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by Tery Setiawan, Muhammad As Hikam, Antonius Suhartomo

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Faith, Networks, and the Ballot: Unveiling the Hidden Drivers of Voting Intentions in Indonesia's 2024 Election

Tery Setiawan¹, Muhammad AS Hikam², Antonius Suhartomo³

¹ Universitas Kristen Maranatha, Indonesia; Radboud University, Netherlands; e-mail: tery.setiawan@psy.maranatha.edu

² President University, Indonesia; e-mail: mashikam@president.ac.id

³ President University, Indonesia; e-mail: asuharto@president.ac.id

* Correspondence

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Abstract: This study investigates the extent to which social network characteristics, religious identity, and past political participation influence voting intentions in Indonesia's 2024 general election, with a particular focus on the implications of religiosity in a predominantly Muslim society. A quantitative survey method was employed, gathering primary data through both online and offline surveys from 314 participants across selected locations in Indonesia. Multilevel modelling techniques were used to analyse the relationship between social network characteristics, religious identity, and voting intentions. The results revealed that social network characteristics, such as the frequency of interaction and socio-political discussions, do not significantly influence voting intentions. In contrast, religiocentrism negatively impacts voting intentions, suggesting that individuals with more conservative religious beliefs are less likely to vote. However, past offline political participation was found to be a strong positive predictor of voting intentions. These findings highlight the need for targeted interventions that address the concerns of conservative religious groups and reinforce the civic duty associated with voting. Understanding the limited role of social networks in this context can inform strategies to increase voter turnout in future elections. This study provides new insights into the complex interplay between religious identity, social networks, and political behaviour in Indonesia, a predominantly Muslim and culturally diverse nation, particularly in the post-pandemic socio-political landscape.

Keywords: Political participation; religious identity; social networks; voting intention.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini menyelidiki sejauh mana karakteristik jaringan sosial, identitas agama, dan partisipasi politik masa lalu memengaruhi niat memilih dalam pemilihan umum Indonesia 2024, dengan fokus khusus pada implikasi religiusitas di masyarakat yang mayoritas Muslim. Metode survei kuantitatif digunakan, mengumpulkan data primer melalui survei online dan offline dari 314 peserta di lokasi yang dipilih di Indonesia. Teknik pemodelan multilevel digunakan untuk menganalisis hubungan antara karakteristik jaringan sosial, identitas agama, dan niat memilih. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa karakteristik jaringan sosial, seperti frekuensi interaksi dan diskusi sosial-politik, tidak secara signifikan memengaruhi niat memilih. Sebaliknya, religioentrisme berdampak negatif pada niat memilih, menunjukkan bahwa individu dengan keyakinan agama yang lebih konservatif cenderung kurang berpartisipasi dalam pemilihan. Namun, partisipasi politik offline di masa lalu ditemukan sebagai prediktor positif yang kuat terhadap niat memilih. Temuan ini menyoroti perlunya intervensi yang ditargetkan yang menangani kekhawatiran kelompok agama konservatif dan memperkuat tanggung jawab sipil yang terkait dengan pemungutan suara. Memahami peran terbatas jaringan sosial dalam konteks ini dapat membantu merumuskan strategi untuk meningkatkan partisipasi pemilih dalam pemilihan mendatang. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan baru tentang interaksi kompleks antara identitas agama, jaringan sosial, dan perilaku politik di Indonesia, negara yang mayoritas Muslim dan beragama budaya, terutama dalam lanskap sosial-politik pasca-pandemi.

Kata Kunci: Partisipasi politik; identitas agama; jejaring sosial; niat memilih.

1. Introduction

Political participation in Indonesia is influenced by various social factors, including religious identity and individuals' social networks (de Zúñiga, 2012). As the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia presents a complex political dynamic, particularly in the context of general elections. The Covid-19 pandemic, with its accompanying social restrictions and vaccination policies enforced by the government, has triggered various forms of political participation, including intense public debates (Hutabarat, 2021). However, most Indonesians tend to view political decisions as personal matters that are rarely discussed openly, especially outside the family sphere. This suggests that interactions within social networks may only sometimes influence individuals' political decisions as previously assumed.

Previous research has demonstrated that social network characteristics and social identity, particularly religious identity, play a significant role in predicting political participation (Campbell, 2013; Sterkens & Anthony, 2008). Religious practices, such as participation in community-based religious activities like prayer groups or Bible studies, have been shown to be strong predictors of traditional political engagement, including activities like voter registration drives (Davidson & Pieper, 2019). Additionally, religious identity has been found to influence political behaviour, with religious cues activating religious traditionalism, which affects how political candidates are perceived. However, this influence diminishes as individuals gain more knowledge about political issues and candidates (Weber & Thornton, 2012).

Furthermore, the type of religious beliefs held by individuals also plays a crucial role in shaping political participation, with some macro-level religious beliefs significantly increasing macro-level political behaviour (Driskell, Embry, & Lyon, 2008). Religious messages that enhance individuals' self-image can also serve as powerful motivators, providing them with a sense of internal efficacy that encourages political involvement (McClendon & Riedl, 2015). Moreover, religious involvement, particularly in church practices, has been identified as a significant predictor of voting preferences, often aligning individuals with specific political parties (Botterman & Hooghe, 2012). Religion also emerges as a key factor in the political mobilisation of certain groups, where collective identities based on ethnicity and religion are more influential in driving political engagement (Read, 2007).

While previous research has provided substantial evidence on the relationship between religious identity, social networks, and political participation, there still needs to be a gap in understanding how these dynamics operate in the specific context of Indonesia, particularly in the aftermath of significant events such as the Covid-19 pandemic. Most studies have focused on Western contexts or have not fully explored the intricate interplay between religious identity, social network characteristics, and political behaviour in a predominantly Muslim society like Indonesia. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining how these factors influence individuals' intentions to vote in the 2024 general election in Indonesia, offering new insights into the role of religion and social networks in shaping political participation in a rapidly changing socio-political landscape.

The objective of this study is to examine the extent to which social network characteristics, religious identity, and past political participation influence individuals' intentions to vote in the 2024 Indonesian general election. Given the complex socio-political landscape of Indonesia, particularly in the context of its religious diversity and the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, this research aims to provide empirical insights into the factors that motivate or deter voting intentions among different demographic groups.

This study is grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which posits that behavioural intentions are a function of subjective norms, attitudes, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). However, the results of this study challenge some of the initial hypotheses. Contrary to the expectation that social network characteristics, such as the frequency of interactions and socio-political discussions, would positively influence voting intentions (H1 and H2), the findings indicate no significant relationship between these factors and the intention to vote.

On the other hand, the study supports the hypothesis that religiocentrism, a dimension of religious identity, negatively impacts voting intentions (H3). Participants with religiocentric solid views were less likely to intend to vote, highlighting the role of religious identity in shaping political behaviour. Moreover, the study confirms that past offline political participation is a significant positive predictor of voting intention (H5), while past online participation does not show a significant effect (H4). These findings underscore the importance of offline political engagement in motivating electoral involvement.

2. Methods

We purposively selected several research locations, including Denpasar, Semarang, Medan, and Jakarta and its surrounding areas (Jabodetabek: Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi). These locations were chosen for two primary reasons: First, apart from Jakarta, these areas play a central role in determining the outcome of general elections but should be more noticed in existing studies. Second, these locations provide a broad geographical representation of Indonesia, enhancing the generalizability of the study findings. For the on-site survey, Denpasar and Semarang were selected, with participants being randomly sampled through a 'random walk' method. For the remaining locations, an online survey was conducted using a Qualtrics platform.

This study employed a quantitative survey method, gathering primary data through both online and offline surveys. The mixed data collection approach was necessary due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting restrictions, which made face-to-face data collection challenging. The survey was conducted from July to September 2022 after obtaining ethical clearance from the authors' affiliated university.

Participants were sourced from the selected locations using both random sampling (for on-site surveys) and a mailing list-based random selection process (for online surveys). The final sample consisted of 314 participants after excluding those with substantial missing data or indifferent responses. The sample included 178 males and 136 females, with an average age of 34 years ($SD = 13.54$). Participants represented various religious affiliations, with the majority being Muslim.

For on-site data collection, we employed a 'random walk' technique to ensure randomness in participant selection. This involved selecting starting points based on a random number (from dice) and approaching every n th house or location. For online data collection, we distributed survey links via a platform to participants selected from a mailing list. The mailing list was generated by enumerators using social media groups. The response rates varied by location, with on-site surveys generally yielding higher participation rates compared to online methods.

Data were processed and analysed using multilevel modelling techniques to assess the relationship between social network characteristics, religious identity, and voting intentions. The analysis included calculating intraclass correlation coefficients to examine the variance among types of relationships and using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to validate the measurement models. Control variables such as age, gender, educational level, and income were included in the final models to account for potential spurious relationships. The final analysis was conducted on data from 314 participants, after excluding those with incomplete responses or irrelevant data.

For on-site data collection, we employed a 'random walk' technique to ensure randomness in participant selection. This involved selecting starting points based on a random number (from dice) and approaching every n th house or location. For online data collection, we distributed survey links via a platform to participants selected from a mailing list. The mailing list was generated by enumerators using social media groups. The response rates varied by location, with on-site surveys generally yielding higher participation rates compared to online methods (see Table 1).

Table 1. Response rates for each research location.

City	Number of person approached	Refusal	Acceptance	Response rate (%)
Denpasar (on-site)	134	32	102	76.11
Denpasar (online)	30	-	7	23.33
Semarang (on-site)	211	51	160	75.83
Semarang (online)	40	-	30	75
Jabodetabek	60	-	37	61.67
Medan	50	-	33	66
		Total	369	63%

It is worth noting that the number of acceptances is not the final number of participants included in the analysis. Later, we had to remove participants with a substantial number of missing values, especially on the dependent variable measure, and those with indifferent responses. The total number included in the analysis is 314 participants, with 178 males and 136 females, and the mean age is 34 ($SD=13.54$). Based on religious affiliation, we have 227 Muslim participants, 22 Christians (and Catholics combined) participants, 59 Hindu participants, 3 Confucius participants and 3 participants who did not disclose their religious affiliation. Among those participants, 1,054 social network members were recorded. In other words, the average of social network members among participants is 5.97 members.

Measures

Intention to vote

Based on a study Fielding, McDonald, & Louis, 2008 (2008), behavioural intentions were defined as the extent to which people show their intentions to do certain behaviours measured on items such as "I intend to engage in environmental activism during the next six months". In this study, we used the same approach and adjusted the questions to our context. Here, we asked participants to rate themselves on statements about their optimism in the election and their intention to participate in the 2024 general election, ranging from 1 "disagree" to 3 "agree".

Religious identity

As mentioned earlier, religious identity in the current study is represented by the extent to which individuals behave and believe according to their religious affiliation teachings. For this, the measure on religious identity asks participants to respond to items on religious practice and religious beliefs and the centrality of their religion. This scale was derived from a study by Teuku Setiawan, De Jong, Scheepers, & Sterkens (2020) on the relations between religiosity and support for interreligious conflicts. However, their religiosity measure is applicable to a general context. In this measure, religious practices is defined as the extent to which people attend religious services according to their religious affiliation, such as going to mass on Sunday or going to mosque on Friday (Scheepers & Eisinga, 2015). Based on social identity notion, performing religious practices reflects the strength of ingroup ties. Ginges, Hansen, & Norenzayan (2009) added that attending religious services provides individuals more exposure to similar (positive) views towards their ingroup members, and potentially also similar (negative) views towards their relevant outgroup. Here we used a straightforward question to measure participants' attendance to religious services, "How often do you go to religious services in mosques, churches, temples or other places of worship?". The question is rated on a seven-point scale, ranging from 'never' to 'several times a day'.

Next, we measured participants' religious beliefs through a four-item religiocentrism scale adopted from a study on religiocentrism scale by Sterkens and Anthony (Sterkens & Anthony, 2008).

The measure asks participants to rate themselves on a five-point Likert scale to what extent they show positive attitudes towards the religious ingroup as well as negative attitudes towards the religious outgroup. The religious ingroup attitudes are represented by items, such as "Thanks to our religion, most of us are good people", while attitudes towards religious outgroups are measured by items such as, "Other religions only talk about doing good deeds without practising them". Our confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) shows that the model fits well with the data, indicated by fit indices of CFI=.99 and SRMR=.01. The factor loadings of all items are at a moderate level, ranging from .36 to .74. Finally, the scale is shown to be moderately reliable with $\alpha=.60$ (see Appendix for full results).

Political participation

Campbell (2013) proposed that political participation should be defined as the involvement of individuals in social organization, their participation through online medias as well as through offline channels. In the current study, we specifically focused on individuals' online and offline participation that are related to political discussion and electoral vote. Therefore, participants were asked to rate themselves on statements such as "You are involved in political discussions (local/national) through online, e.g., via FB, IG, twitter, etc" for online participation, and "You use your electoral right in every presidential election" (see Appendix for full list of items). The statements were rated on a four-point Likert scale, with higher score indicating higher participation. The CFA reveals that the model fits the data, with CFI=.99 and SRMR=.01. Meanwhile, the factor loadings are at highly acceptable level, ranging from .79 to .10 (unstandardized coefficients). Both dimensions are also highly reliable, with $\alpha=.91$ for online participation and $\alpha=.96$ for offline participation.

Social network characteristics

We collected social network information of participants by using a name-generator method (Peet Van den Berg, Arentze, & Timmermans, 2012). This method is widely used in studying an egocentric method in eliciting the network members under study (Carrasco, Hogan, Wellman, & Miller, 2008). The method asks participants to think of as many close names as they can. Once participants gave out the names, they were asked to identify whether each given name shares discussion on social and/ political issues in general. Next, they were asked to identify the contact frequency with each given name. Finally, they were asked to identify the nature of the relationship, whether a direct link (ego-alter) or indirect link (ego-alter-alter).

Individual characteristics

We asked straightforward questions concerning age, gender, educational level and individual income level. Later in the analysis, we will use these as control variables to check whether there are spurious relationships between predictors and the dependent variable and hence we will add these in the final model.

Data were processed and analysed using multilevel modelling techniques to assess the relationship between social network characteristics, religious identity, and voting intentions. The analysis included calculating intraclass correlation coefficients to examine the variance among types of relationships and using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to validate the measurement models. Control variables such as age, gender, educational level, and income were included in the final models to account for potential spurious relationships. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of the participants on all measures used in the study.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of participants on all measures

Predictors	Range	Denpasar (N=74)		Semarang (N=189)		Jabodetabek (N=31)		Medan (N=20)	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Intention to vote	1-3	2.80	.36	2.75	.37	2.73	.31	2.82	.29
Religious attendance	1-7	2.68	1.12	3.89	1.65	3.35	1.43	4.25	1.45
Religiocentrism	1-5	2.41	.85	2.33	.53	3.40	.63	3.44	.69
Past online participation	1-5	1.86	.87	1.53	.67	2.86	.93	2.67	.66
Past offline participation	1-5	3.02	.95	3.27	.93	4.41	.62	4.53	.81
Frequency of interaction (with network members)	1-6	4.30	.77	4.21	1.26	3.58	1.16	4.43	1.25
Socio-political discussion (with network members)	0-2	.90	.44	1.04	.53	.72	.72	.81	.58
Individual characteristics									
Age	18-87	30.62	10.18	35.60	13.58	31.90	16.19	41.55	15.71
Gender (male as reference)	0/1	.46	.50	.39	.49	.48	.50	.70	.47
Educational level	1-6	4.45	.53	4.20	.81	4.68	.65	5.05	.60
Income level	1-8	4.07	1.98	4.29	1.83	4.16	2.77	5.80	2.55

3. Results

We ran multi-level analysis to test the proposed hypotheses. In doing so, we built our statistical models one at a time, starting from Model 1 by only including the intercept (grand mean) and the type of relationship of participants (see Table 3). In this model, we find that there is almost no variance among types of relationships (0=direct connection and 1=connection through alter(s)). In this step, we also calculated an intraclass correlation coefficient to determine that there is variation among types of relationships. Consistently, we only find a very small variation (ICC=.06).

Table 3. Multilevel models of social network on intention to vote in 2024 (N=277)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Fixed effects				
Intercept	2.75 (.05)	2.59 (.09)	2.40 (.12)	2.47 (.15)
Within-level data (social network characteristics)				
Frequency of interactions		.03 (.01)	.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)
Socio-political discussion		.06 (.06)	.05 (.05)	.04 (.05)
Individual-level data (ego characteristics)				
Religious attendance			-.00 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Religiocentrism			-.10 (.03)	-.11 (.02)
Past online participations			.02 (.02)	.03 (.02)
Past offline participations			.15 (.02)	.15 (.02)
Control variables				
Age				.00 (.00)
Gender (male as reference)				.01

				(.03)
Education				-.02
				(.03)
Income				-.00
				(.01)
Random effects (variance components)				
Variance among type of relationships (σ^2_{u0})	.00	.00	.00	.00
	(.06)	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)
Residual (σ^2_e)	.12	.12	.10	.10
	(.35)	(.35)	(.32)	(.31)
Log-lik.	-105.3	-102.8	-74.5	-70.0
ICC	.06			

Note: For fixed effects, standard errors are in parentheses, and for random effects, standard deviations are in parentheses. Bolded numbers show significance at $p < .05$.

Social Network Characteristics and Voting Intention

We began our analysis by examining the relationship between participants' social network characteristics and their intention to vote in the 2024 general election. The first model (Model 1) included only the intercept and the type of relationship participants had within their networks. The analysis revealed minimal variance among different types of relationships, with an intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) of 0.06, indicating very little variation between direct connections and connections through intermediaries. This finding suggests that the type of relationship within a social network does not significantly impact voting intention.

In Model 2, we incorporated social network characteristics, including the frequency of interactions and engagement in socio-political discussions. The results showed no significant relationship between the frequency of interactions ($b=0.03$, $CI=-0.00$; 0.06) and socio-political discussions ($b=0.06$, $CI=-0.05$; 0.19) and participants' intention to vote. Therefore, our hypotheses regarding the positive influence of social network characteristics on voting intention (H1 and H2) were not supported by the data.

Religious Identity and Voting Intention

Next, we explored the influence of religious identity on voting intention by adding ego characteristics, such as religious attendance and religiocentrism, into Model 3. The results indicated that religiocentrism was significantly and negatively related to the intention to vote in the 2024 general election ($b=-0.11$, $CI=-0.16$; -0.05). Participants who held strong positive attitudes toward their religious ingroups and negative attitudes toward outgroups were less likely to intend to vote. This partially supports our hypothesis that religious identity influences voting intention, specifically through religiocentrism (H3). However, religious attendance did not significantly predict voting intention.

Past Political Participation and Voting Intention

Finally, we investigated the role of past political participation in predicting voting intention. Model 3 also included participants' past online and offline political activities. The analysis showed that only past offline participation was positively related to voting intention ($b=0.15$, $CI=0.11$; 0.19), confirming our hypothesis (H5). In contrast, past online participation did not show a significant relationship with voting intention, contrary to our expectations (H4).

Demographic Variables and Voting Intention

In Model 4, demographic variables, including age, gender, educational level, and income, were added to ensure that the relationships observed in previous models were not spurious. The analysis revealed that none of these demographic factors significantly predicted voting intention. This finding

suggests that religiocentrism and past offline participation are robust predictors of voting intention, regardless of individual demographic characteristics.

4. ⁴⁴ The influence of social networks and religious identity on voting intention for the 2024 election

The study aims to examine the extent to which individuals' social network characteristics and religious identity are related to their intention to vote in the 2024 general election in Indonesia. The results present mixed findings in relation to the proposed hypotheses. Here, we provide explanations for these outcomes.

Firstly, we found no evidence supporting the notion that individuals' social network characteristics, particularly the frequency of interaction and engagement in socio-political discussions with their network members, are related to their intention to vote in the 2024 Indonesian general election. This finding contradicts previous social network studies that claim ego-network characteristics significantly influence individuals' social behaviours (Scott & Carrington, 2015; Pauline van den Berg, Arentze, & Timmermans, 2012). We offer two explanations for this discrepancy. First, many Indonesians may still consider political decisions a private matter, which hinders open discussion of socio-political issues. Consequently, they rarely engage in political conversations, falling into what Conover, Searing, and Crewe (2002) describe as the "silent category," and when they do, it is likely with family members rather than friends.

Additionally, Indonesians may also avoid conflicts among friends (Jang, Lee, & Park, 2014). Therefore, even when participants exhibit a high frequency of interaction with their network members, they may develop attitudes towards participation in the 2024 general election that differ from the expectations. This observation suggests that family members, rather than friendships, may hold greater importance in shaping political behaviours.

Secondly, religiocentrism is closely linked to fundamentalism, which in Indonesia is characterised by more conservative beliefs and the narrative that Muslims have long been repressed in the country, with democratic elections being perceived as not fully aligning with these beliefs (Hadiz, 2017; Teuku Setiawan, De Jong, et al., 2020). Furthermore, some individuals may have adopted a more inflexible Islamic conservatism because they believe that political elections will consistently favour the middle and upper classes' private wealth while sacrificing the poor (Hadiz, 2017; Jati, 2021; van Bruinessen, 2018). This finding is consistent with other studies showing that a considerable portion of Indonesian Muslims support Sharia law and the resurgence of Islamic authority in Indonesia (Manullang, 2020; Mujani, 2003; Mulia, 2011; Otto, 2010). However, this result should be interpreted cautiously, as religiocentrism is only one aspect of religiosity; other aspects such as religious salience and intratextual fundamentalism also play significant roles (Teuku Setiawan, De Jong, et al., 2020). Thus, although individuals high in religiocentrism are less likely to vote in the 2024 general election, other psychological factors may influence their decision-making process. Consequently, they may still participate in the general election if they possess a high level of religious salience.

Thirdly, offline political participation plays an important role in increasing individuals' intention to vote. Campbell (2013) argues that those who score high in past political participation may view such participation as a civic duty, which cannot be reduced to a cost-benefit-based activity. Furthermore, this finding is noteworthy because during the initial social restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic, there were numerous complaints against government decisions and simultaneous requests for social assistance for those heavily affected. Although it was reported that the central and regional governments eventually provided the necessary aid to affected households (SMERU, PROSPERA, UNDP, UNICEF, 2021), it is still expected that discussions related to Covid-19 among the public may shape perceptions of the presidential election. In this study, we can assume that these discussions have not diminished people's intention to vote in the 2024 general election and may have even slightly increased it.

These findings differ from much of the existing literature, which often highlights the significant role of social networks in shaping political behaviour (Scott & Carrington, 2015; Pauline van den Berg

et al., 2012). The lack of a significant relationship between social network characteristics and voting intention in this study suggests that, in the Indonesian context, political decisions may be more private and less influenced by social interactions than previously thought. This finding aligns with studies that suggest Indonesians may avoid discussing political matters outside of their family circles to prevent conflict (Jang et al., 2014).

The negative relationship between religiocentrism and voting intention supports the notion that more conservative religious beliefs, which are often critical of democratic processes, may lead to political disengagement (Hadiz, 2017; T. Setiawan, Scheepers, & Sterkens, 2020). This aligns with other research indicating that a significant portion of Indonesian Muslims support Sharia law and the resurgence of Islamic authority, which may contribute to their reluctance to participate in national elections (Manullang, 2020; Mujani, 2003).

The findings of this study highlight the complex and context-specific nature of political participation in Indonesia. The apparent disconnect between social network characteristics and voting intention suggests that political engagement in Indonesia may not be as socially driven as in other contexts. This may reflect broader cultural tendencies toward privacy in political matters and a preference for avoiding conflict, even within social networks. Additionally, the role of religiocentrism in reducing voting intentions points to a growing tension between religious conservatism and democratic participation, which could have significant implications for the future of Indonesian politics.

These results suggest that efforts to increase voter turnout in Indonesia may need to consider the influence of religious identity and offline political engagement more carefully. For instance, strategies that address the concerns of more conservative religious groups and emphasize the civic duty aspect of voting could be effective in counteracting the negative impact of religiocentrism on voting intentions. Additionally, understanding that offline political participation is a stronger predictor of voting intention than online engagement could inform future voter mobilization campaigns.

The lack of influence from social network characteristics may be due to the cultural context of Indonesia, where political matters are often kept private and discussed primarily within the family. The negative impact of religiocentrism on voting intention likely reflects the broader trend of increasing religious conservatism in Indonesia, where some view democratic processes as incompatible with their religious beliefs. The positive relationship between past offline political participation and voting intention underscores the importance of civic engagement in fostering democratic participation, even in a challenging political climate.

To build on these findings, future research could explore the role of other aspects of religiosity, such as religious salience, in influencing voting intentions. Additionally, strategies to increase voter turnout should consider the complex interplay between religious identity and political engagement in Indonesia. Given the findings, it may be beneficial to develop targeted interventions that address the specific concerns of conservative religious groups while promoting the civic importance of voting in a democracy.

5. Conclusion

This study presents several important findings regarding the relationship between social network characteristics, religious identity, and voting intentions in the context of Indonesia's 2024 general election. Contrary to much of the existing literature, our results suggest that social network characteristics, such as the frequency of interaction and engagement in socio-political discussions, do not significantly influence voting intentions in the Indonesian context. This suggests that political decisions may be more private and less influenced by social interactions than previously assumed. Additionally, the study highlights the negative impact of religiocentrism on voting intentions, indicating that individuals with more conservative religious beliefs may be less likely to participate in the democratic process. Conversely, offline political participation was found to be a strong predictor of voting intentions, emphasising the importance of civic engagement in fostering democratic participation.

The value of this research lies in its contribution to understanding the complex and context-specific nature of political participation in Indonesia. By examining the roles of social networks, religious identity, and past political behaviour, the study offers insights into the factors that may drive or hinder electoral participation in a predominantly Muslim and culturally diverse nation. These findings have significant implications for the design of strategies aimed at increasing voter turnout, particularly in addressing the concerns of conservative religious groups and reinforcing the civic duty associated with voting.

However, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. The reliance on self-reported data may introduce biases, and the cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to infer causality. Additionally, the study focused primarily on specific aspects of religiosity, such as religiocentrism, while other dimensions, like religious salience, were not explored in depth. Future research should address these limitations by incorporating longitudinal designs to understand causal relationships better and by exploring additional aspects of religiosity that may influence political behaviour. Further studies could also investigate how targeted interventions might effectively engage conservative religious groups and promote the importance of voting as a civic responsibility, thereby enhancing voter turnout in future elections.

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