SOCIALLY MEDIATED POPULIST COMMUNICATION IN INDONESIA'S 2018 GUBERNATORIAL ELECTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Populism has evolved in Indonesia and has been adopted by Indonesian political actors within the context of both the national and local elections. Secular nationalist and Islamic populism have also been frequently exploited by the Indonesian political actors who contested in these elections. However, we have little knowledge of what encouraged the candidates, nominated by the Indonesian political parties who competed in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections, to take up populism as a means for developing socially mediated populist political communications to win the elections. Focusing on these issues, this article selects 53 gubernatorial candidates from among those who ran in these elections as cases and proposes socially mediated populist communication as a conceptual framework. This is followed by analysing the campaign materials posted on the candidate's Facebook pages prior to the elections using traditional content analysis. It was found that most of the gubernatorial candidates adopted socially mediated populist political communication strategies but only some of them vigorously established an inclusive populist political communication strategy based on secular nationalist and Islamic populism. Such developments were determined by the parties' ideological orientation and their position in the government as well as the party candidates' political career duration, education level, and background. This article offers the two following knowledge-based contributions: (1) it visualises the two socially mediated populist political communication models adopted by the political actors in Indonesia's local

elections; and (2) it chronicles the types of party-related and candidate-related factors that determine such adaptations. Professionals could consider these models when aiding political party candidates during the elections.

Keywords: Islamic populism, Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections, populism, secular nationalist populism, socially mediated populist political communication

INTRODUCTION

The idea for this research comes from numerous observations. First, populism has been developing as a global phenomenon (Moffitt 2016, 2017), notably within the supra-national, national, and sub-national party systems (Mudde 2007, 2014; Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008), and also within both election and non-election contexts (Alberg and de Vreese 2017). While investigations into such developments have been robustly conducted within the contexts of American, European and Latin American politics (Mudde 2004, 2007; Panizza 2005; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013, 2017, 2018), the knowledge regarding socially mediated populist political communication models advanced by political actors in Asian democracies has been underdeveloped. Second, studies observing populism have commonly adopted the discourse and actor-centred perspectives, but few have considered the communication-centred perspective (de Vreese et al. 2018). Following the communication-centred perspective, subsequent studies have examined the diverse structural factors that determine the populist political communication undertaken by political actors and organisations through social media platforms in European democratic countries (e.g., Aalberg et al. 2017; Ernst, Engesser, et al. 2017; Ernst, Engesser, Buchel, et al. 2017), as well as Latin American democracies (e.g., Casero-Ripollés 2017). However, none of them have offered knowledge regarding the types of socially mediated populist political communication developed by the Indonesian political actors who ran as gubernatorial candidates in Indonesia's local elections.

Finally, while adopting the actor-centred perspective, some studies have explored the personal characteristics of the Indonesian populist actors who took part as party candidates in either the presidential election (Ziv 2001; Aspinall and Mietzner 2014; Aspinall 2015; Mietzner 2015) or the local election (Hamid 2014, 2019). Subsequent studies have evaluated the political leadership styles displayed by the Indonesian populist actors who ruled in either the local government (Pratikno and Lay 2011) or central government (Hadiz and Robison 2017; Mietzner 2018). Alternatively, subsequent researchers

have examined the modes of Islamic populist mobilisation organised by those who ran in either the national or local elections (Hamayotsu 2011; Mietzner et al. 2018; Mietzner and Muhtadi 2018; Power 2018). However, none of them have investigated the following two issues, namely the types of populisms adopted by the gubernatorial candidates who ran in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections as a means for developing a workable populist political communication model to win the elections, and the types of party-related and candidate-related factors that are likely to determine such adaptations.

In consideration of such a background, this article raises numerous questions. Did the candidates who contested in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections adopt secular nationalist and Islamic populism as a mean for developing socially mediated populist political communication when they attempted to win these elections? If so, what kinds of party-related and candidate-related factors determined such adaptations? To evaluate such questions, this article proposes that the Indonesian politicians nominated by Indonesian political parties as gubernatorial candidates to run in these elections favour the adoption of this populism to establish socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication strategies. This development is likely to be determined by party-related and candidate-related factors. The first factor includes the party's position in the government and ideological orientation, and also the ideological orientation of the party and its political block. The second factor consists of the party candidate's incumbency status, age and gender, the length of their political career, educational background and level, and birthplace's association with the province where the candidate was in the running for the gubernatorial election.

Such propositions are evaluated in the following sections. The first section discusses the nature of populist political communication. The second section outlines the development of secular nationalist and Islamic populism in the post-Soeharto New Order regime. The third section proposes socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communications as a conceptual framework and identifies the party-related and candidate-related factors that potentially encourage (populist) political actors to establish socially mediated populist political communications. The fourth section details the research hypotheses, method, and materials. The fifth and sixth sections report the research findings. The last section describes the research conclusion and recommendations.

POPULISM AND POPULIST POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

As a global phenomenon, populism has been understood using diverse research perspectives. It is widely considered to be a type of political appeal (Canovan 2004; Kriesi 2014), and contains political communication ideas, strategies, and styles (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Aalberg and de Vreese 2017; Bracciale and Martella 2017; Casero-Ripollés et al. 2017; Reinemann et al. 2017). Furthermore, it is also seen as an expression of political communication (de Vreese et al. 2018). In the last couple of years, populism has been investigated using diverse approaches. Advocates of the ideational approach have defined it as "a thin-centred ideology" that "considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups", which are "the pure people" versus "the corrupt elite" (Mudde 2004: 543). It highlights "the notion of the sovereign people as an actor in an antagonistic relation with the established order" (Panizza 2005: 4). Such a notion brings in a Manichean view, which acknowledges the moral distinction between the pure people as "a homogeneous and virtuous community" and the corrupt elite as "a homogeneous and pathological entity" (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013: 151). The Manichean view also advocates for the sovereignty of these people, as well as the need to defend their interests and to attack the elites who undermine their interests (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013).

Following the idea of Mudde (2004), this article argues that populism should be seen as a thin ideology that contains a set of ideas that do not merely "claim that politics is about respecting popular sovereignty" but also categorise society into two opposing groups, which are "the pure people" versus "the corrupt elite" (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2018: 1669). Such "a set of ideas" could be adopted and exploited by populist political agents as a specific type of communication model (Herkman and Jungar 2021: 251). These political agents include the media, citizens, and political actors (de Vreese et al. 2018). This article also contends that populism could be exploited by (populist) political actors as a populist political communication to achieve their goals within context of either an election or outside of one (de Vreese et al. 2018; Herkman and Jungar 2021). In democratic countries, these political actors might adopt the components that constitute populism as ideational elements to develop socially mediated populist political communication strategies.[1] These components include people[2] centrism and sovereignty, creating antagonism between the "people" and the "others", excluding the out-groups (the others), attacking the elites (anti-establishment) and invoking the heartland.[3] While formulating such strategies, these political actors might

consider not only the current populism forms that exist in these countries but also the elements that constitute them. As detailed in the subsequent section, this tendency is evolving in Indonesia during the post-Soeharto New Order era.

SECULAR NATIONALIST AND ISLAMIC POPULISM IN THE POST-SOEHARTO NEW ORDER

In the last couple of years, secular nationalist and Islamic populism have evolved in Indonesia. Secular nationalist populism has been commonly developed by populist actors and organisations to achieve the following goals: to define the people as the repository of virtue in contrast to the evil and rapacious elites; and to secure the value of harmony "from a range of influences, including that of radical forms of Islamic politics" (Hadiz 2017: 275). While strongly endorsing the importance of having a secular nationalist state based on Indonesian Unitary State's ideology, namely *Pancasila* (the Five Principles) (Hadiz 2017), advocates of it endorse the importance of national sovereignty and the need to promote nationalist and anti-foreign sentiments. Those who advocate for it commonly favour developing "direct appeals to the people", communicating and persuading using "the rhetoric of nationalism and social justice" and attacking the "selfishness of established politicians" (Hadiz 2017: 274–275). These politicians are considered to be lacking in success when it comes to resolving the foreign debt and social inequality issues, securing "Indonesia's natural resources for the good of the people" and dealing in international agreements that "serve multinational corporations and their backers" (Aspinall 2015: 18; Hadiz and Robison 2017: 493).

Islamic populism, differing slightly from secular nationalism, has been propagated by political actors and organisations to achieve the following objectives. The first is to cause "antagonism between the marginalised Islamic people and the elites"[4] (Hadiz and Robison 2017). The second is to advocate for the sovereignty of these people. The third is to promote social justice, while the fourth is to protect marginalised Islamic people's interests. The last is to attack the established and selfish elites (Hadiz 2016, 2017, 2018). Advocates of this Islamic populism do not recognise Islamic people as either heterogenous or common, as the followers of secular nationalist populism do. Rather, they consider the Islamic people to be a "peripheralized ummah" (Hadiz and Robison 2017: 496). Proponents of this Islamic populism favour

deploying cultural idioms to address and mobilise these Islamic people as though they are "a distinctly ummah-based political identity" (Hadiz and Robison 2017: 498; Hadiz 2018: 567). Unlike those who advocated for secular nationalist populism, they organised the efforts such as promoting anti-pluralist and liberal views (Hadiz 2018: 566), formulating "a common narrative about perennial marginalisation" of Islamic people (Hadiz 2018: 567), and portraying them as those who have suffered under the domination of capital owners or the state and governments (Hadiz 2016, 2017).

In the last couple of years, secular nationalist populism has been intensively advanced by some prominent Indonesian politicians, including those who ran in Indonesia's 2014 presidential election (Aspinall 2015; Hadiz and Robison 2017). Conversely, Islamic populism has been developed not only by Islamic political parties, such as the Prosperous and Justice Party (PK/PKS), but also by educated professional groups made up of the Islamic middle classes and a large number of successful and powerful Islamic businesspeople (Hadiz 2018). They have done so "to win greater access to state power" and to accumulate "tangible material resources for the ummah" (Hadiz and Robison 2017: 496). While the use of the Internet and social media have both increased substantially in Indonesian electoral politics, political actors in the country have also been increasingly interested in developing populist mobilisation based on secular nationalist and Islamic populism, not only through mainstream media, such as TV news channels (Ahmad 2019, 2022), but also through social media platforms (Widian et al. 2023). Such developments allow socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communications to take shape in the country.

SOCIALLY MEDIATED POPULIST POLITICAL COMMUNICATION: THEORETICAL PROPOSITIONS

The existing literature indicates that political actors in democratic countries have favoured considering not only inclusionary and exclusionary populism approaches[5] (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013; Filc 2015), but also social media platforms as a means for developing a populist communication frame (Jagers and Walgrave 2007) and political communication strategy (Bracciale and Martella 2017; Engesser, Ernst, et al. 2017). Using social media platforms means that the political actors are able to become much more capable of connecting with people interactively and handling "the journalistic gatekeepers" as well (Bracciale and Martella 2017: 1311; Engesser, Ernst,

et al. 2017: 1110). Moreover, adapting to social media platforms allows them to get an advantage from what Engesser, Fawzi, et al. (2017) called "online opportunity structures" (1281–1282). More importantly, harnessing social media platforms makes them capable of producing and circulating "populist messages that reach people directly, create and frame their issues strategically and set the agenda for and influence public debate and opinion" autonomously (Casero-Ripollés et al. 2017: 989).

Focusing on Indonesia's democracy, some studies have argued that (populist) political actors have been interested in exploiting not only social media platforms to achieve their goals in the elections (Hamid 2014, 2019; Widian et al. 2023) but also secular nationalist and Islamic populism within the contexts of both elections and non-elections (Aspinall 2015; Hadiz and Robison 2017; Hadiz 2018). While addressing the latter, Hadiz and Robison (2017) argued that the "absence of strongly liberal-reformist or social democratic or Leftist" approaches in the post-Soeharto regime paved the way for secular nationalist and Islamic populism to evolve substantially (500). The mainstream "discourses of Islamic morality and hyper-nationalism" in the new democracy of Indonesia that have been increasing the robust "world-views" that reference either "Islamic morality" or "hyper-nationalism" in this country have been evolving as well (Hadiz 2017: 276). Not only did a political conflict between variations of religious and nationalist forms of populism emerge, but a political competition also took place between the combinations of such forms of populism in the country (Hadiz 2017).

Following the ideas of these past studies, this article assumes that the political actors who competed in Indonesia's local elections favour exploiting social media platforms and adopting the populist ideational elements that constitute secular nationalist and Islamic populism to establish a socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication strategy. In this respect, secular nationalist populism's elements include the: (1) importance of secular nationalist people-centrism; (2) these people's sovereignty; and (3) excluding those who are dissimilar to secular nationalist people, referring to them as the "others". The first refers to the importance for these people to secure the value of harmony "from a range of influences, including that of radical forms of Islamic politics" (Hadiz 2017: 275) and to establish and develop a secular nationalist state based on the Indonesian unitary state ideology, namely *Pancasila* (Hadiz 2017). The second one is associated with promoting anti-foreign sentiments and/or having national sovereignty, while the last one is associated with excluding those who advocate for Islamic populist elements (Hadiz 2017). These Islamic populist elements include:

(1) Islamic people-centrism; (2) the sovereignty of the Islamic people; and (3) the exclusion of those who are dissimilar from these Islamic people, who they perceive as "others". Islamic people, in this respect, refers to the "peripheralized ummah" (Hadiz and Robison 2017: 496) who have suffered from the domination of capital owners or that of the state and government (Hadiz 2016, 2017). These Islamic people are likely to advocate not only for Islamic social justice but also for the need to resolve social inequality and secure Indonesia's natural resources for the "peripheralized ummah" (Hadiz 2017: 276; Hadiz 2018: 566). They are likely to propagate not merely anti-pluralist and liberal views, but also the Islamic people's sovereignty (Hadiz 2018).

Studies (Hawkins 2009; Bracciale and Martella 2017; Casero-Ripollés et al. 2017; Engesser, Ernst, et al. 2017; Engesser, Fawzi, et al. 2017; Ernst, Engesser, et al. 2017; Ernst, Engesser, Buchel, et al. 2017; Hawkins and Kaltwasser 2017; Stanyer et al. 2017; De Vreese et al. 2018) argue that populism does not only exist in democratic countries, and that there are also populist attitudes and populist political communications advanced by political actors within and across these countries. The ways these have evolved in these countries is likely to be determined by country-related, party-related, and individual (populist) politician-related factors (Filc 2015; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2012, 2013, 2018; de Vreese et al. 2018). The country-related actors include the type of political system, government system, election system, and the media system that exists in these countries. The party-related factors consist of the party's size, ideology and ideological orientation, and position in the government, while the individual (populist) politician-related factors incorporate the material, immaterial, and political and symbolic resources owned by (populist) politicians (Filc 2015; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2012, 2013, 2018; de Vreese et al. 2018). In considering the ideas developed by past studies, this article argues that both party-related and candidate-related factors are likely to determine the ways in which the Indonesian politicians who ran in the local elections advanced using socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication strategies when they attempted to win the elections.

METHODS

This article aims to evaluate how the gubernatorial candidates who competed in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections adopted the ideational elements that constitute secular and Islamic populism as a means for developing socially

mediated populist political communications to win the elections. It also looks to identify which kinds of party-related and candidate-related factors determined such adaptations. It assumes that the gubernatorial candidates were likely to have done so by advocating for secular nationalist as well as Islamic people-centrism. They are also likely to have propagated the sovereignty of these secular nationalist and Islamic peoples but are unlikely to have excluded those who are different as the "others". This article also proposes that the following party-related and candidate-related factors are likely to have determined two adaptations. The first includes the party's position in the government and ideological orientation, and also the ideological orientations of the party and its political block. The second consists of the party candidate's incumbency status, age and gender, the length of their political career, education background and level, and their birthplace association with the province where the party's candidate was nominated for running in the gubernatorial election.

To evaluate these propositions, this article has adopted traditional qualitative and quantitative content analyses[6] as the research method and selected 53 out of 55 gubernatorial candidates who ran in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections as a set of samples.[7] The political campaign messages posted by these gubernatorial candidates on their Facebook[8] pages in between 16 February 2018 and 25 June 2018 were extracted using this method. The elections were conducted in the North Sumatera, Riau, South Sumatera, Lampung, East Java, West Java, Central Java, Bali, Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB; West Nusa Tenggara), Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT; East Nusa Tenggara), West Borneo (Kalbar), East Borneo (Kaltim), South Sulawesi, Southeast Sulawesi, Maluku, North Maluku, and Papua provinces.

Adopting the idea of Pauwels (2011), this research considers each of the political campaign messages to be a unit of analysis. In this study, the researcher was supported by two trained coders. The researcher counted the intensity of populist elements included in the political campaign messages[9] and coded them using a coding framework.[10] This framework included the populist elements of people-centrism, people's sovereignty and the exclusion of "others".[11] In this respect, people-centrism and people's sovereignty are considered to be the "lowest common denominator" of populism, while the exclusion of the others is seen as "the additional common denominator" of populism (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013: 153). Those who adopted the lowest common denominator are labelled as followers of "thin populism" (Jager and Walgrave 2007: 326), while those who combine it with an additional common denominator are instead accounted for as followers of "thick populism" (Jager and Walgrave 2007: 328).

The political campaign messages were coded and classified into six groups. The first, second, third, and fourth groups included political campaign messages that contained secular nationalist people-centrism, Islamic people-centrism, secular nationalist people's sovereignty, and Islamic people's sovereignty, respectively. The fifth and sixth groups incorporate political campaign messages that advocate the exclusion of non-secular nationalist people as the "others" and the exclusion of non-Islamic people as the "others", respectively. The total number of Facebook campaign messages for the first one was 2,450, while total number for the second one was 2,392. The total number for the third one was 2,502, while the total number for the fourth one was 2,356. The total number for the fifth one was 470, while the total number for the last one was 350.

The abovementioned groups of political campaign messages were extracted using traditional qualitative and quantitative content analyses to generate indexes related to people-centrism, people's sovereignty, and the exclusion of "others". In this respect, the political campaign materials posted by the gubernatorial candidates on their Facebook pages that advocate for secular nationalist people-centrism were counted to obtain a score that was used to make a secular nationalist people-centrism index. This procedure was also applied to generate an Islamic people-centrism index. For example, a gubernatorial candidate who wrote the following statement on his Facebook page, "We should protect all the people, regardless of their religion and ethnicity background" (ER's Facebook page, 23 June 2018), received a score of 1 for his secular nationalist people-centrism index. In contrast, a gubernatorial candidate who voiced the subsequent statement on his Facebook page, "The ruling government in Central Java Province did not fulfil the rights of Islamic people. I heard that all Muslim women who were eager to participate in the Solo Dance Event 2018 being prohibited to wear the head craft" (SS's Facebook page, 27 April 2018), obtained a score of 1 for his Islamic people-centrism index. The political campaign materials posted by the gubernatorial candidates to their Facebook pages to promote secular nationalist people's sovereignty were counted to get a score that was used to compose the secular nationalist people sovereignty index. Such a procedure was also applied to generate the Islamic people's sovereignty index. For example, a gubernatorial candidate who pointed out the following statement on his Facebook page obtained a score of 1 for his secular nationalist people sovereignty index: "Oil explorations have been carried out for more than a hundred years in this place, but economic disparity between the poor and the rich peoples prevailed. We should help the poor people to get much more

advantages from such exploration" (ER's Facebook page, 4 June 2018). In contrast, a gubernatorial candidate who advocated the following statement on his Facebook page obtained a score of 1 on his Islamic people sovereignty index: "Most of Islamic people less educated and live in poverty. Islamic people convention in this province decided that supporting a pair of Islamic governor-vice governor candidates to win in this election is essential to help Islamic people to uphold Islamic values and get a better life" (ER's Facebook page, 3 April 2018). The exclusion of non-secular nationalist and non-Islamic people indexes resulted from the abovementioned procedures.

The abovementioned secular nationalist people-centrism, secular nationalist people's sovereignty, and exclusion of the non-secular nationalist people indexes were aggregated to formulate a socially mediated, secular nationalist populist political communication adaptation index. Moreover, the aforementioned Islamic people-centrism, Islamic people's sovereignty, and exclusion of the non-Islamic people indexes were counted to generate a socially mediated Islamic populist political communication adaptation index. The absolute scores of these indexes were transformed into z scores and converted into the 0 to 100 range/percentage. These populist political communication adaptation indexes were evaluated using the statistical descriptive method, Spearman's rho correlation[12] and ANOVA [Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23, IBM, New York]. They were accounted for as dependent variables.[13] The following party-related and candidate-related factors were deployed as independent variables to further evaluate the dependent variables. The first one included the party's position in the government, the party's ideological orientation and the ideological orientations of the party's political block. The second one consisted of the candidate's education background and level, the length of their political career, their incumbency status, their age and gender, and their birthplace association with the province wherein the party's candidate was running in the gubernatorial election. This generated the findings of this study.

RESULTS

Gubernatorial Candidates' Socially Mediated Populist Political Communication in Indonesia's 2018 Gubernatorial Elections

Since 2005, a series of local elections has been organised by the Indonesian general election commission. Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections are part of these local elections. The gubernatorial elections are conducted based

on Law No. 10/2016, which regulates the election of the head and vice head of Indonesia's local governments (provinces, regencies and municipalities). As imposed by Article No. 40, Point 1 of this law, the Indonesian political parties' politicians who run in such elections should be nominated by a political party or a coalition of political parties who hold at least 20% of the total local parliamentary seats or 25% of popular votes collected during the last parliamentary local election. This regulation was applied to the 55 gubernatorial candidates who stood in the elections.

Most of these gubernatorial candidates who complied with such regulations[14] were supported by the political coalition established by the two types of political parties. The first type were the secular nationalist parties, specifically Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDIP; Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle), Golkar Party, Gerindra Party, Democratic Party, and Nasdem Party.[15] The abovementioned political parties, respectively, nominated 23.1%, 15.3%, 19.2%, 15.4%, and 7.7% of the gubernatorial candidates. The second type were Islamic parties, specifically Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN; National Mandate Party), Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB; National Awakening Party), Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP; United Development Party), and Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS; Prosperous Justice Party), and each party successfully nominated 3.8% of the total number of candidates who ran in said elections.[16]

The extraction of the political campaign materials posted by these gubernatorial candidates on their Facebook pages reveals the following. Overall, they strongly advocated for not only secular nationalist people-centrism (M = 78.16; SD = 17.89) but also Islamic people-centrism (M = 51.90; SD = 52.77). They substantially promoted secular nationalist people's sovereignty (M = 25.82; SD = 16.57) and moderately propagated Islamic people's sovereignty (M = 3.30; SD = 8.19) but did not exclude those who are different from either secular nationalist people as the "others" as much (M = 0.18; SD = 0.59), or non-Islamic people as the "others" (M = 0.06; SD = 0.31). Further explanations regarding such points are detailed below.

Firstly, most of the gubernatorial candidates advocated for not only secular nationalist people-centrism but also Islamic people-centrism. Some of the gubernatorial candidates, such as Nurdin Halid of the Golkar Party who contested South Sulawesi province's 2018 gubernatorial election and Sudirman Said of Gerindra Party and his contender, Ganjar Pranowo of PDIP, who ran in Central Java province's 2018 gubernatorial election, strongly advocated such efforts. In contrast, Edy Rahmayadi, Major General (ret) Sudrajat, Isran Noor, and Ahyar Abduh of the Gerindra Party and his contender,

M. Ali Dahlan who contested North Sumatera, West Java, East Kalimantan, and NTB provinces' 2018 gubernatorial elections, respectively, and Syaifullah Yusuf and Muhamad Lukman Edy of PKB who ran in East Java and Riau provinces' 2018 gubernatorial elections, respectively, advocated for secular nationalist people-centrism much more than Islamic people-centrism. Only a small number of gubernatorial candidates who contested in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections promoted Islamic people-centrism less. These included Wempi Wetipo, Murad Ismail, Abdul Ghani Kasuba, Wayan Koster, and Esthon Layloh Foenany of PDIP who ran in Papua, Maluku, North Maluku, Bali, and NTT provinces' 2018 gubernatorial elections, respectively, and Lukas Enembe, Rusda Mahmud, and Benedictus Kabur Harman of the Democratic Party who ran in Papua, Southeast Sulawesi, and NTT provinces' 2018 gubernatorial elections, respectively.

Secondly, Saifullah Yusuf of PKB and his contender, Khofifah of the Democratic Party, who contested in East Java province's 2018 gubernatorial election, strongly advocated not only for secular nationalist sovereignty but also for the sovereignty of the Islamic people as well. However, instead of promoting secular nationalist people sovereignty, four gubernatorial candidates, Major General (ret) Sudrajat of Gerindra Party, Mustafa of Nasdem Party and Firdaus of Gerindra Party and his contender, Syamsuar of PAN, who ran in West Java, Lampung, and Riau provinces' 2018 gubernatorial elections, respectively, alternatively preferred advocating for the Islamic people's sovereignty much more. Regardless, most of the gubernatorial candidates who ran in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections favoured promoting secular nationalist people sovereignty much more.

Thirdly, most of the gubernatorial candidates did not favour excluding those who were different from either secular nationalist or Islamic peoples as "others" through their Facebook pages. The indexes regarding this point are quite low overall. Only the three gubernatorial candidates substantially excluded non-Islamic people as the "others", specifically Marianus Sae, TB Hasanuddin of PDIP, and Muhammad Ridho of the Democratic Party who ran in NTT, West Java, and Lampung provinces' 2018 gubernatorial elections, respectively. Only two gubernatorial candidates significantly excluded those seen of as being different from secular nationalist people as the "others". These were Edy Rahmayadi of Gerindra Party[17] who contested in North Sumatera province's 2018 gubernatorial election and Major General (ret) Sudrajat of Gerindra Party, a non-incumbent gubernatorial candidate, who attempted to win in West Java province's 2018 gubernatorial election.

Overall, the gubernatorial candidates who advocated for secular nationalist people centrism favoured the promotion of Islamic people centrism (Spearman's rho correlation = 0.326; p = 0.021). Advocating the former significantly encouraged them to develop the latter (t = 2.967; η^2 = 0.394; p = 0.005). Those who advocated for the sovereignty of secular nationalist people preferred promoting Islamic people's sovereignty less (Spearman's rho correlation = –0.109; p = 0.450). Developing the former insignificantly discouraged them to establish the latter (t = –1.579; η^2 = –0.222; p = 0.121). Those who excluded those who are different from secular nationalists insignificantly preferred excluding non-Islamic people as "others" (Spearman's rho correlation = 0.258; p = 0.071). Excluding the former, however, insignificantly encouraged them to exclude the latter (t = 1.733; η^2 = –0.243; p = 0.089).

In evaluating the aforementioned populist elements holistically, this research reveals that the gubernatorial candidates overall considered the components that constitute secular nationalist and Islamic populism as ideational populist elements (Hadiz 2016, 2017, 2018; Hadiz and Robison 2017). Having adopted such elements, they favoured developing not only a secular nationalist populist political communication strategy (M = 47.90; SD = 27.945) but also an Islamic populist political communication strategy (M = 46.81; SD = 27.158). Those who advocated the former significantly advanced the latter (Spearman's rho correlation = 0.367; p = 0.009). Adopting the former significantly encouraged them to develop the latter as well (R^2 = 0.158; t = 2.997; η^2 = –0.397; p = 0.004).

Figure 1 illustrates how some of the gubernatorial candidates strongly advanced secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication strategies through their Facebook pages. These included Nurdin Hallid of Golkar Party, Andi Sofyan Hasdam of Golkar Party, Dedy Mizwar of Democratic Party and his contender, TB Hasanuddin of PDIP, and Sudirman Said of Gerindra Party and his contender, Ganjar Pranowo of PDI, who contested in South Sulawesi, East Kalimantan, West Java, and Central Java provinces' 2018 gubernatorial elections, respectively. Slightly differently, Wempi Wetipo, Murad Ismail, Nurdin Abdullah, Wayan Koster, Karolin Margret Natasya, Rusmandi, and Ganjar Pranowo of PDIP preferred developing a socially mediated secular nationalist populist political communication strategy much more. They ran in Papua, Maluku, South Sulawesi, Bali, West Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, and Central Java provinces' 2018 gubernatorial elections, respectively. In contrast, Edy Rahmayadi, Major General (ret) Sudrajat, Isran Noor, Ahyar Abduh, and

Firaus of Gerindra Party prioritised developing an Islamic populist political communication strategy. They contested in North Sumatera, West Java, East Kalimantan, NTB, and Riau provinces' 2018 gubernatorial elections, respectively. Similarly, Syaifullah Yusuf and M. Lukman Edy of PKB and Herman Deru of Nasdem Party and Muhammad Kasuba of PKS also carried out such strategies. They ran in East Java, Riau, South Sumatera, and North Maluku provinces' 2018 gubernatorial elections, respectively.
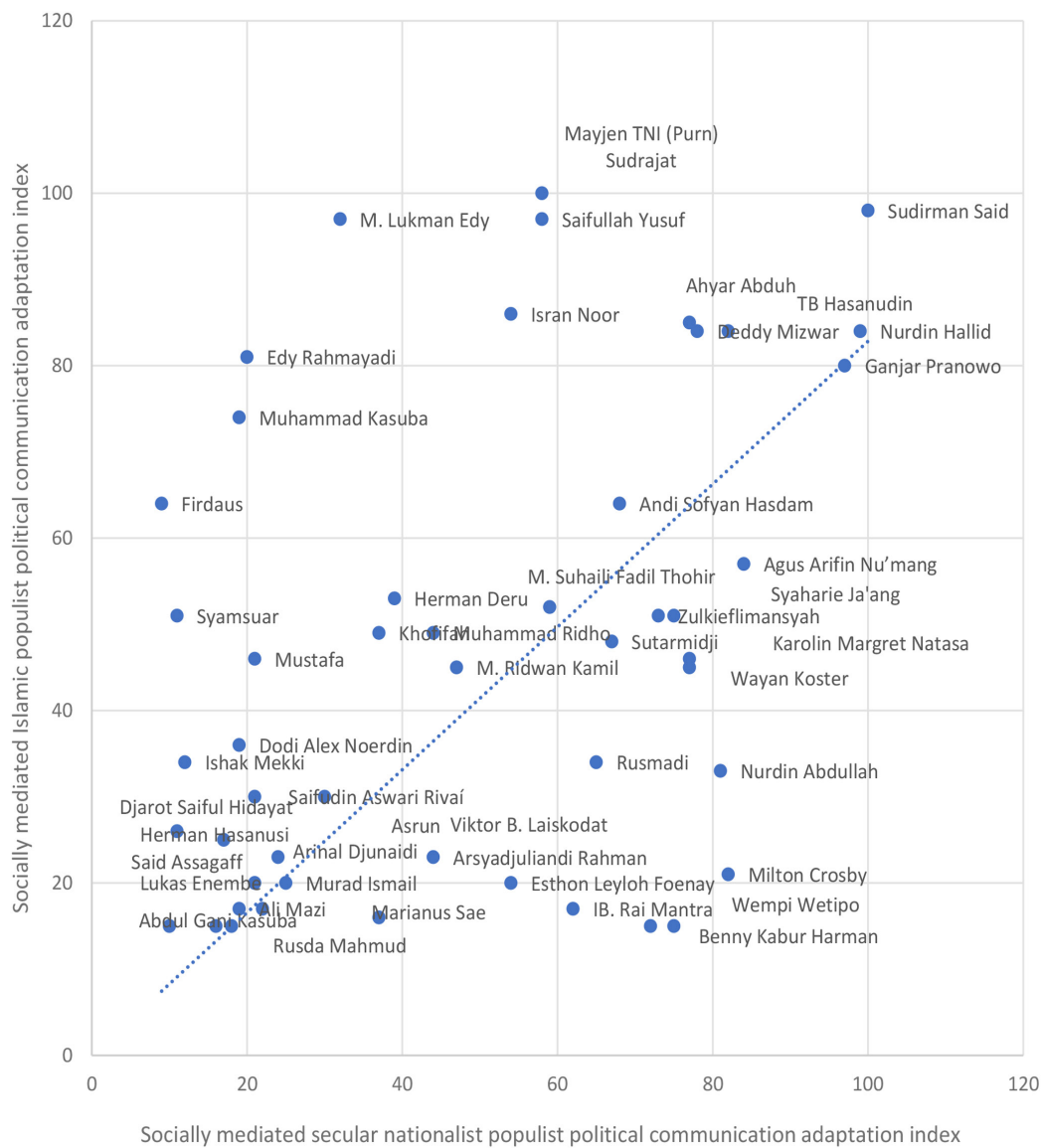

Figure 1: Socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication adaptation indexes.

Note: The R² value of the regression line between the socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication adaptation indexes is 0.158.

Gubernatorial Candidates, Socially Mediated Populist Political Communication and Influential Factors

As well as uncovering the abovementioned findings, this research also reveals the subsequent findings. The following party-related and candidate-related factors insignificantly encouraged the gubernatorial candidates who ran in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections to adopt either socially mediated secular nationalist or socially mediated Islamic populist political communication as political communication strategies. These factors, as exhibited by Supplementary Figures (a–h), include the party's ideological orientations and the ideological orientation of the political block that nominated the gubernatorial candidate, as well as the party candidate's incumbency status, age and gender, and their birthplace association with the province within the gubernatorial election. The subsequent party-related and candidate-related factors, as visualised by Figures 2–6, significantly encouraged them to take up these political communication strategies. The former includes the party's position in the government and ideological orientation, while the latter consists of the candidate's education background and level, and the length of their political career. In this respect, the first, second, third, and fourth factors, as shown in Figures 2, 3, and 4, significantly stimulated them to develop socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategies. The fourth and fifth factors, alternatively, as exhibited in Figures 5 and 6, significantly propelled them to advance not only socially mediated secular nationalist but also socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategies. These points are detailed as follows.

Gubernatorial candidates who were endorsed by the ruling party to run in such elections adopted a socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategy much more ($F = 3.230$; $\rho = 0.043$) than those who were supported by the opposition party. Similarly, compared to those who were affiliated with secular nationalist parties, the gubernatorial candidates who were associated with Islamic parties significantly favoured advancing for such a socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategy ($F = 3.352$; $\rho = 0.042$). This evidence indicates that by being nominated by the ruling party and/or being associated with secularist nationalist parties, the gubernatorial candidates who ran in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections preferred posting populist political campaign messages on their Facebook pages that advocated for both Islamic people-centrism and Islamic people

sovereignty more compared to those nominated by the opposition party. They seemed to be strongly interested in doing so to capture the Islamic electorates who were eligible to cast their votes in such elections.

These trends seem being triggered by the following conditions. Since 1999, the total number of Islamic laws enacted by those who rule in the local governments in the country have expanded substantially. In 2012, the total was 169 (Buehler 2013) and this increased to 433 in 2013 (Buehler and Muhtada 2016). There have been a substantial number of Indonesian electorates who have favoured the support of Islamism. The survey data collected by the Indonesian Survey Institute in May 2017, which was reported by Fossati (2019), revealed that around 41% voiced that Islam should be prioritised over the other religions, another 39% advocated for Sharia/Islamic law, and around 58% highlighted the need to vote for a Muslim leader in the elections (Fossati 2019). There was also an encouraging of most of the gubernatorial candidates who were running in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections to advocate for Islamic populist messages and sentiments through their Facebook pages.

The gubernatorial candidates nominated by the Indonesian Islamic parties and those who were nominated by the secular nationalist political parties that exist in the country, such as PDIP, Golkar and Democratic Party, also favoured the above. This trend was visible in the Indonesian provinces where a substantial number of Islamic laws have been enacted. These provinces include the South Sulawesi and West Java provinces, which have been widely considered as the basis from which Islamist networks and movements have expanded in this country (Buehler 2013; Buehler and Muhtada 2016). Those nominated by their party to run in one of the provinces—such as Nurdin Halid of Golkar Party who ran for South Sulawesi's 2018 gubernatorial election, Dedy Mizwar of the Democratic Party, and TB Hasanudin of PDIP who ran for West Java's 2018 gubernatorial election—were strongly interested in exploiting Islamic populist sentiments. They did so to captivate the Islamic electorates populating these provinces.
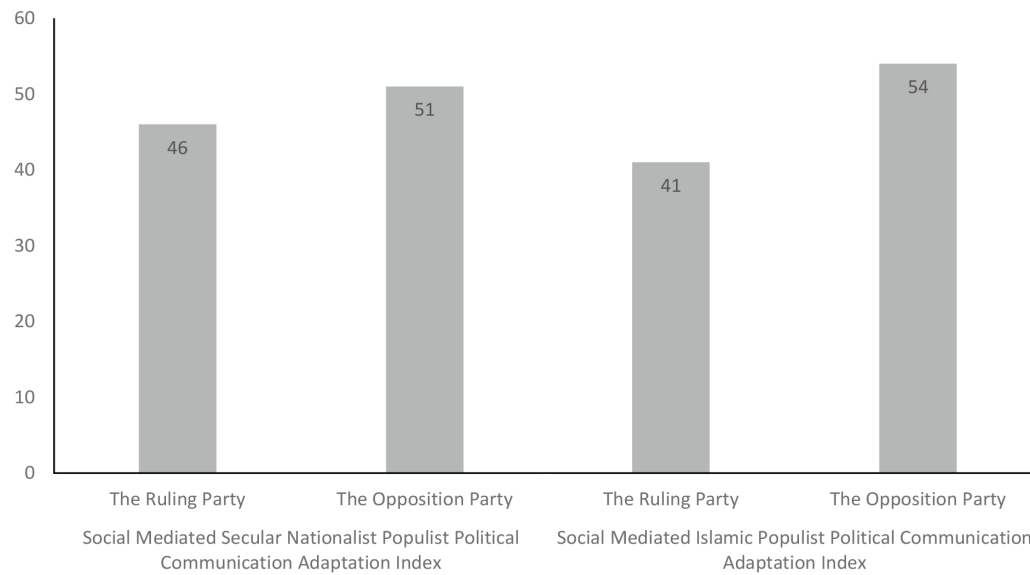
Figure 2: The effects of the party's position in the government on the gubernatorial candidate's socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication adaptation indexes.
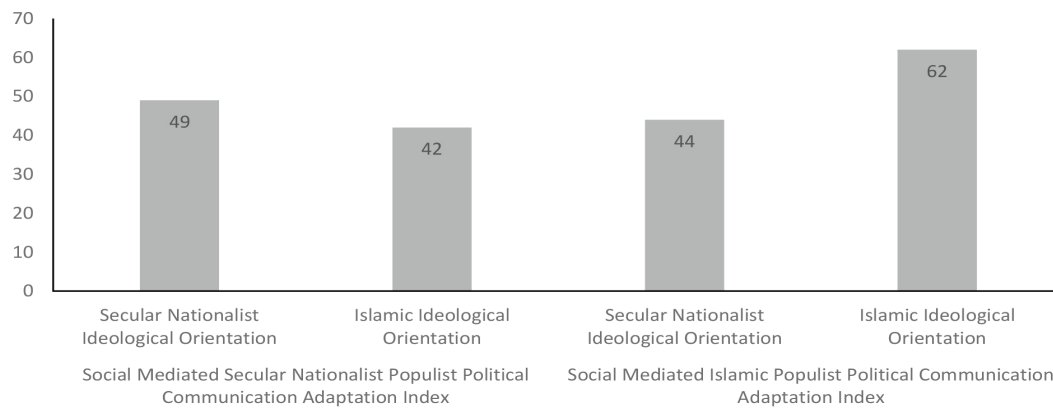

Figure 3: The effects of the party's ideological orientation on the gubernatorial candidates' secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication adaptation indexes.
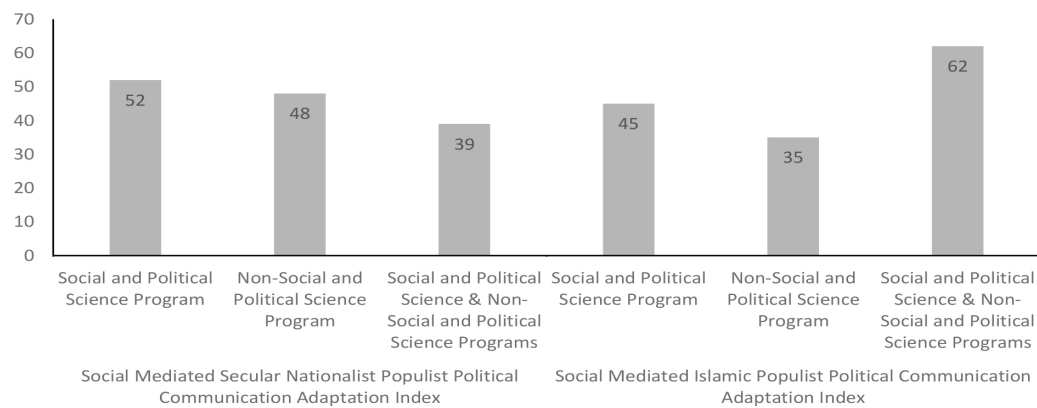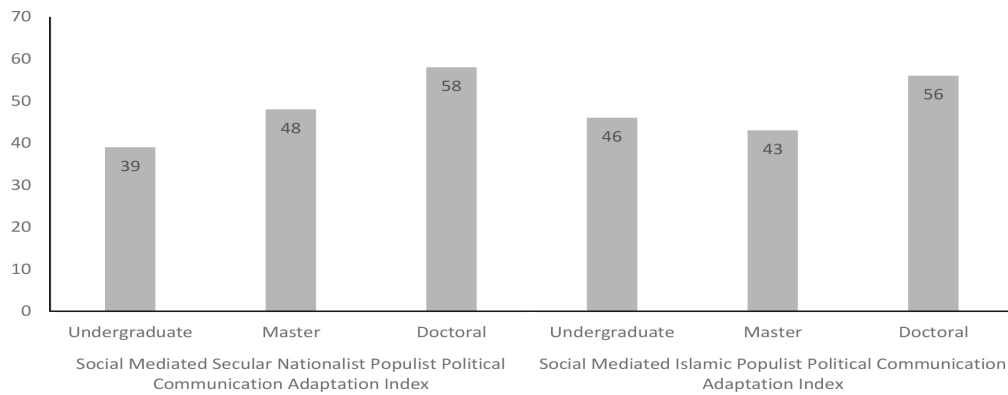
Figure 4: The effects of the party candidate's education background on the gubernatorial candidates' secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication adaptation indexes.

Figure 5: The effects of the party candidate's education level on the gubernatorial candidates' secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication adaptation indexes.
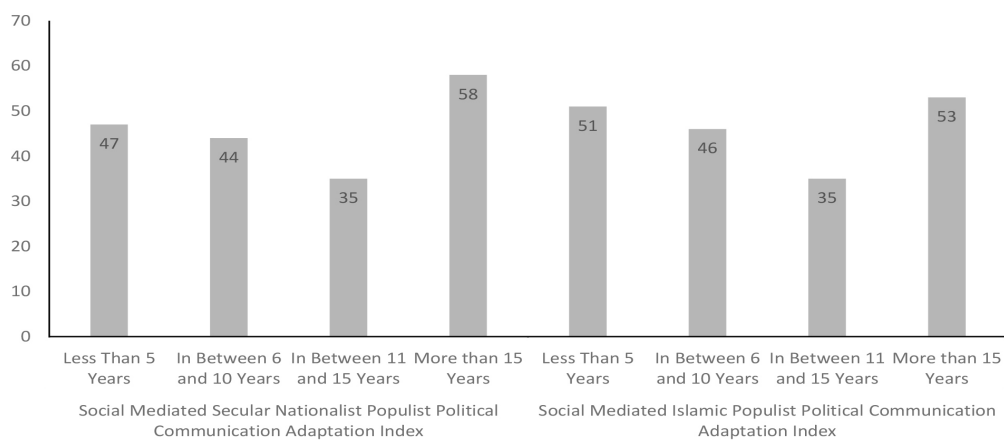

Figure 6: The effects of the party candidate's length of political carrier on the gubernatorial candidates' secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication adaptation indexes.

Meanwhile, compared to the gubernatorial candidates who graduated from non-social and political science programmes, the gubernatorial candidates who had a mixed education background from both social and political and non-social and political science programmes preferred taking on a socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategy much more ($F = 17.417$; $\rho = 0.045$; $F = 27.811$; $\rho = 0.018$). In contrast, the gubernatorial candidates with a doctoral certificate preferred advancing a socially mediated secular nationalist populist political communication strategy more ($F = 19.098$; $\rho = 0.046$) compared to the contenders who lacked a doctorate certificate. This evidence indicates that the gubernatorial candidates with a mixed education background were interested in posting populist political campaign messages on their Facebook pages that advocated for Islamic people-centrism and the Islamic people's sovereignty much more than their rivals who lacked such a background. Similarly, the gubernatorial candidates who took part in such elections who were not qualified following doctoral study programmes favoured posting populist political campaign messages using their Facebook pages that promoted Islamic people-centrism and the Islamic people's sovereignty much more than the contenders who had graduated from a doctoral study programme. They did so to persuade and mobilise a larger number of Islamic electorates who were eligible to vote in the elections.

Nonetheless, compared to the gubernatorial candidates who had political careers of between 11 and 15 years, the gubernatorial candidates who had spent more than 15 years in political office were significantly more engaged in establishing not only a socially mediated secular nationalist populist political communication strategy ($F = 22.459$; $\rho = 0.032$), but also a socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategy ($F = 17.864$; $\rho = 0.043$). This evidence suggests that the gubernatorial candidates with a longer political career were strongly interested in posting populist political campaign messages on their Facebook pages that advocated not only for secular nationalist and Islamic people-centrism but also secular nationalist and Islamic people sovereignty, compared to their contenders with a shorter political career. They seemed eager to do so to get a larger number of political supporters from both the secular nationalist and Islamic electorates who were eligible to cast their vote in such elections.

DISCUSSION

This research is an exploratory study that was directed to discover not only the types of populism exploited by the gubernatorial candidates who ran in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections as a means for developing a socially mediated populist political communication strategy, but also the party-related and candidate-related factors that encouraged them to adopt socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication strategies. The findings reported by this research indicate that most of them favoured adopting not only socially mediated secular nationalist but also socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategies. They did so by posting populist campaign messages on their Facebook pages to advocate for secular nationalist and Islamic people-centrism, as well as the sovereignty of secular nationalist and Islamic peoples. Most of them did not favour excluding non-secular nationalist or non-Islamic people as the "others". Alternatively, some of them preferred combining the secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication strategies to establish an inclusive populist political communication strategy. They did so to captivate and mobilise the secular nationalist and Islamic electorates that they targeted in the elections.

The evidence indicates a slight difference between the populist political actors in Western European and Latin American democracies who have commonly favoured developing either Left or the Right-oriented populist mobilisations (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013; Filc 2015), while none of the gubernatorial candidates facing the elections preferred establishing such populist mobilisations. Alternatively, the gubernatorial candidates preferred exploiting the ideational components that constitute secular nationalist and Islamic populism (Hadiz 2016, 2017, 2018; Hadiz and Robison 2017) to develop socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication strategies. While establishing these populist political communication strategies, most of them did not favour considering the ideational components as a conflicting entity. Instead, they considered the components to be a fragmented entity (Engesser, Ernst, et al. 2017). Making this effort allowed some of them to be much more capable of developing an inclusive socially mediated populist political communication strategy.

The findings also exhibit that the degrees to which the 2018 gubernatorial candidates adopted socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication as political communication strategies to win the elections, and how this was determined by the party-related and candidate-related factors. The first one includes the party's position in the government

and ideological orientation, while the second consists of the party candidate's education level, background, and length of political career. In this respect, the first, second, and third factors significantly encouraged them to develop a socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategy. The fourth and fifth factors encouraged them to advance a socially mediated secular nationalist populist political communication strategy. This evidence indicates that the abovementioned factors are likely to take place, as they significantly determine the type of socially mediated populist political communication strategy adopted by the (populist) political actors in Indonesia's local elections.

Despite that, the findings also indicate that most of the gubernatorial candidates favoured establishing a socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategy much more than a socially mediated secular nationalist populist political communication strategy. Such a trend seems to be driven by the following development. A few months before Jakarta's 2017 gubernatorial election was held, the formation of algorithmic enclaves "based on a perceived shared identity" took place (Lim 2017: 423). This paved the way for mushrooming religious polarisation and Islamic populist narratives and mobilisations in Indonesian politics (Mietzner et al. 2018; Mietzner and Muhtadi 2018; Widian et al. 2023). Such developments prevailed a few months before Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections were conducted (Mietzner and Muhtadi 2018; Power 2018). The findings hint that when facing such elections, most of the gubernatorial candidates not only realised such a development but also attempted to manage it tactically. They did so by establishing a socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategy.

The findings also confirm that the type of ideological orientation of the political parties and coalitions that nominated the gubernatorial candidates for Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections was a determinant factor. This factor is positively correlated with the willingness of the gubernatorial candidates who competed in such elections to establish a socially mediated secular nationalist populist political communication strategy (Spearman's rho correlation = 0.104; p = 0.473), as well as a socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategy (Spearman's rho correlation = 0.101; p = 0.485). Such evidence substantiates Power's (2018) arguments that highlighted how the religious polarisation and Islamic populist narratives and mobilisations in Indonesian electoral politics escalated substantially soon after Jakarta's 2017 gubernatorial election was held. The key political player in the Indonesian presidential palace forced the secular nationalist and Islamic political parties' leaders who supported the Jokowi government

to achieve two objectives. The first was to form a political bloc to manage the religious polarisation and Islamic mobilisation that could take place in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections. The second was to nominate pairs of gubernatorial candidates to run in these elections who could tackle religious polarisation and Islamic mobilisation (Power 2018). Despite considering the need to adopt a socially mediated Islamic populist political communication strategy to manage such religious polarisation and Islamic mobilisation, most of the gubernatorial candidates seemed interested in adopting socially mediated secular nationalist populist political communication strategies to meet the leaders' expectations as well.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This article has reported findings that illustrate not only the types of populist political communication strategies adopted by the gubernatorial candidates who contested in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections but also the types of party-related and candidate-related factors that advance such adaptations. It offers the following knowledge contributions. First, it proposes two types of populist political communication models as performed by the gubernatorial candidates who ran in the elections. These models are socially mediated secular nationalist and socially mediated Islamic populist political communications. Secondly, it chronicles the types of party-related and candidate-related factors that are likely to encourage the gubernatorial candidates who stepped into Indonesia's local elections to take up these socially mediated populist political communication models. These factors include the party's position in the government and ideological orientation, and the party candidate's education level, background, and length of political career.

Professionals could consider the abovementioned socially mediated populist political communication models as a practical model when they need to help those who want to participate in Indonesia's next local elections. This model could also be utilised as a conceptual model to evaluate the types of socially mediated populist political communication strategies advanced by the politicians nominated by a political party or by a coalition of political parties to run in the local elections, particularly in democratic countries that share similarities with Indonesian politics, such as Turkey. These models could be deployed and refined as explanatory or exploratory theoretical models to evaluate the effects of party-related factors on the ways and degrees to which

these politicians have established socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication in the local or national elections.

Regardless of these points, this article has some weaknesses. It has focused only on the gubernatorial candidates who competed in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections. It has also only considered the political campaign materials posted by the candidates who ran in such elections using their Facebook pages as a unit of analysis. While the professionalisation of political communication has taken place in Indonesia's democracy (Ahmad 2024), this study has lacked in providing an exploration of the professionalisation of populist political campaigning performed by the gubernatorial candidates who participated in Indonesia's 2020 gubernatorial elections through diverse social media platforms. Further investigations need to be conducted to examine the modes and degrees of the professionalisation of socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication as advanced by the gubernatorial candidates who ran in the gubernatorial elections in this country in 2020, and who will do so in the next local elections in Indonesia. This can be done by examining not only the political campaign materials they shared through their social media accounts, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok, but also the organisational campaign structures and strategies established when engaging with the elections.

Indonesia remains a united nation-state but soon after Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections were conducted, the polarised political issues driven by the secular nationalist and Islamic identities kept evolving. This polarisation was also taking shape a few months before the 2019 parliamentary and presidential elections were conducted (Ahmad 2019, 2022). In consideration of this, this article calls for the need to examine the ways and degree to which the political actors who ran in such elections, and who will run in the next 2024 parliamentary and presidential elections in Indonesia, adopt socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communications as political communication strategies. When examining such issues, the effects of the party and candidate-related factors on such adaptations must be explored.

Considering how populism is continually evolving across the globe, this article also advocates the need to evaluate the effects of not only the aforementioned factors but also the country-related factors on the ways and degree to which political actors and organisations within and across democratic countries, especially those who share similar characteristics with Indonesian politics, adopt socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication as political communication and mobilisation strategies in order to achieve their goals within the context of (local and

national) elections and non-elections. Making such an effort may facilitate the enriching of the literature of populism and populist communication, and enable the formulating of a theory of socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist communication.

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COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

The content analysis of the campaign messages posted on the Facebook pages of the gubernatorial candidates was conducted in accordance with the procedures that are standard in Indonesia's social science research.

NOTES

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[1]   In this view, populism is seen as "a means to an end" (Engesser, Fawzi, et al. 2017: 1280).

[2]   In this respect, the people may be conceptualised as sovereign (political perspective), as a nation (cultural perspective), and as a class (a political economic perspective) (Mény and Surel 2002 as cited in Kriesi 2014) based on the internal and external boundaries formulated by such actors and organisations (Canovan 2004). People may be defined "as sovereign or nations or those who opposed to or are being oppressed by the 'ruling elite'" (Canovan 2005: 2).

[3]   See Engesser, Ernst, et al. (2017), Ernst, Engesser, Buchel, et al. (2017), Hadiz and Chryssogelos (2017), Reinemann et al. (2017), Mazzoleni and Bracciale (2018).

4   The elites, in this sense, are commonly "identified as secular, ethnic Chinese, or foreign origin". For further explanation regarding this point, see Hadiz and Robison (2017: 498).

5   The former has been commonly advanced by right-wing populist actors in Western European democracies, while the latter has been usually developed by the left-wing populist actors in Latin American democracies (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013; Filc 2015). They have done so by exploiting the material, political and symbolic components that constitute populisms (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013). The first refers to issues related to "access to state resources", such as jobs and welfare provision (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013: 158–159). The second is associated with political participation and representation (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013). The third is connected with the least tangible symbolic elements used to set the boundaries between "the people" and "the elite", defining the homogeneity and inclusivity of the characteristics and values of these people (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013: 164).

6   This article adopted the approach of Jager and Walgrave (2007). The reason for this is due to the validity of assisted computer content analysis having been shown "to be lower than this approach" (Rooduijn and Pauwels 2011: 1278).

7   Two of the gubernatorial candidates were excluded since they were much more reliant on traditional or on the ground campaigns, and thus did not use a Facebook page as a tool for political campaigning.

8   Ernst, Engesser, Buchel, et al. stated that, in comparison to Twitter, "Facebook in general has more reciprocal message exchanges, which brings the users closer together and may enhance the quality of interpersonal communication" (2017: 1352). He and his colleagues also highlighted that this platform offers several benefits for politicians who adopt it, such as "higher levels of proximity and reciprocity, unlimited space for messages, and its non-elite character" (Ernst, Engesser, Buchel, et al. 2017: 1355). Considering such arguments and realising that most of the candidates favoured adopting this social media platform rather than Twitter, this research used their Facebook pages as an object of analysis.

9   Krippendorff's alpha test was conducted to determine the reliability estimate of the coders, and the results of this test are reported in the Appendix.

10 This was formulated based on the ideas of Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2013), Engesser, Ernst, et al. (2017), Engesser, Fawzi, et al. (2017), Ernst, Engesser, Buchel, et al. (2017), Hadiz (2016, 2017, 2018), and Hadiz and Robison (2017).

11 Following the ideas of Ernst, Engesser, Buchel, et al., this research considers variables such as "formative measures" as "not require[ing] to be internally consistent in order to be reliable or valid" (2017: 1355).

12 Spearman's Rho correlation analysis was undertaken due to the non-normality distribution of the data that constituted the secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication strategy indexes.

13 When evaluating the relationship between such indexes, this research deployed the indexes that represented the secular nationalist populist political communication strategy as the independent variables and the indexes that represented the Islamic populist political communication strategy as the dependent variables.

[14] Two of them were excluded from the sample since they lacked Facebook pages that were used as a political campaign tool.

[15] One of secular nationalist parties, the Hanura Party, lacked success in nominating its politician to run in the elections.

[16] Some of the Islamic parties already had a moderate number of local parliamentary seats or popular votes that allowed them to form an Islamic political block. None of them succeeded in formulating this block, however.

[17] Compared to his contender, Edy Rahmayadi favoured labelling some of the groups that have been ignoring the need to protect the interests of Islamic peoples as "others". Surprisingly, he collected 57.58% of total votes and won this election.

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APPENDIX

Coding Framework for the Measurement of the Indexes of the Gubernatorial Candidate's Populist Communication in Indonesia's 2018 Gubernatorial Elections

The following coding framework was formulated to assess the elements that constitute the indexes of socially mediated populist communication established by the gubernatorial candidates who ran in Indonesia's 2018 gubernatorial elections. The indexes were composed from secular nationalist and Islamic populist communication indexes.

The populist elements that constitute each of the populist communication indexes include people-centrism (P1), people's sovereignty (P2), and the exclusion of the others (P3). These elements were used to formulate the secular nationalist and Islamic people-centrism indexes, secular nationalist and Islamic people's sovereignty indexes, and the exclusion of non-secular nationalist and non-Islamic people as other's indexes, respectively. The indexes are labelled as: (1) secular nationalist people-centrism index/SNPCI; (2) Islamic people-centrism index/IPCI; (3) secular nationalist people sovereignty index/SNPSI; (4) Islamic people sovereignty index/IPSI; (5) secular nationalist exclusion the others index/SNEOI; and (6) Islamic exclusion the others index/IEOI. The measurements of the above-mentioned indexes were organised through the following procedures.

The first one was measured through the following indicators: the intensity of the total number of materials posted by each of the gubernatorial candidates on their Facebook pages that highlighted the centrality of secular-nationalist people (1.1a), the importance of representing and accomplishing the will of these people (1.2a), fulfilling the needs and interests (or common good) of these people (1.3a), and the importance of having a strong leader to do so (1.4a). The next one was evaluated through the subsequent indicators: the intensity of the total number of materials posted by each of the gubernatorial candidates on their Facebook pages that advocated for the centrality of the Islamic people as an ummah (1.1b), the importance of representing and accomplishing the will of these people (1.2b), fulfilling the needs and interests (or common good) of these people (1.3b), and the importance of having a strong leader to do so (1.4b).

The second one was investigated using the following indicators: the intensity of the total number of materials posted by each of the gubernatorial candidates on their Facebook pages that highlight the ultimate sovereignty

of secular-nationalist people (2.1a) and the importance of delivering social justice for these people (2.2a). The next one was assessed through the subsequent indicators: the intensity of the total number of materials posted by each of the gubernatorial candidates on their Facebook pages that advocates for the ultimate sovereignty of the Islamic people (2.1b) and the importance of delivering social justice for these people (2.2b).

The third one was assessed using the following indicators: the intensity of the total number of materials posted by each of the gubernatorial candidates on their Facebook pages that excluded those who are different from secular nationalist people as "others" (3.1a), stigmatising these "others" as dangerous groups (3.2a). The last one was assessed through the subsequent indicators: the intensity of the total number of materials posted by each of the gubernatorial candidates on their Facebook pages that excluded those who are different from the Islamic people as the "others" (3.1b) and stigmatising these "others" as dangerous groups (3.2b).

SUPPLEMENTARY FIGURES
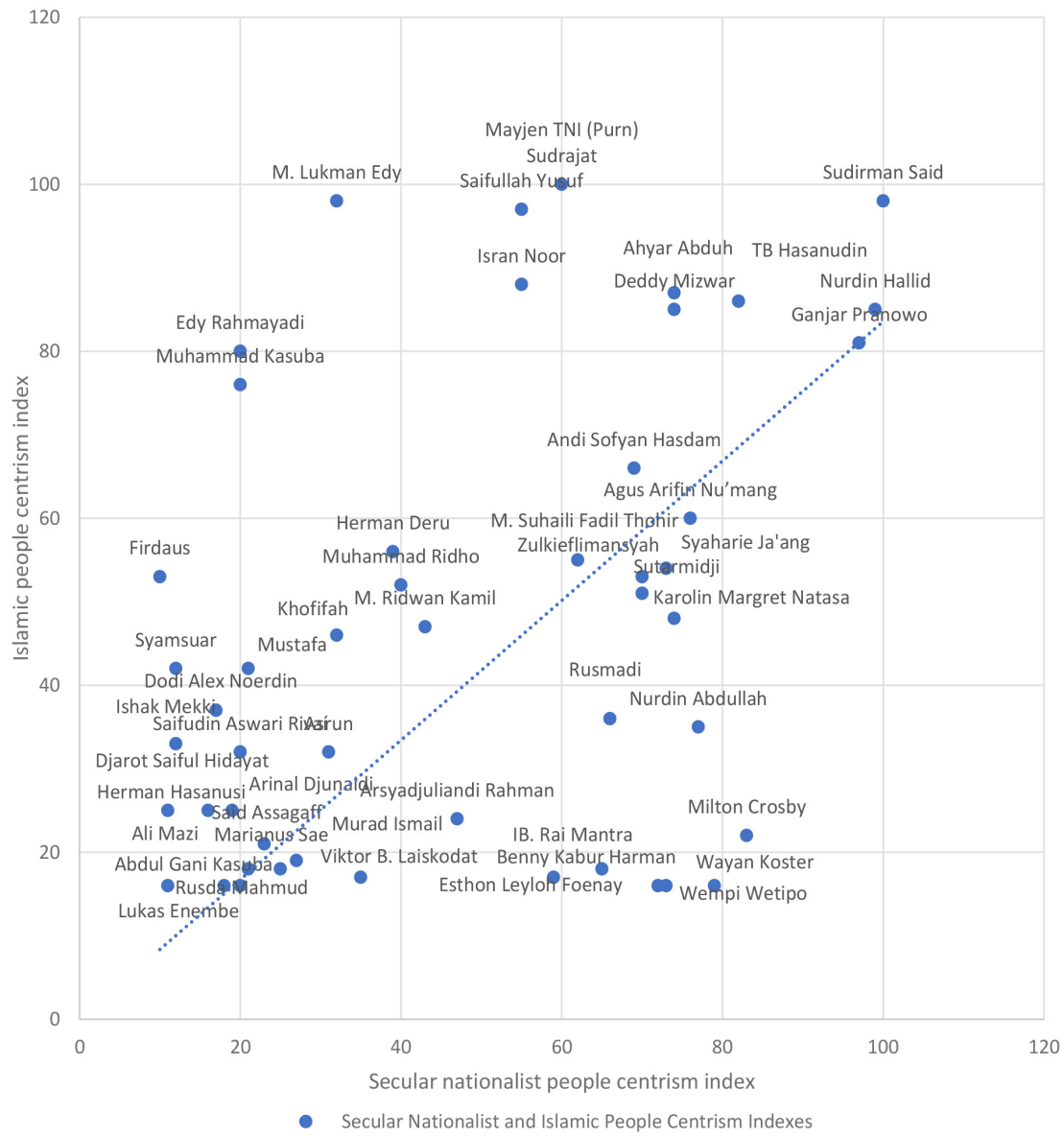
Figure a: Secular nationalist and Islamic people's centrism indexes.

Note: The R^2 value of the regression line between the secular nationalist and Islamic people's centrism indexes is 0.155.
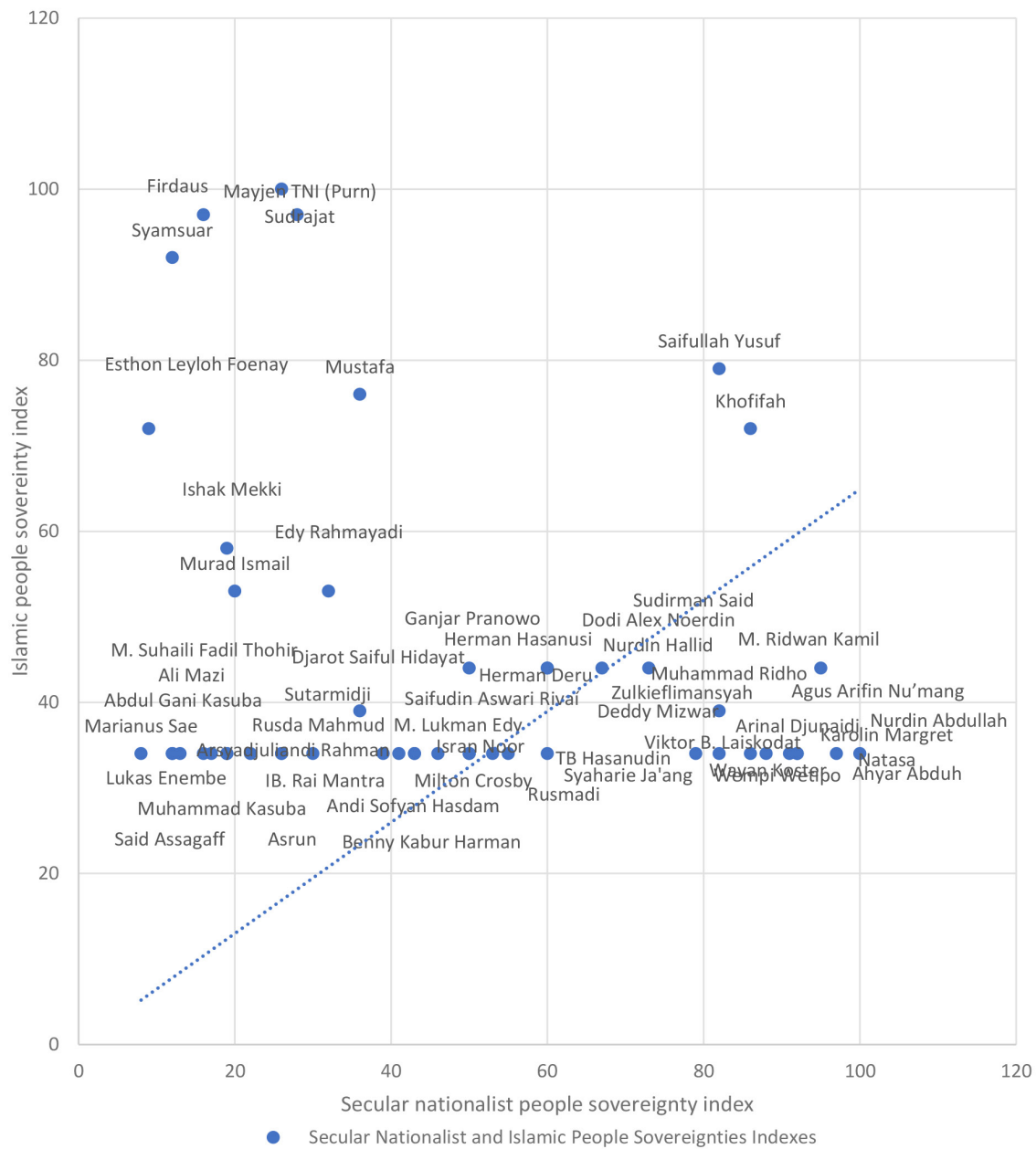
Figure b: Secular nationalist and Islamic people sovereignty indexes.

Note: The R² value of the regression line between the secular nationalist and Islamic people's sovereignty indexes is 0.049.
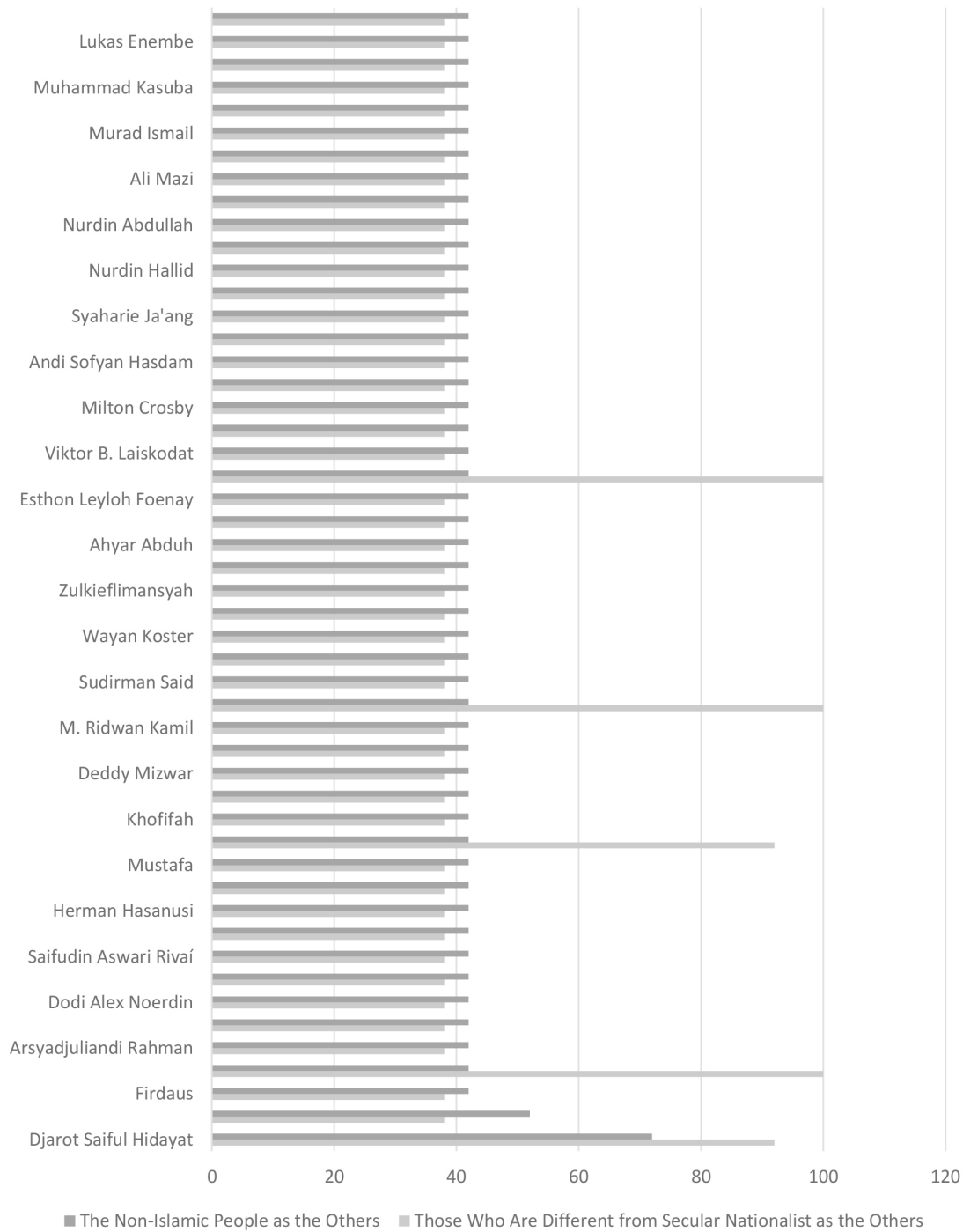
Figure c: Indexes on the exclusion of others (non-secular nationalist or non-Islamic people as the others).

Note: The R^2 value of the regression line between the indexes of the secular nationalist and Islamic people as the "others" is 0.059.
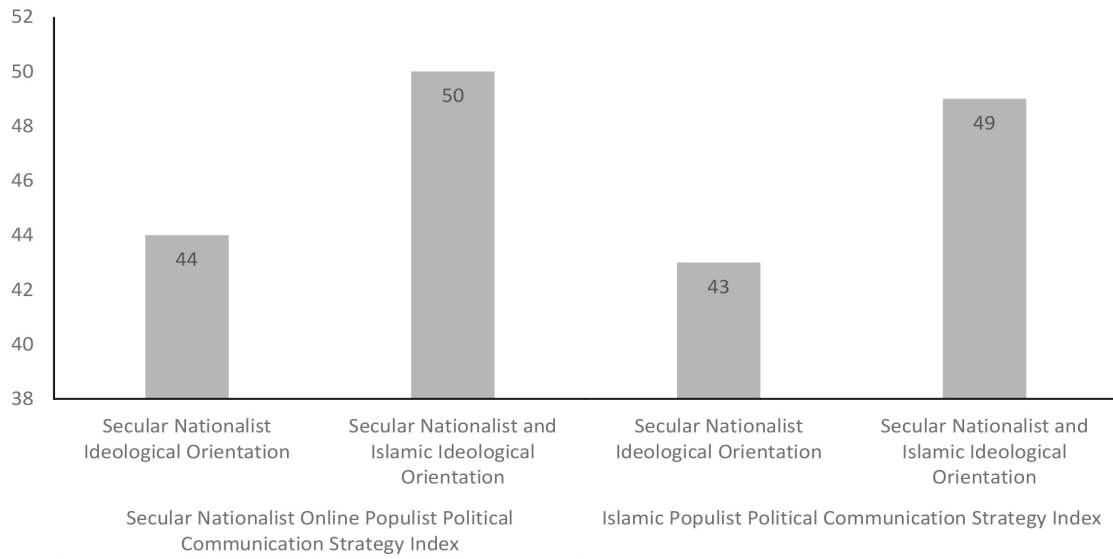
Figure d: The effects of the ideological orientation of the political block that supported the party on socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist communication.
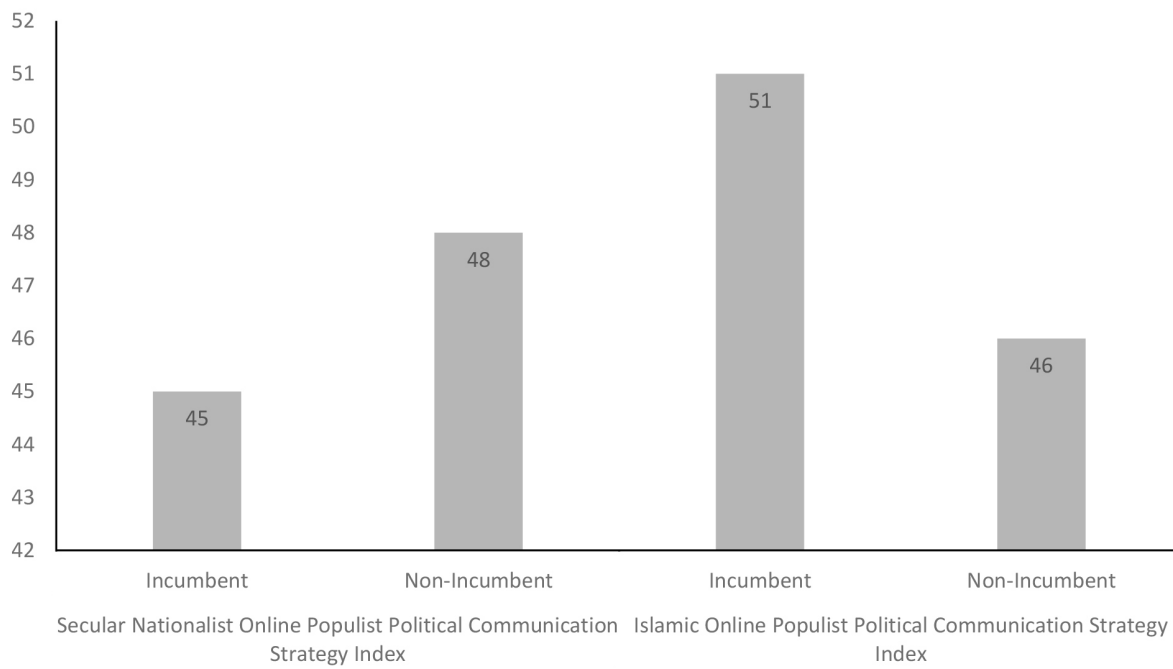
Figure e: The effects of the party candidate's incumbency status on socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist communication.
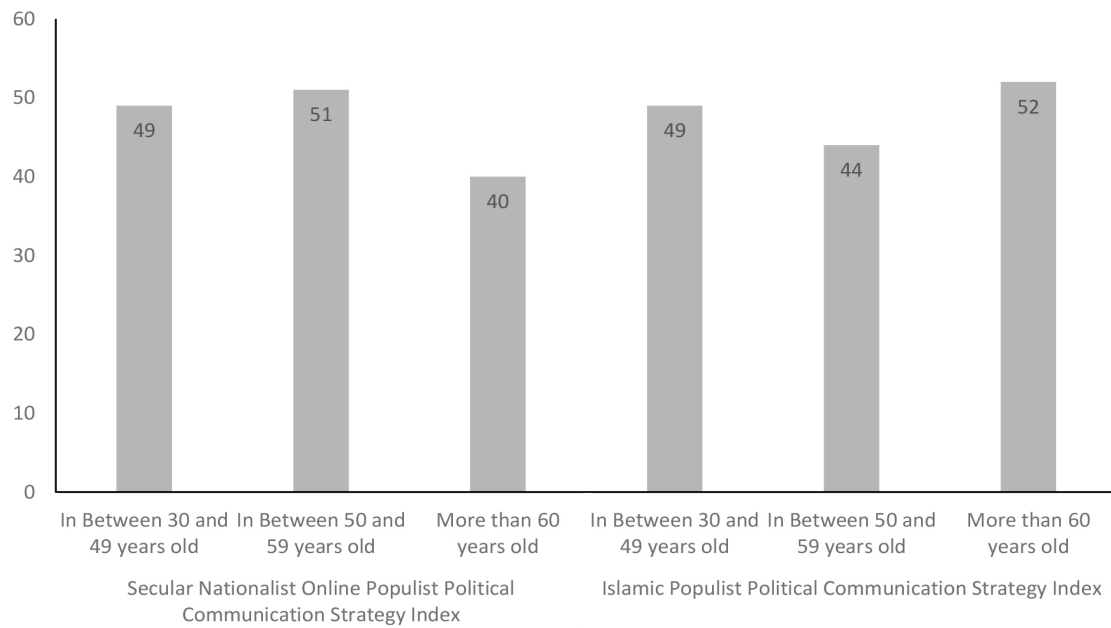
Figure f: The effects of the party candidate's age on socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist communication.
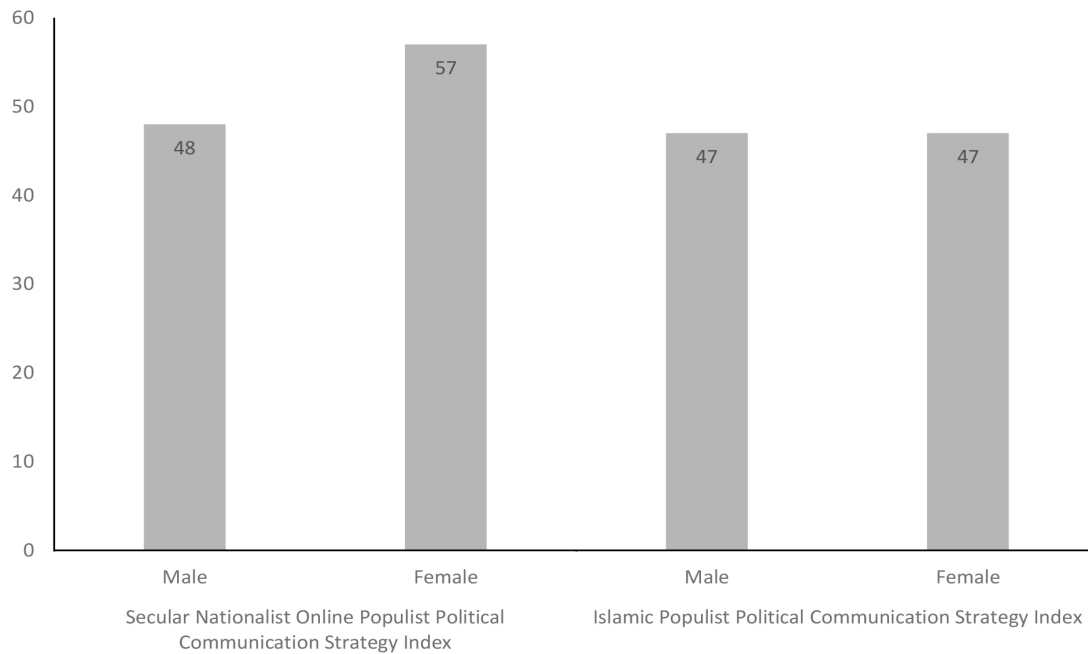

Figure g: The effects of the party candidate's gender on socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist political communication.
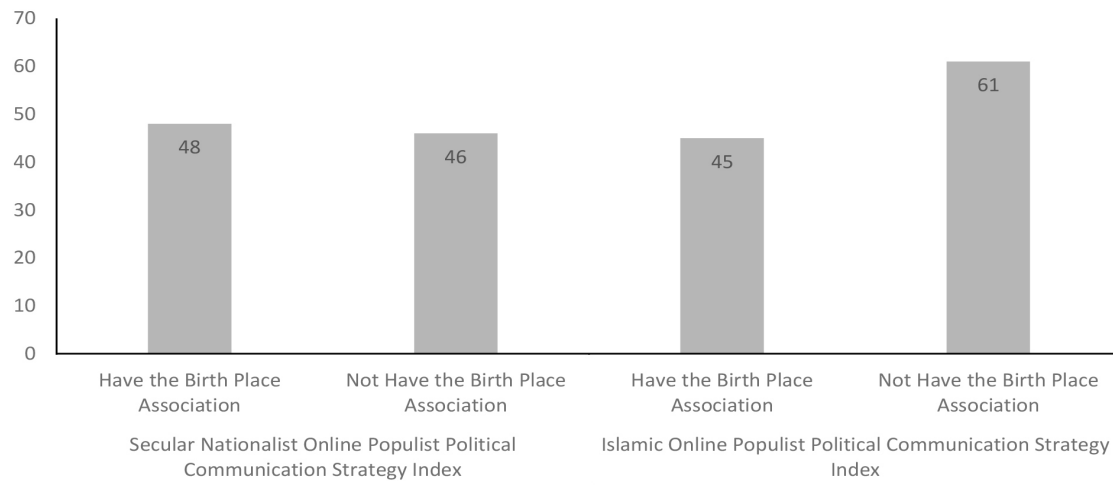
Figure h: The effects of the party candidate's birthplace association with the provinces where the elections were held on socially mediated secular nationalist and Islamic populist communication.