highest proportion of female DPT is in Tanjungpinang Timur sub-district, 50.9% female, 49.1% male. Then followed by Bukit Bestari sub-district Women 51.2%, Men 48.8%. West Tanjungpinang District Female 51.2%, Male 51.2%. Tanjungpinang District City Female 49.5% Male 50.5%. Based on the proportion of male and female DPT above, the highest proportion of female DPT is in Tanjungpinang City. So, therefore, women voters are the most votes that must be considered in the contest for the election of the governor of the Riau Islands in Tanjungpinang City.

CONCLUSION

The research results show that the dynamics of voter participation in the 2020 Riau Islands Governor election in Tanjungpinang City, a case study of the factors causing women to be interested in voting for certain candidates and programs, is because gender is the main key to voters, with the highest total number of voters in Tanjungpinang city. Factors that cause women to be interested in choosing certain candidates and programs are the KPU's socialization of women, good relationship patterns between agencies including regional government, police, KPU and others, the quality of candidates for governor and deputy governor, awareness of women to exercise their political rights, then socio-economic levels, women's education, and the delivery of political information from the mass media also influence people's political participation.

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