

The Pandemic Politics in Indonesia: A Comparative Perspective

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Abstract: - This manuscript aims to examine the political literature on the pandemic in Indonesia, especially regarding the relationship between politics and the COVID-19 pandemic without leaving the exploration of the views of scholars in the world who address the discussion of this relationship. This study produces several discourses, including, first, countries in the world implement policies depending on the dynamics that exist in that country. The majority implement a lockdown policy or cut off transmission between regions. Indonesia has a somewhat looser policy than other countries, namely large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) while still paying attention to community economic activities. Second, in many cases, electoral trust depends on the successful handling of the pandemic by the ruling regime or even the steps in handling the pandemic by contesting candidates. Third, the election of regional heads simultaneously with the crisis in Indonesia is considered counterfactual. However, the fact is that voter participation has increased from the three previous regional elections. The true form of Indonesian political culture is implied by the actions of the people who respect elections and prioritize health protocols. Fourth, the recommendation of the scholars is the application of political digitization in voting which requires a comprehensive study, especially regarding the readiness of Indonesian technology.

Key-Words: - Pandemic politics; COVID-19; regional head elections; political digitization; Indonesia

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1 Introduction

The term pandemic political emerged when the world's citizens were shocked by the presence of COVID-19 which threatens millions of lives in the world. The Politics of Pandemic is a series of reflections on the impact of COVID-19 on various political, social, economic, and legal issues around the world, [1]. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, political scientists—even those who are not initially familiar with public health—have the tools to develop scholarship and make contributions in specialized fields, [2].

The COVID-19 pandemic is an infectious viral infection and disease caused by acute respiratory syndrome and can transfer the virus from person to person very quickly and widely. In turn, controlling human mobility is a solution to breaking the chain of epidemics, [3]. Countries in the world are struggling to overcome this global pandemic and carry out protectionist policies to save their citizens. On the other hand, some countries have not been responsive to mitigation plans as a result of the spread of the virus still being localized in certain countries. Indonesia is a country that is best described as such. The sentence that states

"Indonesian people will not be infected with the coronavirus" is a fact that the Indonesian government takes the infection of this deadly virus lightly, [4]. The statement is undeniable and even Indonesia is ranked as the sixth country with the most additions of COVID-19 cases in the world.

Many scholars research and provide views related to the COVID-19 pandemic and relate it to mitigation policies, electoral politics, economics, and socio-culture. This article presents a literature review related to the politics of the pandemic in Indonesia, especially the relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic and the field of political science—the relationship between politics and public health by tracing journal manuscripts related to it. This article aims to describe the politics of the pandemic in Indonesia without omitting a comparative discussion. The questions asked include how are the experiences of countries related to pandemic policy responses?; how has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted electoral politics comparatively?; what is the response of scholars regarding the implementation of regional head elections in Indonesia in the context of handling the pandemic?; and finally, what are the future recommendations for voting in the pandemic era?

2 Policy Response to the Pandemic

Every day all countries in the world receive data on the deaths of their citizens due to the ferocity of COVID-19. The pattern of taking various actions in handling the pandemic and taking more into account the characteristics of the people in each country. However, the perspectives of countries regarding the COVID-19 pandemic lead to the same conclusion, namely the priority on human safety.

[5], discussed the spread of COVID-19 in China from early January to late February 2020, with a focus on cross-city transmission. They used counterfactual analysis to measure the impact of different public health measures while controlling for social and economic factors and social distancing. The Chinese government anticipates population movements across cities, particularly indicative of geographic and economic similarities. Observations on the implementation of strict isolation and lockdown as well as health protocols reduce the rate of spread of the virus in mid-February. China's lockdown policies have yielded significant results and saved millions of infected people and tens of thousands of deaths.

[6], interprets socio-economic responses to the events of the COVID-19 outbreak in various countries. He collects data related to social networks across national borders to map virus transmission and analyzes it using global VAR models. The picture of cross-border interconnections not only helps in understanding the spread of the virus across countries but also collects perceptions about the risk of COVID-19 and measures to maintain social distance. In the early phase of the pandemic, the perception of the risk of the coronavirus in most countries was influenced by the penetration of the pandemic that came from Italy. Then the ones that played a big enough role were the United States, Spain, and England. Global pandemics with health implications are responded to in a plurality, however, most are accompanied by delays and unresponsiveness. Unemployment fluctuated in various countries as a result of the pandemic, however, America and Spain were more responsive.

In the United States, [7], studied the policies of the US governor regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of observation is the characteristics of the Governor at the beginning of the pandemic. They tested the variable of applying for the isolation order at home. From the analysis, it was found that if the governor is from the Democratic Party, there will be more than 50% implementation isolation at home during the pandemic. In addition, it is found that the assumption of 40% of the implementation of home

isolation across the state is for governors without a term limit rather than governors with a certain limit. Democratic governors and governors with no term limits can implement home isolation policies more quickly than Republican governors. The findings confirm that there are political facts during the pandemic that are beyond normal. In other countries, mitigation and risk management are strongly influenced by the policies of their respective local governments. We explore the differences in Americans' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Political leaders on the right and left have spoken about the systemic impact of the crisis and the implications for Republicans' and Democrats' actions regarding COVID-19 disaster mitigation efforts. We develop a simple model of the pandemic response that clarifies the causes and consequences of heterogeneous responses. We identified a large sample of mobile users and found Republican streams implementing social distancing policies less.

In the early days of the pandemic, Indonesia had a tug of war regarding the lockdown policy, until in the future the government decided on the policy, like other countries, for example, China. Several protests from most of the Indonesian people are directed at the government which is considered not to be concerned with human safety. In terms of digitization, [8], analyzing Twitter tweets by buzzers found that these tweets were negative about the government's failure to make policies to deal with the pandemic. [9], show the management of opinions related to the lockdown policy, where the aspirations of the citizens expect a lockdown while the Twitter buzzer rejects it. Netizens have become polarized between those who support and oppose the lockdown policy. Controversy is a form of communication crisis, that degrades trust in the government because it ignores public aspirations. How the government restores its image by placing a "buzzer state" which is an informal part of the government that is involved in activities on social media to build a rationale for netizens who have opposing views with the government. Still related to social media, research by [10], analyzed the phenomenon of the decline in Indonesia's democracy index during the pandemic using the freedom house indicator. Their findings point to a decline in Indonesia's democracy amid the pandemic due to the weakening of transparency and freedom of speech as well as guarantees of human rights. Empirical facts show the lack of media information on the use of the COVID-19 handling budget and several threats to netizens who speak in media

accounts for criticizing government policies related to the pandemic.

[11], confirms that the Indonesian government has implemented various policies to handle the COVID-19 pandemic, but the main emphasis is besides policy implementation, public awareness is very important in understanding the pandemic, and community participation in complying with health recommendations and protocols is the key to successful policy implementation, such as Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB). The pros and cons related to the lockdown and PSBB policies were finally revealed in the findings of [12], in Indonesia. He measures the public's assessment of the government's performance in dealing with the pandemic. According to him, economic conditions and political choices affect the public's evaluation of the government's performance in overcoming the pandemic. In public assessment, the government's performance is good in dealing with the pandemic that hit the country. [12], [14], criticized previous studies, such as the opinion of [13], that the lockdown policy was not taken not for economic reasons, but rather because of populist anti-science and polarization of anti-democratic voices. However, in this analysis, [12], [14], found that the public perceives the government's performance as not bad because such policies are expected by the people and the government to be understood as an authority that listens to the public's will, as partisan opinion shapes government decisions in America. Furthermore, the sharpening was carried out by [14], in Yogyakarta. People's behaviour and attitudes towards PSBB policies in the pandemic era are related to their political behaviour background, trust in the government's agility in mitigating COVID-19, employment, revenue, skill, religion, and gender. They concluded the policy of easing the PSBB by allowing residents to work again as before the COVID-19 period and accompanied by strict health protocols was a more realistic solution. The Indonesian government listens to the cries of the people's hearts and does not do it for pragmatic reasons.

3 COVID-19 and Electoral Effects: A Comparative Perspective

Holding elections regularly is an important feature of democratic practice. However, cases for postponing elections are often made in emergencies. Despite the critical nature of the issues of democracy, peace, and security, there is little academic literature on postponing elections. In the

context of the pandemic, [15], tries to propose the latest scheme and outlines the rationale for why the general election was delayed, except in the case of natural disasters. The philosophical understanding of democracy and the substance of elections needs to be discussed to make decisions to postpone elections from the executive, legislative, and judicial branches to be accepted by the community. Presumably, the decision to postpone the election based on information from the laws and regulations will reap a lot of debate.

Nevertheless, the implementation of elections during a crisis has implications for the disruption of election management, both in terms of quantity and quality from the organizer's point of view. On the other hand, what is bound to happen is a drop in voter participation. This trend provides a strong rationale for postponing elections during a crisis. However, the substantive value of democracy will not be achieved and there will be a degradation of trust in institutions if elections are postponed, especially in a presidential order. [15], proposes a middle way to overcome this problem by implementing strict election health protocols, early elections, accountability, and election information that is transparent and with integrity. The COVID-19 pandemic is endemic in the experience of democracy in countries in the world conducting elections during a global crisis. Like, [16], asked to review the case of Spain 2020, where elections can still be held during a crisis while still paying attention to the comprehensive management of elections and the organization of handling the pandemic. However, the COVID-19 crisis has set countries to accommodate health emergency responses in the election calendar, while still emphasizing the importance of the integrity of organizers and candidates in the conduct of elections, [17].

Meanwhile, [18], found problems related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the integrity and accountability of electoral administration at the global level. Their manuscript illustrates why elections are at the heart of democracy. Then they offer an electoral cycle scheme, the idea of a risk matrix as a risk assessment tool, and propose methods of mitigating electoral risk. Elections during the COVID-19 pandemic need a comprehensive solution – not a single one with accurate calculations so that the quality of democracy is maintained. Furthermore, each country should prepare additional medium-term plans to minimize risks. Ignoring the plan to postpone the election during a crisis and how to encourage voter participation from below is one of

the moments of democratic certainty. Not much different from the opinion of [15], they propose a mixed voting system as a way out at this time, such as voting at home (foreigners and 65 years old), electronic voting, and finally, voters coming to the place themselves. voting with strict health protocol standards. On the other hand, delays require changes to laws and regulations as legitimacy and this is a deliberation between election stakeholders.

On the other hand, [19], reveal the case of the 2020 United States Presidential election and its correlation with the crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Their finding is surprising that there is a correlation between Trump's failure and pandemic mitigation behaviour. Strong evidence of these failures concerns the no-isolation policy at home during the pandemic and occurred in states that Trump won in the 2016 US Presidential election. Their study confirms that there is no correlation between the downturn in America's economy and Trump's failure. There is at least an explanation consistent with these findings in that the electoral sanctioned Trump for the way he ignored the importance of the pandemic and drew widespread criticism. Furthermore, [20], aligned with [19], reiterate President Trump's failure story. Their study analyzes public attitudes and global data on deaths from COVID-19. Their findings illustrate the same thing as the previous proposition, that Trump's failure in the 2020 United States Presidential election is confirmed because of his anti-isolation policy at home. Regions of countries with high mortality are less likely to vote for Trump in elections. Of course, in the same context, [21], described the politicization of health practices in the 2020 United States Presidential election. They analyzed data from more than 67 million tweets. They found public space groups who supported wearing masks and voting through the ballot, as well as conservative groups who pushed for anti-mask narratives. Their study is very useful regarding the construction of fake news as a warning to democracy during a pandemic. The frequency of fake news encouraging anti-masks has a bad electoral effect on awareness of the importance of mitigation in elections.

[22], analyze political beliefs and alignments of national leaders to carry out policies to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic. They took a sample of eleven countries that held elections in the spring of 2020. Using comparative survey data, it was found that contextual differences affect the justification of a country's public health and economic actions. They provide the option of public support depending on the public's trust in national leaders who are fighting

for the handling of the pandemic. Meanwhile, [23], describe the populist state model of governing in crisis. This study addresses technocratic populist policies in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Their findings are described in terms of three propositions, such as, first, most populists leave no room for an established and institutionalized critical response. Second, populists are involved in formulating unpopular but highly political policies. Third, there is the politicization of medical expertise by populist technocrats in the Czech Republic and Slovakia to gain legitimacy from the people.

[24], linked the COVID-19 pandemic to Jokowi's democratic pattern. He gave a tendency toward Jokowi's populist agenda in the midst of handling the pandemic that he had neglected his commitment to upholding the politics of civil rights which he considered the essential meaning of the quality of Indonesia's democracy. Cases that are considered non-democratic include Jokowi opening up access to the military and intelligence services in public life in the name of pluralism, and initiating sectarian actions and intolerance towards the Islamic community. Several things later that were considered anti-democratic was the expansion of the dynasty's power by supporting their children and in-laws in the nomination for mayor. The conclusion that can be given is that the COVID-19 crisis has illustrated the defense of people's health but implies a tendency to pass down a more securitized political system and strengthen political dynasties.

Meanwhile, [25], in his article shows that the success of controlling COVID-19 contributed to the landslide victory of the ruling camp in the general election on April 15, 2020, in North Korea. The general election is a kind of "critical election" for voters to decide which ruling party can overcome the threat of the pandemic and solve it right away. In the face of threats, people's preference is to choose safe, risk-averse options. Before entering the polling station, voters are checked for body temperature, and hand hygiene and given a pair of disposable plastic gloves. Indeed, there are no reports of an increase in outbreaks triggered by the election. The vote during the pandemic appears to have had a certain impact and the results have benefited the ruling party. This result is due to the North Korean government's effective response to the aftermath of the pandemic, [17].

4 Indonesian Regional Head Election: Rational Debate

Since Jokowi on April 13 announced that COVID-19 had become a national disaster, which was contained in Presidential Decree No. 12 of 2020. Coinciding with the peaking crisis, Indonesia held simultaneous regional elections which took place in 270 regions, including 9 provinces, 224 regencies, and 37 cities. Speculation on democracy has led to academic debates among scholars, regarding the urgency of the local elections and the urgency of handling the pandemic.

Scholars have begun to investigate public perceptions regarding the implementation of regional elections during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study, [26], explains the public's perception regarding the implementation of the regional head elections (*Pilkada*) in Medan. With the multiple regression test, it was found that 400 respondents (36.36%) did not believe in the information released by the media regarding the development of the COVID-19 case and 553 respondents (50.30%) wanted the elections to continue on the condition that health protocols were implemented. Relatively similar to the study of [27], in Central Kalimantan. The survey results show that more than 50% of the community agrees as long as it is carried out with strict health protocols. Of course, the COVID-19 pandemic is still a mystification by some people so they don't believe in media reports, and on the other hand, people are used to elections. A study on public perception was also conducted by [28], by analyzing public perceptions of the 2020 simultaneous elections in Central Java. The results show that voters have a negative image of the incumbent who comes from the election-winning party because they are considered to have failed to handle the COVID-19 pandemic situation.

The analysis of [29], departs with a normative juridical approach, to find out the impact of the regional election during the COVID-19 outbreak. According to them, it will not be a problem if the local elections are still held to maintain the health of democracy and the legality of local leadership. They suggested that if implemented, all stakeholders would ensure that the local elections are safe from the spread of COVID-19 and provide strict sanctions for violators of health protocols. Meanwhile, [30], [31], describe the positive and negative impacts if the local elections are still held. The positive impact is that the constitutional mandate is fulfilled and reduces the practice of leadership by interim officials in the sub-national. The negative impact is an increase in the

transmission of the COVID-19 outbreak, the number of abstentions increases, Indonesia's investment rating decreases, and it is prone to politicization in the name of COVID-19. A study, [32], shows that the pandemic is one of the factors that put pressure on the global democracy index, including Indonesia in 2020. Concerning the implementation of the regional elections, some predictions regarding the democratic impact of the pandemic are indications of the abuse of the incumbent's power, and the politicization of COVID-19 social assistance.

Indeed, [33], explores media coverage and looks at the phenomenon of the campaign team's agenda and media agenda. Everything goes to its interests, the campaign team focuses on winning candidates, even though they have to violate health protocols during the campaign, while the media is concerned with valuable and sexy news to raise public awareness, one of which is the violation of health protocols by the campaign team. Aspects of public awareness of health protocols can be affected when the elections are held.

Constitutionally, the study of [34], shows that the regional election during a pandemic is a government scenario or what they call pandemic depoliticization. The government implements policies with a degree of prudence, but contradictory as if seen as a tactical strategy. One of them is the postponement of the election from September to December 2020, [35], [36], [37]. The arguments for the implementation of the *Pilkada* are related to the government's reluctance to eliminate the constitutional rights of citizens and some pressures from regions that do not want to be led by the acting governors, regents, and mayors. They conclude that there has been a pathology of democracy and political blame within the various authorities. This argument is of course based that COVID-19 being related to the safety of the Indonesian people, as the holder of the legitimacy of the nation's political rights. He called the regional elections during the COVID-19 pandemic a democratic crisis because the government did not make decisions on the urgency of handling the pandemic crisis.

Meanwhile, [38], analyzes controversial government policies from the perspective of the antinomy of law and human rights. According to them, there is an antinomy between aspects of public health and political rights. Two conflicting policies are enforced, on the one hand, the government tries to guarantee political rights, and on the other hand, guarantees the public's right to health. Empirically, the conclusion of the antinomy of the law is based on the results of his analysis, the

policy on physical distancing in the PSBB regulations and the Health Protocol as well as the policy for holding the *Pilkada* related to voting at polling stations during the pandemic.

Several parties consider that the government's decision to hold elections during a pandemic does not conflict with current regulations, namely Perppu Number 2 of 2020 which is the third amendment related to the election of governors, regents, and mayors, [39]. Meanwhile, [40], shows that there is a constitutional dilemma in the implementation of regional elections in the COVID-19 era because the government's concentration is to guarantee public health rights. They predict that if it continues, it will lead to low voter participation due to the social restriction policy. This study proposes an alternative election through representative democracy can be an option, [41]. The prediction of the decline in voter participation in the regional elections in Indonesia is also confirmed in the Rosanti study, [42], by asking the question of why the regional elections and the pandemic are important elements of democracy. According to him, the danger of COVID-19 will prevent voters from casting their ballots at the polling station (TPS) and in turn will affect the level of voter turnout as a whole. According to him, the entire election cycle can accelerate the growth of new clusters of the pandemic.

Table 1. Voter Participation Rates in *Pilkada* in Indonesia

Election Year	Participation Rate
2015	69.06%
2017	74%
2018	73%
2020	76.09%

Source: Indonesia General Elections Commission (KPU)

Predictions of the COVID-19 pandemic related to the decline in voter participation in the 2020 simultaneous regional elections are counterfactual and mystifying. Table 1 presents the participation rates of 4 simultaneous regional elections in Indonesia and shows something unusual. In 2018 there was a 1% decrease in voter participation from 2017 and this happened in the midst of Indonesia experiencing various progress and a relatively conducive situation. However, it is questionable why the voter turnout rate has increased during a crisis. Is the political culture of the Indonesian people related to elections or local elections? Some predictions by experts regarding the new cluster of COVID-19 spread due to the regional elections, declining voter participation and pessimism

regarding the implementation of the regional elections have been refuted, [43], [44], [45], [46], [47], [48].

Riris Andono Ahmad, Epidemiologist at Gadjah Mada University also emphasized that it is difficult to measure the increase in new cases of COVID-19 due to the simultaneous local elections. The reason is that the process of holding elections takes place over a long period and not only in the voting process. Meanwhile, other factors, because Indonesia is already in the red zone with a high transmission rate, even without the elections being held, the transmission rate always increases, [49]. Mahfud MD said that the 2020 local elections in Indonesia had been successful. The indicator of success is the increase in voter participation at 76% (Table 1). Even the participation rate is above the average voter participation in elections in America, [50].

To borrow the anecdote that "Everything can be arranged, but everything is hard to manage". He used this to describe the mobilization of the Indonesian people during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially during the implementation of the PSBB. Although in conclusion, it is not the people who are difficult to regulate, the government that is difficult to regulate the handling of COVID-19, [51]. On the other hand, when we reflect on this anecdote in the context of *Pilkada*, the reality is the opposite. It was easy for people to come to the polling station even without being mobilized. Implicitly, this fact shows a picture of the political culture of the Indonesian people. [52], described the dangers of COVID-19 being countered by holding simultaneous local elections. At the local level, [53], focused on examining the level of voter participation in the Pandeglang Regency election during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results are astonishing that the voter turnout has increased compared to the 2015 elections.

A study by [54], discusses the strategy of regional heads to maintain a positive image as the savior of the people in their next life. The COVID-19 pandemic is not an obstacle for candidates to promote themselves and gain votes. This incident is taken in the context of Ponorogo and the City of Surabaya. Still related to the image to be displayed ahead of the election during a crisis. By framing Erving Goffman, this study concludes that the incumbents work as hard as they can to obtain a positive image in handling COVID-19 to gain sympathy in the elections. The incumbent sees the

pandemic condition as a blessing and an opportunity to show an image to the public that they have successfully handled the outbreak in the region. Similarly, the opinion of [55], is that the incumbent seems to prioritize political interests by being actively and passively involved in the distribution of necessities, masks, and other personal protective equipment. Actions taken with and on behalf of COVID-19 are a way for incumbents to protect themselves from practices that are contrary to existing regulations, [56]. In a previous study, the failure of the incumbent candidate in handling COVID-19 reduced the level of electability in the *Pilkada*.

5 Political Digitization

By looking at the condition of the COVID-19 pandemic and the trend of increasing cases in Indonesia, [57], offers electronic elections or e-voting. From his comparative study of countries that have implemented an e-voting system, of course, there are weaknesses and advantages to the conventional election system. According to him, the many advantages are budget efficiency and time effectiveness of implementation, on the other hand, the experience of countries that have implemented this system is in security and vote secrecy because they will have to deal with internet and big data systems, especially data piracy and voter manipulation, [58], [59], [60], [61]. Some of those who offer e-voting are mainly blockchain-based in voting so that voters no longer need to go to the polls. This system is equipped with a cryptographic protocol so that the voting data is very safe, transparent, and not prone to manipulation. This blockchain system is very appropriate to be applied if there is a decision to continue to carry out regional elections during a crisis, [62].

[63], examines the Twitter of the Perindo Party and the Gelora Party accounts in political campaigns. Through NVivo analysis, it is known the Perindo and Gelora parties use Twitter social media optimally for the 2020 regional election political campaign. The intensity of the Gelora Party is higher than the Perindo Party in using Twitter media. Campaign content includes party activities, public and party issues, COVID-19, and vision and mission.

Another study related to the capability and adaptability of election administrators in resolve to the COVID-19 epidemic is found in the capabilities

of the South Sulawesi KPU. This capability is demonstrated by the capacity to think ahead, think again, and think cross-sectionally in responding to the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. Empirically, in proving some of these capacities, it can be seen from the way the KPU puts the safety of organizers and voters to prevent the spread, reviews and makes new policies for the implementation of regional elections, and the KPU's willingness to study comparatively with other countries that have been successful in organizing elections in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic, [64]. Furthermore, not only the KPU, [65], discusses the obstacles to election supervision in the regional elections in the pandemic era, but it can still be done by updating the supervision system with more prevention, outreach to the public through online, maximizing the social media owned by Bawaslu. District for stakeholder coordination.

6 Conclusion

The study of the COVID-19 pandemic has been widely discussed by scholars around the world from various perspectives. This manuscript discusses literature whose emphasis is more on the study of pandemics with the study of electoral politics in the world and specifically in Indonesia. From the discussion, this manuscript concludes in four parts. First, a study of countries in the world found that policy responses to handling pandemics varied depending on the contextualization of the country. Countries with a high level of spread implement a policy of lockdown, isolation at home, and severance of transmission between regions. Indonesia has a somewhat looser policy than other countries, namely PSBB without stopping people's economic activities. The opinion of scholars is relatively the same that breaking the chain of virus spread is carried out by limiting the mobility of people within countries and between countries.

Second, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on political leadership and elections. Several cases show that political leaders create opportunities for medical politicization to instill in the public understanding of the populist struggle of the state. The crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic has accentuated this trend, bequeathing a more securitized political system, such as the addresses given to the Czech Republic, Slovakia, America, and Indonesia. On the other hand, people in most countries are dichotomized into two partisans,

namely those who support isolation at home and those who do not support isolation at home. In the case of the United States, voters may electorally sanction Trump for his handling of the pandemic, which is at odds with most of the world's countries and has been widely and consistently criticized. However, unlike in North Korea, the public sees the successful handling of the pandemic as bringing benefits and support to the ruling government. Public approval of the measure hinged heavily on their trust in national leaders, an effect that was magnified for opposition voters.

Third, the election of regional heads simultaneously with the crisis in Indonesia is considered counterfactual. The lawsuit against the policy for the implementation of the regional head election is suspected by several calculations that there is an increase in COVID-19 cases, low voter turnout, declining investment ratings, declining democracy index, politicization in the name of the pandemic, subordination of public health rights, legal antinomy, democratic pathology and abuse of power. Some of the literature reviews electoral opinions and public opinion strongly agrees that the elections will be held while still ensuring security and health protocols. On the other hand, the community itself chooses candidates who have an agenda for handling COVID-19 in their programs. Of course, the foundation of Indonesian democracy is built on the thoughts and opinions of the Indonesian people about taking sides in the election. The term counterfactual in this case does not imply impartiality to the urgency of handling the pandemic but is in alignment with the cries of the Indonesian people as holders of legitimacy, such as their opinion on the PSBB policy. The government's courage to adopt policies to implement regional elections during a crisis is a form of innovation without calculation. The mystification is refuted by the high turnout of Indonesian voters from the three previous election periods. This figure shows a valid picture of the political culture of the Indonesian people.

Finally, the literature proposes recommendations regarding the development of political digitization in voting. It is very important to consider, especially in future election regulations, that there are considerations for crises. The modernization of voting is highly dependent on Indonesia's readiness in terms of technology, financing, human resources, software, and the readiness of the community in terms of technology literacy.

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