



Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs

Prasetyawan, Wahyu (2014), Ethnicity and Voting Patterns in the 2007 and 2012 Gubernatorial Elections in Jakarta, in: *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 33, 1, 29–54.

URN: <http://nbn-resolving.org/urn/resolver.pl?urn:nbn:de:gbv:18-4-7369>

ISSN: 1868-4882 (online), ISSN: 1868-1034 (print)

The online version of this article can be found at:

www.CurrentSoutheastAsianAffairs.org

Published by

GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Institute of Asian Studies and Hamburg University Press.

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Ethnicity and Voting Patterns in the 2007 and 2012 Gubernatorial Elections in Jakarta

Wahyu Prasetyawan

Abstract: This paper evaluates the dynamics of ethnicity and politics in the 2007 and 2012 gubernatorial elections in Jakarta. Previous research has mostly emphasised the negative impact of ethnicity on politics in the *reformasi* era, particularly through ethnic polarisation. By closely evaluating the major ethnic groups living in the mega-city, i.e. the Javanese, Betawi and Chinese, the author shows that the relationship between ethnicity and voting patterns is an intricate one that is not static, particularly if one evaluates a commonly overlooked but crucial factor – the time frame. The author argues that ethnicity continues to play a role in elections even though it is less significant than education and flood variables. The relationship between ethnicity and voting patterns is thus very dynamic, being related to the political context at the time of an election. The findings in this paper open up new questions on ethnicity and politics in a plural society like Indonesia.

■ Manuscript received 16 March 2014; accepted 17 May 2014

Keywords: Indonesia, Jakarta election, ethnicity, voting pattern, democratisation, local politics

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1 Introduction

This paper¹ evaluates the dynamics of ethnicity in the 2007 and 2012 gubernatorial elections in Jakarta. In these two elections, ethnicity was a relevant factor that influenced the outcome of each event. In the 2007 election, ethnicity was the only variable that was able to explain the result, while in the 2012 election, ethnicity, education level and flood² all played a role. In the latter case, however, the coefficient for ethnicity was much lower than those of education and flood. These two elections warrant close evaluation due to the persistence of ethnic politics in a multi-ethnic mega-city like Jakarta where there are at least five major ethnic groups (or *suku bangsa* in Bahasa Indonesia): the Javanese, Betawi (who are claimed to be the *putra daerah*, i.e. the indigenous ethnic population of Jakarta), Sundanese, Chinese, Malay, Minangkabau and Batak. There are many other people of different ethnicities living in the capital, of course, but they are far fewer than these seven ethnic communities. These different ethnic groups tend to live together in many areas of Jakarta. There are only a few regions where they cluster, such as Glodok and Kelapa Gading in the case of the Chinese Indonesians. Based on statistics at *kelurahan* level (i.e. sub-district administrative village level in the city, the lowest level of government administration), it is very difficult to say that any *kelurahan* is dominated by a particular ethnic group; their ethnic make-up is no more than thirty per cent at most (BPS 2000).

The presence of these ethnic groups can be traced back to the colonial era when the Dutch ruled the city. When Indonesia achieved its independence in 1945, Jakarta was still functioning as the capital and the Sukarno government projected it as a showcase (Abeyasekere 1990). The effort made by the Dutch colonial administration, Sukarno and Suharto to modernise Jakarta attracted many migrants to the city. Under the New

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- 1 Acknowledgments: I would like to thank Carol Hau, Shiraishi Takashi, Okamoto Masaaki and Jun Honna for their suggestions and earlier discussion of this paper. I also thank the JSPS's Asian CORE Program of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University for supporting this research. My gratitude goes to Novia Budi and Hara Yonosuke for the discussions I have had with them on econometric modelling. I am also grateful to Ken Miichi, Benny Subianto and Abdul Hamid for their comments on an earlier version of this paper. Finally, I thank two anonymous referees for their constructive comments and Kathleen Azali for her wonderful editing of the paper. Any remaining errors are all mine.
 - 2 It is used as one indicator to measure capability to manage public policy. If the flooded areas decrease it means that the governor has capability to manage public policy, or otherwise.

Order administration, modernisation of the city was closely associated with the incoming migrants from the adjacent province of West Java and to some extent Central and East Java as well.

In 2007, the very first direct gubernatorial election was held in Jakarta, opening up a chance for the Betawi – the ‘indigenous’ Jakartans – to compete for the highest political post in this special province. In the past, under the New Order regime, there had hardly been any opportunity for a Betawi to serve as governor of Jakarta. This post was awarded by the President himself: Parliament proposed three candidates to the Minister of Home Affairs for consideration, and Suharto ultimately decided who would be appointed. Not surprisingly, the governors he selected over the years had similar backgrounds; they had previously served in the armed forces and were mostly Javanese. The only exception was Surjadi Sudirdja, a Bantenese (serving from 1992 to 1997). Since a Betawi had never been appointed as governor, the current direct gubernatorial election opened up the long-suppressed opportunity to actively participate politically and to win the highest political seat in this special region.

In the first direct election in 2007, two pairs of gubernatorial candidates competed for the office. They were Fauzi Bowo, a high-ranking officer in the provincial administration, and Dani Anwar, who was supported by an Islamic political party known as the Prosperous and Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, or PKS). Fauzi, then already vice-governor, ran for governor after pairing up with Prijanto, a Javanese with a military background. Dani Anwar, on the other hand, ran as vice-governor for Adang Daradjatun, a Sundanese and a former deputy head of the National Police Force. Fauzi won the office after defeating Adang Daradjatun. Fauzi was supported by Betawi mass organisations in Jakarta and cleverly employed Betawi cultural symbols in his campaign. Before running for election, he had been a long-time activist in the Functional Group Party (Golongan Karya, or ‘Golkar’) and also a Betawi community leader. In 2007, he was nominated by a coalition of nineteen political parties, including three major parties: the Democratic Party (Partai Demokrat, PD), Golkar and the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP).

In the 2012 election, which was the second direct election to take place, Fauzi Bowo was backed by a few political parties led by the Democratic Party, the People’s Conscience Party (Hati Nurani Rakyat, or ‘Hanura’), the Prosperous Peace Party (Partai Damai Sejahtera, PDS) and the National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, PKB). While Fauzi paired up with Prijanto in 2007, in the 2012 election he paired up with a retired Betawi officer (a former major-general) by the name of

Nachrowi Ramli. Nachrowi headed the Betawi Consultative Body (Badan Musyawarah Betawi, Bamus Betawi), an umbrella for about a hundred Betawi-based organisations. Due to his long-standing friendship with Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, he secured the top seat of the Democratic Party in the Regional People's Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, DPRD) in Jakarta. Additionally, he also headed an intelligence body called the National Encryption Body (Lembaga Sandi Negara) and rose eventually to the top of it.

In the 2012 gubernatorial election, six pairs of candidates competed for the governorship,³ with Fauzi Bowo the incumbent. One of the most interesting phenomena in this election was the participation of candidates from regions outside Jakarta. Alex Noerdin had previously been the governor of South Sumatra, for example, running his candidacy with the support of Golkar. He also gained backing from various small political parties. Joko Widodo ('Jokowi'), then the mayor of Surakarta (Solo) in Central Java, was only backed by two political parties, PDIP and Gerindra. These both share a similar secular-nationalist ideology, with PDIP having a strong support base among lower-income voters. Jokowi's running mate was Basuki Tjahaja Purnama ('Ahok'), an Indonesian-Chinese politician from Golkar who had previously served as a member of the national parliament and regent of East Belitung in Bangka Province. Interestingly, Basuki was nominated by Gerindra, a party chaired by Prabowo Subianto, a politician infamous for his anti-Chinese and anti-foreigner rhetoric. Prabowo's effort to invite Basuki to run as a candidate under Gerindra's ticket could be seen as an attempt to reduce his damaging anti-Chinese image. After two rounds of the election, only two pairs of candidates were left: Fauzi Bowo/Nachrowi Ramli and Joko Widodo/Basuki T. Purnama. In the end, the winners were Jokowi and Basuki.

Why did Jakarta's citizens vote for Joko Widodo and Basuki, and what are the implications of the electorate's behaviour in a much broader context of ethnic politics and ethnicity within Indonesian democracy? As we shall see, the relationship between ethnicity and voting patterns in direct local elections has been very complex in the post-Suharto period and has its own internal dynamics, which responded to the changing political situations during the two gubernatorial elections. In this paper, it is argued that ethnicity still counts as an influential factor in elections today, even though its weight tends to be less substantial than that of

3 These pairs of candidates were Fauzi Bowo and Nachrowi Ramli, Joko Widodo and Basuki T. Purnama, Hendaradi Soepandji and Ahmad Riza Patria, Hidayat Nurwahid and Didik Rachbini, Faisal Batubara and Biem Benyamin, and Alex Noerdin and Nono Sampono.

education and flood in deciding the outcome of an election. The paper does not claim that ethnicity is insignificant, but that it coexists with a number of much stronger variables, as mentioned above. The ethnic background of the candidates competing for the gubernatorial post in Jakarta is an important factor, but one that is dependent on changing political situations. A candidate, along with his/her running mate, may embody an ethnic sentiment and have a proven track record and the capability to manage local government. In particular, this study points out that a candidate is more likely to receive political support from his/her own ethnic group if the latter perceives other ethnic groups living in Jakarta as a significant threat to itself. However, the same candidate may not receive political support from his/her own ethnic group if there is no perception of such a threat, especially not from the ethnic group that is in the majority.

The main data used in this study was obtained from the population census carried out by the Indonesian Statistics Office (Badan Pusat Statistik, BPS) in 2000 for ethnicity and education level, and the Election Commission (Komisi Pemilihan Umum, KPU) for the gubernatorial elections in Jakarta in 2007 and 2012. The data relating to the 2012 election is taken from the second round of the election, in which only two pairs of candidates competed. This study uses data on flooding in 2010 obtained from the National Board for Disaster Management (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana, BNPB). It employs flood data because Jakarta is located in a lowland area which has naturally been “subject to regular flooding by waterways cutting through the plain such as [the River] Cisadane, Angke, Ciliwung, Bekasi and Citarum” (Caljouw, Nas and Pratiwo 2004). Consequently, flooding occurs on a regular basis in Jakarta in the rainy season and affects most areas of the city. Flood data was used as one indicator to measure capability to manage public policy (if the flooded areas decrease it means that the governor has capability to manage flood, or otherwise). The overall data is taken on the *kelurahan* level. The study also employed a qualitative analysis to interpret the quantitative findings.

Generally speaking, at the beginning of the direct elections held in 2005, ethnicity was an influential factor when garnering votes through the mobilisation of ethnic identities and symbols. Direct local elections have been held twice now and when it comes to winning votes, ethnicity seems to be just as influential today as it was initially. However, in a big, metropolitan province like Jakarta, the role of ethnicity has continued to exist, although it has grown less influential than other variables such as voters’ levels of education and flood (see Table 1 below). In fact, after

evaluating the voting behaviour of several ethnic groups in Jakarta, it was found that these groups had changed their behaviour between the two elections. The Betawi paid less attention to their ethnicity in the 2007 election, but in the 2012 event, they intentionally voted for candidates from their own ethnic group. It seems that the perception of a threat from other ethnic groups was responsible for this political behaviour. The Betawi apparently perceived this threat when Joko Widodo (who was Javanese) competed against Fauzi Bowo for the governor's office, particularly since the Javanese had dominated this position ever since Suharto's era. When Fauzi Bowo had to face Joko Widodo, the Betawi population felt that the Javanese wanted to grab the governor's office for themselves yet again. Chinese Indonesians also changed their political behaviour dramatically between these two elections, in general demonstrating that they favoured candidates who were more secular and nationalist. The Javanese – the largest ethnic group in the city – turned out to be the most pragmatic voters, basing their votes on candidates who were expected to manage Jakarta well. This was a new development in which the role of ethnic identity continued to exist in elections, but it became less significant than in the past, losing ground to assessments of the candidates' ability to manage flood. Ethnicity still plays a limited role for several ethnic groups, as this study explains.

After introducing the topic, my paper broadly reviews the discussions on ethnicity in Indonesia before proceeding to a discussion of electoral volatility. It then addresses the largest ethnic groups in Jakarta – the Betawi, Chinese and Javanese – and their voting patterns in the 2007 and 2012 elections before concluding with a few practical and methodological notes about the analysis of ethnicity and voting patterns in Indonesia.

2 On Ethnicity

Before we take a closer look at ethnicity, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of the term since there are various controversies about the concept (Esman 1994: 10–12). In this paper, ethnicity is understood in the sense argued by Weber, i.e. that ethnic groups have no fundamental reality of their own, but are created for political reasons. In Weber's own words:

The belief in group affinity [...] can have important consequences, especially for the formation of a political community [...]. In our sense, ethnic membership does not constitute a group, and it only facilitates a group formation of any kind, particularly in the politi-

cal sphere. On the other hand, it is primarily the political community, no matter how artificially organised, that inspires the belief in common ethnicity (Weber 1969: 389).

Brown (1994: 4) explains ethnicity as a kinship myth; an endowment of an “imagined” cultural community with the attributes of a real family. In the Indonesian context, I believe that Anderson’s (1983) argument about nations being “imagined communities” also works on a very similar logic applicable to ethnicity. Referring to the ‘Chineseness’ of Indonesian citizens who are Chinese descendants and how they have been shaped by the New Order regime, Heryanto (1998) says that ethnicity has been “constructed” by the system. I believe this concept can also be extended to other ethnic groups. Considering Weber’s argument that ethnicity is created by the political community, it is safe to say that it can also be ‘invented’ and manipulated by a political group for certain political or economic purposes.

Post-Suharto Indonesia has experienced communal violence in various regions, in turn creating a perception of Indonesia as a nation with strong ethnic conflicts (Bertrand 2004; van Klinken 2003 and 2007; Davidson 2008; Wilson 2008; Drexler 2008; Aspinall 2009) or violence and secessionist struggles (Mackerras 2003: 2). The scholars mentioned here refer to the ethnic conflicts which occurred in remote areas of Indonesia such as Central Sulawesi, West Kalimantan and Maluku. They argue that the fall of Suharto brought ethnicity to the forefront of the political struggle to tap the benefit of controlling various resources, including political positions. Most of the events they have analysed, however, took place shortly after Suharto stepped down as President in 1998. Even though there were ethnic conflicts, in general, the law has prohibited any specifically ethnic or local political party from being formed since the return of democracy and establishment of a multi-party system in 1999. Aceh Province is an exception here as local political parties with an assumed affiliation to a certain ethnic group have been allowed to exist – a product of the peace agreement between the Indonesian government and the militant Free Aceh Movement (Hillman 2012).

Aspinall (2011) has recently argued that this perception of widespread ethnic conflict is not true, however. He proposes that Indonesia is, in fact, a weakly ethnicised polity. Aspinall states that the political salience of ethnicity has diminished as a new democratic system has settled into place, and he highlights the capacity of democratisation to create compromises. Ethnicity still counts in arenas such as local elections, he says, but it prevails in a softer form of ethnic politics as there are fewer serious disputes about ethnic history or cultural policy; these

occur more often in ethnicised polities. Aspinall offers three characteristics of the political salience of ethnicity (Aspinall 2011: 297–299): (1) the mobilisation of ethnic symbols and appeals in a political context, (2) the importance of ethnic identity in a voter's choice, and (3) the importance of ethnic identity in voters' selection of candidates and the strategies voters pursue.

The relevance of ethnicity in direct local elections is indeed a new phenomenon. Subianto (2009) and Tanasaldy (2007) regard ethnicity as the main factor in explaining these new political dynamics in West Kalimantan. Subianto (2009) argues that the electorate tended to vote for candidates on the grounds of their ethnicity and religious backgrounds, while at the same time paying little attention to the candidates' actual ability to achieve the task at hand. This propensity of the electorate to vote along ethnic and religious lines is evident for three reasons, he argues:

[F]irst, no single ethnic [group] or religion is dominant and [in full] control of the region. Second, the decade-old recurrent bloody ethnic violence has intensified the ethnic and religious identity of the people. Third, most of the people in West Kalimantan are not well-educated; hence, ethnic and religious identities can be easily manipulated for political purposes (Subianto 2009: 334).

The last reason might be treated as a hypothesis that closely links ethnic identities to the level of education; in other words, an increased level of education will presumably reduce the politics of ethnicity. The other two parameters are also relevant, however: the existence of an intensified ethnic and religious conflict and the non-existence of a single ethnic domination. In a far more pessimistic assessment, Hadiz (2003) argues that ethnic gangs have become dominant players in local elections and are highly influential in determining voters' behaviour when it comes to choosing a particular candidate.

In general, studies on ethnicity in Indonesia at the beginning of the *reformasi* period only evaluated one direct local election in any particular area; the researchers did not have the chance (or time) to make any meaningful comparison between elections, and if they did, the comparisons were applied between two different areas in a relatively similar time frame (as a cross-section). As a result, the investigators failed to look at the dynamics of ethnicity between elections in a similar area over a long period of time. This weakness in the existing studies is rooted in the methodology of evaluating one particular case, or at best, several cases from different areas within a similar time frame, thus usually further emphasising the relevance of ethnicity and ethnic politics.

I argue that the methodology used to date is actually unsuitable for evaluating the dynamics of ethnicity in electoral politics. First, the dynamics of ethnic politics should only be evaluated in a longitudinal manner to allow the researcher to assess changes that different ethnic groups undergo over a period of time. Secondly, the dynamics of ethnic variables seem to be dependent upon the ethnic identity of the competing candidates. I argue that the earlier studies on ethnic politics failed to capture this important aspect because they did not attempt to evaluate different sets of candidates over a long period of time.

Additionally, the role of ethnic gangs intended as vehicles to gain votes in elections also appears to be relatively insignificant in reality (Wilson 2010: 216). In this respect, Jakarta is no different from any other city that is multi-ethnic in nature; the role of ethnic gangs such as the Betawi Brotherhood Forum (Forum Rempug Betawi, FBR) to have been insignificant in the elections (Wilson 2010: 211).

3 Electoral Volatility

Jakarta may not be different from any other provinces in Indonesia where electoral volatility is relatively high. Voters in Jakarta can change their voting behaviour dramatically in regional legislative elections. In the 2004 election, for example, most Jakartan voters chose an Islamic political party, viz. the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS), which won eighteen seats (24 per cent), followed by the secular-nationalist Democratic Party (Partai Demokrat, PD), which gained sixteen seats (21 per cent), while the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP) – another Islamic political party, which had a close relationship with Muslims in Jakarta – only won seven seats (9.3 per cent). Under the New Order administration, PPP was even able to compete with the ruling Functional Group Party (Golongan Karya, Golkar) in Jakarta. In the 2009 election, in contrast, it was PD which dominated the voting in Jakarta, winning 32 seats (34.04 per cent), followed by PKS with eighteen seats (19.15 per cent), then the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, PDIP) with eleven seats (eleven per cent). PPP only gained seven seats (7.45 per cent).

Voters in Jakarta also swung dramatically in the gubernatorial elections. In the first direct gubernatorial election in 2007, they had voted for Fauzi Bowo and Prijanto, who gained more votes than Adang Daradjatun and Dani Anwar (57.87 per cent compared to 42.13 per cent). This election had been long-awaited, especially among Betawi citizens, since it

was the first time they were able to cast their own votes for the candidates they wanted. In the 2012 election, the Jakartans voted for Joko Widodo and Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. The 2012 election was held in two rounds as there were no candidates who managed to gain more than fifty per cent of the vote – a special criterion necessary to win the gubernatorial election in Jakarta. With six pairs of candidates running for the governor’s post, garnering more than fifty per cent of the votes in the first round proved to be a highly competitive undertaking.

4 The Models

This particular study has used empirical models based on the discussion of ethnicity and voting patterns in the previous section and with the election result acting as a dependent variable, while ethnicity, education level and flood were assigned as independent variables. Flood and education were treated as control variables in order to capture the significance of ethnicity in the gubernatorial elections. This study employs ordinary least square (OLS) to estimate the outcome of elections. The models used are as follows:

$$FBS07_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ethnicity_{ji} + \beta_2 flood_i + \beta_3 educ_i + u_i$$

$$FBS12_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ethnicity_{ji} + \beta_2 flood_i + \beta_3 educ_i + u_i$$

FBVS07 is a measure of the votes Fauzi Bowo obtained in the 2007 election at *kelurahan* level, and *FBVS12* is a measure of his share in the second round of the 2012 election. *Ethnicity* refers to the main ethnic groups in Jakarta, i.e. the Betawi, Javanese, Sundanese, Chinese, Batak and Minangkabau. *Flood* is a measure of flooded areas in Jakarta, and it is used as one of indicator to measure the government’s capacity to manage public policy (flood management in this case). *Educ* is the level of education that voters have (primary, secondary or tertiary). *U* stands for errors. The index *i* is the number of observations at *kelurahan* level (265 units altogether), while *j* is an index of ethnicity standing for Betawi, Javanese, Sundanese, Chinese, Batak and Minangkabau.

Table 1: Regression Results on Ethnicity

	M1 (Fauzi07)+	M2 (Fauzi12)++
Constant	81.92971 (35.41748)	124.35454 (35.53553)
Betawi	0.02849 (0.09258)	0.30904** (0.09289)
Javanese	-0.12729 (0.09818)	-0.17037 (0.09851)
Sundanese	-0.29505* (0.12438)	0.25566 * (0.12479)
Chinese	0.26176 ** (0.08636)	-0.37330*** (0.08665)
Batak	0.18996 (0.20117)	-0.86731*** (0.20184)
Minangkabau	-1.18921*** (0.16715)	0.59060 *** (0.16771)
Flood	-0.16557 (0.70314)	-1.82677* (0.70548)
Primary school ^{oo}	-0.36270 (0.74916)	-1.59884* (0.75166)
Junior High school	-0.10821 (0.34646)	-1.09456** (0.34761)
Senior High school	-0.19755 (0.35166)	-0.80255* (0.35284)
University	0.14804 (0.91623)	-3.31564*** (0.91928)
R squared	0.553	0.7987
Adjusted R squared	0.5336	0.79

Note: On the significance codes: ***significance at 0 per cent; ** significance at 0.01 per cent; * significance at one per cent. Standard errors in parentheses. + M1 (Fauzi07), a dependent variable, is the share of the votes for Fauzi Bowo in the 2007 election. ++ M2 (Fauzi12), also a dependent variable, is the share of votes for Fauzi Bowo in the second round of the 2012 election.

^{oo} Indonesian education system: primary (1–6 years); junior high school (6–9 years); senior high school (9–12 years).

Source: BPS, KPU and BNPB, estimated by author.

5 Empirical Results

The regression results in Table 1 show that being Sundanese, Chinese or Minangkabau was statistically significant for the outcome of the 2007 election (M1). Generally speaking, this result confirmed the findings of other scholars who have claimed that ethnicity counts in elections

(Subianto 2009; Tanasaldy 2007). Further ethnic variables – being Betawi, Javanese or Batak – were insignificant, however. The variables of education, flood were also insignificant. The ethnicity factor was only of positive significance for Chinese voters, while being Sundanese or Minangkabau was of negative significance. This means that if a *kelurahan* was inhabited by a relatively large number of Sundanese and Minangkabau, the share of the votes for Fauzi Bowo was likely to decrease. In contrast, the votes for him were likely to increase if a *kelurahan* had a relatively high number of Chinese voters.

The regression results for the 2012 election (M2) are slightly different to those of 2007. In the 2012 election, ethnicity was not the only variable capable of explaining the outcome of the polling. In general, coefficients for ethnicity were significant, which is an indication of the continuing importance of this factor in Indonesian politics. In contrast to other ethnic groups, the coefficient for the Javanese was insignificant. The coefficients for the Betawi, Sundanese and Minangkabau were significant and positive. The one for the Minangkabau was the highest of all, at more than 0.5, while those for the Betawi and Sundanese were less than 0.5. These positive results indicate a correlating amount of support for Fauzi Bowo from the Betawi, Sundanese and Minangkabau. In contrast, the coefficients for the Chinese and Batak were significant and negative. This indicates that it was likely that these ethnic groups did not support Fauzi Bowo. In the 2007 election, none of the control variables (level of education and flood) were significant. In the 2012 election, however, the flooding and educational variables were significant and had a negative sign, which indicates that Fauzi's lack of ability to manage flooding and education resulted in fewer votes for him. It should also be noted that some of these additional coefficients were higher than those for ethnicity. In short, it is quite clear from the longitudinal results that there were changes in people's voting behaviour over time due to ethnicity.

Having outlined these regression results, it is safe to say that ethnicity is still of importance in gubernatorial elections, although this factor is not as significant as it used to be. Differences in the role of ethnicity in the two gubernatorial elections can be seen in the level of its significance on each occasion. In the 2007 election, ethnicity was very significant in explaining the result, while in the 2012 election, it was not the only factor that counted; ethnicity certainly had an influence, but education and flood were more important. With this in mind, I would say that ethnicity still continues to be one of the factors that helps to decide the outcome of elections, but it has lost ground as other factors have emerged. The

discussion below highlights the reduced relevance of ethnicity in the gubernatorial elections. It looks at the Betawi, the Chinese and the Javanese.

Considering the results of the regressions, it would be valid to ask how we should understand the political behaviour of different ethnic groups in these two elections. Why did different ethnic groups change their political behaviour so dramatically on these two occasions? One way to answer these questions is to look at the political contexts in which the elections took place.

5.1 The Betawi

All analyses of ethnicity are political to a certain extent. In Indonesia, the link between power and ethnicity is evident; it was there before the fall of the Suharto regime and it has been ever since. A study of ethnicity and the struggle for power therefore needs to take into account the history and socio-politics of the city of Jakarta. To understand the Betawi, who are the indigenous inhabitants of Jakarta, we need to develop a deep understanding of the dynamics of ethnicity and power relations within the city.

The New Order regime was characterised by an authoritarian, centralised government that emphasised economic development and political stability (Schwarz 2000). The Betawi were under-represented, if not suppressed, under the Suharto administration, as indicated by their conspicuous absence in the highest political position in a province: the governor's office. During his three decades in power, Suharto never appointed a Betawi to serve as governor of Jakarta; under his administration, most of the governors were Javanese and had a military background: Ali Sadikin (Sundanese, 1966–1977), Tjokropranolo (Javanese, 1977–1982), Soeprapto (Javanese, 1982–1987), Wiyogo Atmodarminto (Javanese, 1987–1992), Soerjadi Soedirdja (Bantenese, 1992–1997) and Sutiyo-so (Javanese, 1997–2002). These governors were not chosen by the Indonesian people in a democratic election, but were appointed autocratically by Suharto himself. Note that in the early post-Suharto era, Sutiyo-so was elected by DPRD in his second term as governor in 2002–2007, before the first direct election was held in 2007.

The decision not to appoint a Betawi as governor of Jakarta may have been related to Suharto's vision of development (*pembangunan*) and his strong sense of Java-centric politics. Jakarta was included in his vision of development as “a showcase for [the] Indonesian development miracle made possible through forceful leadership of Suharto's New Order government” (Silver 2008: 187). At the beginning of his rule, Suharto

planned to transform Jakarta from a big *kampung* (rural village) to a modern city and appointed Ali Sadikin as governor of Jakarta to do the job. Suharto continued to materialise his vision by building roads and skyscrapers. During his period in office, he turned Jakarta into a mega-urban city. In 1977, Suharto started to develop Jabotabek, i.e. Jakarta and its surrounding cities, Bogor, Tangerang and Bekasi; these three small cities were integrated into Jakarta, transforming it into a single mega-urban region.

In order to pursue his dream of making Jakarta a showcase of development, Suharto relied on private entrepreneurs who had the right skills and capital required in the property sector. In Suharto's view, being the capital of the country, Jakarta was the most important region of all, a fact that ought to be reflected and facilitated by its development in spatial terms. Suharto needed assistance from private capital that could be used to develop buildings to accommodate modern offices and new housing residences. Ciputra, a Chinese entrepreneur, had built the first block of flats in Ancol at the beginning of the 1990s (Pratiwo and Nas 2005: 74) and also developed satellite towns of Bintaro and Pondok Indah in southern part of Jakarta. His footsteps were followed by other private entrepreneurs who not only built flats, but office buildings as well. Suharto's family also participated in this new city development project in many areas of Jabotabek. Pratiwo and Nas (2005: 75) explain in the Tomang area, for example, Mrs. Suharto developed the Taman Anggrek housing complex. They mention that her sons, Tommy Suharto, developed the Sentul area in Bogor, while Bambang Trihatmodjo opened a large residential area in Bogor called Royal Sentul Highland (Pratiwo and Nas 2005: 76–77).

To maintain strict security control over this development, Suharto appointed military personnel that he trusted as governors (Kimura 2013: 51). Not surprisingly, most of them were Javanese. Suharto had not only adopted this strategy in Jakarta, but also in regions of importance for the development of Indonesia. For example, he appointed a Javanese to serve as governor in Riau, an oil-producing area, and another Javanese to serve in East Kalimantan, a crucial region producing minerals and gas for the country.

Suharto's decision not to appoint a Betawi as governor of Jakarta might well have been a result of his Java-centric politics⁴ and was to some extent the type of security that he required to suppress any poten-

4 Personal communication with Professor Murodi, himself a Betawi and member of Bamus Betawi, 13 July 2013. He is an expert on the Betawi community.

tial dissent. This hypothesis can be illustrated best by the story of Eddie Marzuki Nalapraya, a prominent Betawi who served as vice-governor of Jakarta from 1984 to 1987. Born in Tanjung Priok, North Jakarta, on 6 June 1931, Eddie was one of the most successful Betawi and had served in the armed forces. He received his primary and secondary education in Tasikmalaya, West Java, and went on to study at the Military Administration (Sekolah Bintara Administrasi) in Surabaya in 1951. He then attended a military course for officers in Bandung in 1957 and received further training later at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas (in 1972). Nalapraya eventually came to head the garrison command staff at the Military Territory of Jakarta (Staf Komando Garnisun Kodam V Jaya) before being stationed at Military Headquarters (Markas Besar ABRI). By the time he retired, he was a major-general. Yet despite his illustrious career and having served as commander of the Presidential Guard in 1972 as well as vice-governor, Eddie was never promoted to the post of governor of Jakarta.

A careful look at the surrounding period when Eddie Marzuki Nalapraya served as vice-governor in 1984–1987 reveals that all the governors of Jakarta between 1977 and 1992 were Javanese: Tjokropranolo, Soeprapto and Wiyogo Atmodarminto. Suharto's decision to rely on Javanese governors with military credentials may be related to one noteworthy event in the history of elections held during the New Order: in 1977, Golkar, which was Suharto's ruling state party, lost its votes to an opposition party, PPP (Election Commission 2013). This Islamic political party received most of its own votes from people living in regions with strong political Islamic aspirations such as Jakarta. While this dealt a humiliating blow to Suharto and his ruling party, the political step of electing a governor was still entirely his prerogative, even if the process of choosing the candidates took place in Parliament. Even though Golkar regained its dominant votes in Jakarta in the 1982 elections (Election Commission 2014), the memory of its loss in the 1977 election seemed to warn Suharto of potential dissent from the Betawi. As a consequence, he never allowed any Betawi to fill the top position as governor of Jakarta.

As a concession for marginalising the Betawi this way, the Suharto administration made an effort to win their hearts through Jakarta's provincial government by revitalising Betawi cultural heritage, a domain considered least threatening politically. Note, however, that even though the Betawi were represented in this effort of revitalising Betawi cultural heritage, it was a top-down effort as the Jakartan government took the initiative (Shahab 2001). The Jakartan government and the Betawi com-

munity set up a team that was given the task of seeking out and revitalising aspects of Betawi cultural heritage. Shahab (2001) has explained that there were some difficulties at the beginning of this initiative, due not only to the very limited written records of Betawi culture, but also to the ongoing, contested disputes on the definition of what was actually 'Betawi'. Shahab (2001) mentions that the team decided to revive a folk theatre known as *lenong*, a dying part of the Betawi culture, which they managed to do in 1968. After achieving this, she continues, the team sought other aspects of Betawi cultural heritage to be revitalised such as *gambang kromong*, *kroncong Tuwu* and dances. However, not all of these met with the unanimous consent of the Betawi themselves. Performance of *gambang kromong*, for example, was originally associated with alcohol consumption and gambling activities, which are considered un-Islamic today, thus provoking some Betawi to refuse to watch it. However, she says the provincial government seems to have ignored this response as it continued to stage *gambang kromong* performances at cultural events that it promoted (albeit without the alcohol and gambling). Shahab (2001) explains that this rejection on the part of the Betawi lasted up to the 1980s; over time, though, *gambang kromong* gradually became accepted as an aspect of Betawi cultural heritage and identity and was performed in Jakarta on various occasions.

One unintended consequence of these cultural efforts was that the Betawi identity was strengthened considerably, which has been very useful for the Betawi in the long run. Under the Suharto regime, this cultural domain was the only area in which the Betawi could express themselves relatively freely, even though one should still note that some of these cultural expressions were suppressed by the provincial government. At the very least, one could imagine that most of the cultural activists could gather and discuss cultural matters together. Their written works might have been disseminated widely without arousing the suspicion of the Suharto regime. At the other extreme, this cultural activity not only served to strengthen the Betawi's sense of identity as the 'authentic' natives of Jakarta, but it also served as a kind of mutual exchange between the Suharto regime and the Betawi: their access to political power had been limited intentionally and effectively curtailed by Suharto in exchange for him relaxing his control over their cultural activities.

On the surface, this type of mutual, unwritten agreement might have worked well, at least under the strong authoritarian control of the Suharto regime. However, after Suharto's fall from power in 1998, the Betawi saw an opportunity to realise their long-repressed aspiration to install a Betawi as governor of Jakarta. They were finally able to achieve

this through the first direct gubernatorial election in 2007, where two Betawi candidates – Fauzi Bowo and Dani Anwar – competed for the position. Fauzi ran as governor, paired up with Prijanto as vice-governor. The two men had to compete against Adang Daradjatun, a retired policeman with a Sundanese background who ran together with Dani Anwar – a young Betawi politician – as vice-governor. In terms of ethnicity, Fauzi Bowo and Prijanto represented the biggest ethnic groups in Jakarta. In contrast, Adang Daradjatun and Dani Anwar represented the much smaller ethnic groups who lived there.

Having explained that the Betawi have nurtured the dream of having a Betawi as governor for a long time now, let us discuss the voting behaviour of this group by looking at the regression results mentioned above.

Why exactly did the Betawi change their political behaviour so dramatically? In the 2012 election, there was an indication that this group supported Fauzi Bowo. Judging by the regression results outlined above, it is clear that being Betawi was not significant in the 2007 election, while the results were positive and significant in the 2012 election. The Betawi may have voted for both candidates, of course. However, we need to see the political context of these elections to be able to understand the situation properly. First of all, let us consider the Betawi. As we have seen, two Betawi politicians competed in the first election in 2007: Fauzi Bowo and Dani Anwar, although Dani Anwar only ran for vice-governor. With only two pairs of candidates in the election, the Betawi presumably felt safe with this political constellation as they knew that at least one Betawi would occupy the governor's office. The Betawi seemed to have secured their chance of winning the governor's post: in the best scenario, if Fauzi Bowo won the election, then the governor's office would definitely be in the capable hands of a Betawi, and in a slightly less ideal scenario, a Betawi would still be installed as vice-governor if Adang Daradjatun won.

It appears that the Betawi did not see any threat from outside, especially since Prijanto had paired up with Fauzi Bowo as vice-governor. Additionally, during his term as vice-governor of Jakarta under Sutiyoso, Fauzi Bowo had taken several steps to maintain the Betawi's cultural identity such as preserving a Betawi village in Setu Babakan, South Jakarta.

Another possible answer might also be found in the way the 2007 election had been framed by the candidates. Along with Prijanto, Fauzi Bowo presented himself as being more of a secular figure rather than an Islamic one, with a proven ability to run Jakarta expertly (*abli*). Fauzi

Bowo was a senior bureaucrat who had spent most of his career working in the bureaucracy of Jakarta Province. By pairing up with Prijanto, he was able to play his Islamic and ethnic identity down and instead embraced the view of a pluralistic Jakarta. This differentiating strategy was relevant as their rivals, Adang Daradjatun and Dani Anwar, were supported by an Islamic political party, PKS, and presented themselves as being more Islamic than secular. At this time during the election, the conflicting issues of Islamism and secularism mattered for voters because there was a widespread perception that Adang Daradjatun and Dani Anwar were predisposed to adopt stringent policies that accommodated the more Islamic norms. By proposing more Islamic norms, as they appeared in the campaign, this pair wanted to garner more votes from the Betawi.

However, the political constellation in the 2012 election was very different from 2007. In this election, the Betawi arguably seemed to feel there was a political threat from the Javanese. This time, Fauzi Bowo had paired up with Nachrowi Ramli and both were of Betawi origin. They had to compete against Joko Widodo, a Javanese with a successful track record as mayor of Surakarta (Solo) in Central Java. Unlike Joko Widodo, Fauzi's attempt at managing Jakarta had been undermined by his failure to reduce the chronic problems of annual flooding and traffic congestion. Jokowi had also paired up with Basuki, again another candidate who had gained a good reputation for himself and had a clean record as regent of East Belitung in Bangka Belitung Province.

In contrast to their behaviour in the election of 2007, the Betawi showed their support for Fauzi Bowo and Nachrowi Ramli in 2012. Fauzi Bowo and Nachrowi Ramli mobilised ethnic Betawi organisations to garner votes for them. They also presented themselves as 'authentic' Betawi by using Betawi cultural identities, symbols, clothes and even language in Nachrowi Ramli's case. The latter had also served as head of the *Bamus Betawi* previously. It appeared that both Fauzi Bowo and Nachrowi Ramli needed to strengthen the Betawi identity because they knew they could exploit the perception of an ethnic threat from Jokowi and Basuki. By playing with this ethnic sentiment (of being threatened by the Javanese – and the Chinese, too, for that matter), they seemed able to gain more votes from the Betawi.

5.2 The Chinese

The Jakartan Chinese have a fairly long history that can be traced back to the early 17th century when the Dutch established the first fort, Benteng, on a bank of the River Ciliwung, where the Chinese had long been living

as rice farmers (Knorr 2009). The Chinese experienced different kinds of treatment under various governments, ranging from the Dutch colonial period up to Suharto's era from in 1967–1998. Under the Suharto government, which was a continuation of Sukarno's administration, the Chinese were subject to severe discrimination (Knorr 2009).

With the fall of Suharto in 1998, a number of relevant developments occurred that are associated with the Chinese Indonesians. First of all, Chinese Indonesians still constituted a significant presence in the Indonesian economy due to their business and capital. Secondly, with Law No. 2/1999 relaxing the curb on establishing political parties, the Chinese in Indonesia were now able to be politically active again by joining political parties and getting involved in their activities. By June 1998, the following ethnic-Chinese-based political parties had been established: the Chinese Indonesian Reform Party (Partai Reformasi Tionghoa Indonesia) and the Indonesian Assimilation Party (Partai Pembauran Indonesia, Parpindo), chaired by H. Junus Jahja and Jusuf Hamka. The establishment of Partai Reformasi Tionghoa Indonesia broke the long-standing ban on Chinese political activity. Another Chinese political party was established and participated in the 1999 elections: Partai Bhinneka Tunggal Ika Indonesia (PBI) led by Nurdin Purnomo, a Hakka Chinese.

Even though there were political parties affiliated with the Chinese, the voting patterns of Chinese Indonesians in the 1999 election revealed that the majority of these citizens apparently did not vote for these parties. Freedman (2003: 439–452) reported an estimate of the election results in which a large majority of the Chinese Indonesians voted for a nationalist party led by Megawati Sukarnoputri, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, PDIP) rather than for a 'Chinese' party. She argues that some of the possible reasons for this political behaviour might include (1) the prominence of the economist Kwik Kian Gie (an ethnic Chinese) as a close adviser to Megawati's campaign, and (2) Megawati's promise to grant the ethnic Chinese equal status and rights in her campaign. PDIP was also one of two leading political parties that promised a secular, pluralist state, the other being the National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, PKB) led by Abdurahman Wahid.

As far as the Chinese Indonesian voting pattern is concerned, it could be stated that this section of the electorate has a tendency to vote for political parties which grant them equal status and respect, or one which guarantees a secular and pluralist state. It seems that this voting pattern on the part of the Chinese was reflected in both the 2007 and

2012 gubernatorial elections in Jakarta. The results of the two regressions, which use the data from their share of the votes for Fauzi Bowo in 2007 and 2012, make it clear that Chinese Indonesians are predisposed to vote for candidates who appear to have a secular and pluralist view of society. In the 2007 election, Fauzi Bowo ran with Prijanto, supported by nineteen political parties. While there were differences in the ideologies of these parties, the main drivers of this coalition were nationalist and secular parties such as PD headed by Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, PDIP chaired by Megawati and Golkar chaired by Jusuf Kalla. Since Fauzi Bowo and Prijanto were supported by parties of diverse ideologies, they were perceived as being more inclusive. In contrast, their competitors, Adang Daradjatun and Dani Anwar, were only supported by one political party, PKS – an Islamic political party. This pair of candidates was perceived – fairly or unfairly – as the one that proposed a more Islamic view, or rather, a more exclusive one with Islam as its point of reference.

In the campaign, both candidates had employed a more rational theme. Fauzi Bowo and Prijanto used the slogan “Give It to the Expert” (*Serahkan Pada Ablinya*), while Adang Daradjatun and Dani Anwar employed “Let’s Fix Jakarta” (*Ayo Benahi Jakarta*). Only towards the date of the gubernatorial election did Fauzi Bowo and Prijanto adopt a more emotional slogan, “Jakarta for All” (*Jakarta untuk Semua*), strongly implying that they would help any ethnic groups who were living in Jakarta, including the Chinese. In contrast, Adang Daradjatun and Dani Anwar were much less vocal about their own views on the issue of a plural society. It was thus no surprise that Chinese Indonesians in Jakarta mostly voted for Fauzi Bowo and Prijanto. The result of the regressions indicate that the ethnicity variable was much more significant for Chinese Indonesians than other variables were.

The 2012 election revealed a very different result for Fauzi Bowo, who had paired up with Nachrowi Ramli. After gaining the second-highest number of votes in the first round, the two candidates then had to compete against the pair that had gained the most votes, Joko Widodo and Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. Even though Fauzi Bowo and Nachowi Ramli were backed by several political parties with different backgrounds and ideologies in this election, in terms of ethnicity, the pair was conspicuous in only representing Betawi voters. As mentioned earlier, Fauzi Bowo and Nachrowi Ramli both claimed they were of Betawi origin and espoused the Betawi culture in addition to being supported by eighty social organisations under the influential Bamus Betawi (*Poskota* 2011). In the 2007 election, Fauzi Bowo had also been supported by the Bamus Betawi, but this was not considered exclusively sectarian since he had

also paired up with Prijanto. In the 2012 election, however, it seemed that all the Betawi grouped behind Fauzi Bowo and Nachrowi Ramli, who also headed the Bamus Betawi at the time of the election. Unlike his less sectarian, more inclusive and secular approach in the 2007 election, Fauzi (and Nachrowi) unmistakably took a more ethno-religious approach to politics in the 2012 election.

The regression in the voting pattern of the Chinese Indonesians in the 2012 election shows a significant shift compared with the 2007 election, for at least two reasons. Firstly, the Chinese continued to maintain their political behaviour, voting for the nationalist, secular and pluralist political parties, represented in this case by Jokowi (PDIP) and Basuki (Gerindra). The Gerindra party chaired by Prabowo Subianto had been perceived as being anti-Chinese, but allowed Basuki, a Christian Chinese, to run his candidacy with its support, which demonstrated that Gerindra valued pluralism. Secondly, the position of Basuki as Joko Widodo's running partner had a positive influence on the number of votes the pair obtained from Chinese Indonesians. This result opens up the possibility of a wider interpretation of the voting patterns of this ethnic group: if a Chinese Indonesian runs for a public position, she/he is likely to receive support from the majority of the Chinese. In general, Chinese Indonesians are likely to vote for secular and pluralist parties that grant them equal rights and respect, and if there is a Chinese running for a public office, they are likely to vote for her/him. This similar trend could also be found in Medan where a Chinese Indonesian candidate was supported by Chinese voters (Nasution 2014: 502).

In the 2007 and 2012 gubernatorial elections, Chinese Indonesian voting behaviour was consistently predisposed towards the more secular, nationalist and pluralist candidates – Fauzi/Prijanto in 2007 and Jokowi/Basuki in 2012. The Chinese Indonesians in Jakarta make up a relatively large group (about five per cent of the city's total population, based on the 2000 population census by BPS). Looking at the voting pattern of the Chinese in the 2007 and 2012 elections in Jakarta, we can conclude that it is relatively consistent as a block and hence is significant for gubernatorial elections in a plural society like Jakarta's.

5.3 The Javanese

The Javanese population in Jakarta has outnumbered the Betawi ever since the first census was conducted in 1961 and is the largest ethnic group of all there; the census in 2000 established that the Javanese made up around 35 per cent of the total population (BPS 2000). In fact, the Javanese have been migrating to Jakarta ever since the Dutch colonial era,

mostly in order to find jobs and improve their standard of living (Hugo 1997). Some of them decided to stay permanently and became Jakartan citizens, while others chose to become circular migrants, working in Jakarta most of the time while their families and homes remained in their original hometown.

In political terms, the Javanese have had a long history of majority representation. If the number of governors of Jakarta appointed during Suharto's New Order is taken as an indicator, it will be found that most of these men were Javanese, as we have seen above.

In general, the Javanese do not experience any serious threats from any other ethnic groups in Jakarta, owing no doubt to the privileged status granted to them during the Suharto era. This factor seems to have been reflected in the 2007 and 2012 elections. The result in Table 1 indicates that the ethnic variable of being Javanese is less significant in explaining the outcome of the election for Fauzi Bowo in the 2007 election and Joko Widodo in the 2012 election. The possible reason for this might be related to the sheer size of the Javanese population and the privileged position of the Javanese as the largest ethnic group in Jakarta, thus making them far less likely to vote as a block. Perhaps the perception of the Javanese as the largest group and the fact that Joko Widodo is Javanese render the ethnicity question a moot point and call attention to other factors than ethnicity. These additional factors might be associated with the expectations of the Javanese voters; it appears that Javanese voters put more emphasis on public policy that would improve people's living conditions in the capital city. Therefore, the ability of Jakarta's governor to manage the city seems to be an important factor in determining their choice of candidates to vote for since most Javanese have moved to Jakarta in search of a better life. They expect the governor of Jakarta to manage the city well so that they, along with other ethnic groups, can live in a decent environment. In addition to the regression result mentioned above, one can speculate that as immigrants, they have better access to education, mass media and international news spreading political norms and therefore higher expectations of good governance. Another interpretation is that the possibility of the Javanese voting for both candidates is wide open.

6 Conclusion

This paper has argued that the relationship between ethnicity and voting patterns is an intricate one and has its own internal pattern of process that responds to changing political situations at the time of an election. It

also explains the reduced relevance of ethnicity as a factor in the two gubernatorial elections. Ethnicity was actually consequential in deciding the outcome of the first gubernatorial election in Jakarta in 2007. In the 2012 election, it continued to exist as one of the factors that led to the result, but its magnitude was much smaller than that of education or flood. There are, however, groups that submit their votes for candidates with a similar ethnic identity, as this paper has explained. In general, however, other factors play a more prominent role such as the high level of education that voters have and the trust they put in candidates' ability to manage public goods. Ethnicity may still be relevant to many voters, but its role in determining the outcome of an election is not likely to be as influential as it was in the first direct election of the *reformasi* era.

These findings show to some extent that the relationship between ethnicity and voting patterns is not a static one, especially not if one evaluates it over a longer period of time, as this paper has pointed out. Indeed, we need to remember that the dynamics of ethnic voting patterns are only possible in a democratic system where elections can be conducted in a regular manner once every five years.

Furthermore, the findings in this paper differ from those of previous research on ethnicity and politics, which has emphasised the negative impact of ethnicity on politics in the *reformasi* era, particularly studies that have focused on the violence resulting from ethnic polarisation. In the initial period of direct local elections, some researchers factored in ethnicity as one influential variable that determined the outcome of elections, postulating that a particular ethnic group would only vote for a candidate with a similar ethnic background. However, I believe these writers have overlooked the need to examine the relationship between ethnicity and voting patterns over an extended period of time.

In addition, analysing local direct elections in a plural society like Jakarta's in a longitudinal study also highlights the relevance of a possible coalition in which the governor and vice-governor are recruited from different ethnic groups. This kind of team is likely to sustain and strengthen the social fabric of Jakarta as a place where many ethnic groups live together.

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