



A Qualitative Analysis the Factors Affects Voters Behavior

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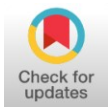
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Abstract:

Understanding voter behavior in Indonesia's diverse sociopolitical landscape is critical for fostering democratic participation. This qualitative study examines the multifaceted factors influencing electoral choices in the 2024 Indonesian General Election through the lenses of sociological, psychological, and rational choice theories. Employing case studies, interviews, and thematic analysis of existing literature, the research highlights the interplay between Indonesia's entrenched ethnic, religious, and social cleavages and emerging technological and demographic shifts. Key findings reveal a generational divide: urban, educated voters exhibit heightened skepticism toward institutional politics, while rural communities remain influenced by traditional patronage networks. The 2024 elections underscore the dual dynamics of digital campaign strategies such as the viral "gemoy" rebranding tactic targeting Gen Z and persistent structural challenges like political polarization and regional disparities in electoral access. The study identifies how digital platforms amplify emotional appeals and identity politics, yet rational calculations around policy outcomes (e.g., economic welfare programs) remain pivotal. Recommendations emphasize the need to strengthen electoral integrity through transparent governance, equitable technological access, and narratives that bridge pragmatic governance objectives with sociocultural values. By synthesizing multidisciplinary insights, this research contributes to broader discourses on inclusive political engagement in pluralistic democracies, offering pathways to mitigate polarization and enhance democratic resilience in Indonesia's evolving political ecosystem.

Keyword: Voters Behavior , Politics, Electoral



INTRODUCTION

Among the most well-known and heavily studied sub-fields of political science are elections, voting behavior, and public opinion. In the context of democracy, voting methods are normally simple to understand and are appreciated by a large group of decision-makers and the general public, so they do not result in mistrust of the decision-makers. Voting is our civic responsibility (Campbell, 2010). In praxis, voting can change the quality, scope, and type of government. The way we vote can either help or harm people. Compulsory voting is often linked to pro-democracy orientations in the public

(Singh, 2018). Even in the context of democratic morality, this is considered a virtue. When a group of citizens collectively elects its representatives, it affirms the notion that we govern ourselves by free choice (Douglas, 2013). An individual's right to vote ties that person to our social order, even if that person chooses not to exercise that right. Voting represents the beginning; everything else in our democracy follows the right to vote. Participation is more than just a value it is a foundational virtue of our democracy.

However, the most interesting questions among the three concepts are questions such as why people voted the way they did or what the implications of the results are questions related to voter behavior. The study of voter behavior is consistently intriguing due to the dynamic nature of political choices made by voters across various elections, including legislative and regional head elections. The altered behavior may reflect a different choice than before previously consistent behavior has become inconsistent; previously ignorant behavior has turned into active participation. Examining and analyzing these factors is essential for understanding voter behavior and the complexities of electoral dynamics (Kulachai et al., 2023).

In the context of elections, each electoral moment is an opportunity to improve the quality of democracy by encouraging intelligent, rational, and high-quality voting behavior. In praxis, the role of voters is very important because they can determine who gets elected as a member of the legislature or as a national leader both incumbents and newcomers. Voters are able to elevate individuals to become regional representatives to ensure that regional aspirations are represented at the central government level (Fauzi, 2019).

Therefore, the study of voter behavior alongside public opinion holds special attraction in political contestation. This is evident among various parties, including the state, academics, and political actors such as candidates and parties (Fisher et al., 2017). Voter behavior in elections does not occur in a vacuum or in isolation (Satriadi et al., 2021). Many scholars and researchers have defined voter behavior over the years, revealing that voting behavior comprises both individual and non-individual dimensions internal and external or psychological and sociological factors respectively (Abdullah et al., 2020; de Beer & Matthee, 2021). Historically, the study of voter behavior has attracted considerable interest following the growth of public opinion research (Adams, 2019; Sánchez Parra et al., 2023; Tížik, 2022).

Generally, there are various definitions of voting behavior. At its most basic level, voting behavior is when citizens use the ballot to accomplish things they care about (Butler & Stokes, 2013). It is a set of individual actions and activities during electoral processes, particularly when choosing whom to vote for (Bratton, 2008). Behavior can be interpreted as any act a person engages in, influenced by psychological, physical, biological, and social conditions that shape a person's life (Abdullah et al., 2020).

There are three major theories of voting behavior commonly used in academic contexts. The first is the sociological approach, pioneered by Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Science, which views voting as an individual act largely influenced by the social groups to which a person belongs (Fraile & Hernández, 2020; Vorobyev, 2018). This theory includes both micro (individual) and macro (social group) perspectives. From a micro-sociological perspective, factors such as socio-economic status, ethnicity, living situation (urban or rural), and religious affiliation strongly influence voting intention. From a macro perspective, social conflict between groups plays a significant role (Antunes, 2010).

The second is the psychological approach, developed by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center. It emphasizes individual psychological processes

such as perception, emotion, and motivation in shaping voting decisions (De La Poza et al., 2017; Ivanescu, 2017). There are six psychological factors that may influence voters' decision-making: (1) party identification, (2) concerns with issues, (3) personal attachment to candidates, (4) conformity to group standards, (5) sense of efficacy, and (6) civic obligation to vote (Noor Hamid Khan Mahsud & Husnul Amin, 2020).

The third is the rational choice approach, which emphasizes rational calculations to achieve outcomes aligned with personal objectives (Ganti, 2020). In this context, voters are seen as rational actors, guided by self-interest, responsibility, and the principle of utility maximization (Krstić, 2022). Rational choice theory was developed as an alternative to explain high voter turnout and voting in close elections, which could not be accounted for by individual egoism alone (Edlin et al., 2007).

This research aims to provide a qualitative analysis of all the factors affecting voter behavior based on the three main theories: sociology, psychology, and rational choice. It seeks to explain election outcomes and offer a comprehensive perspective on the multifaceted factors influencing voter behavior in Indonesia, with a special focus on the 2024 General Elections. The 2024 elections were chosen as a critical case due to their unique political and demographic features, which significantly affect voter behavior. One key reason is the evolving nature of political communication and coalition-building. Political culture, including parochial, subject, and participant cultures, plays a crucial role in candidate selection and voter engagement (Arrianie et al., 2024). Increased digital connectivity and more persuasive political campaigns also make the dynamics in 2024 different from previous elections.

Demographic shifts are also essential to understanding the 2024 elections. Millennials and Generation Z now form a large part of the electorate. A trend of abstention among digitally literate urban students has been identified, reflecting their critical approach to political choices (Fernando et al., 2024). Social media and digital interaction significantly shape Gen Z's voting behavior (Ningsih et al., 2024; Budiana et al., 2024; Setiawan & Djafar, 2023; Yusrin & Salpina, 2023). This marks a generational shift in political engagement, requiring deeper analysis.

By integrating sociological, psychological, and rational choice theories, this study aims to unravel the complexities behind electoral outcomes in Indonesia's vibrant but contested democracy. The Indonesian context with its diverse socio-cultural landscape, growing digital ecosystem, and post-reformasi political environment offers a critical lens for examining voter behavior and its impact on governance, policy, and democratic resilience in the post-2024 era.

Previous research often treats these theories in isolation or generalizes contexts, failing to incorporate interdisciplinary insights within culturally dynamic democracies. Studies in Indonesia have focused disproportionately on identity politics, patronage, or economic voting, without addressing how socio-technical shifts like digital disinformation or social media polarization interact with traditional determinants such as religion or party loyalty.

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper uses qualitative analysis as methodology with literature reviews as method approach, the reason researchers used qualitative methodology because object of study hard to generate to hypotheses and develop quantitative measures, the issue at hand can be studied more deeply and fully by observing actual behavior or questioning informants, a process can be studied over time (Adler et al., 1995; Gerring, 2017; Mohd Arifin, 2018). Which is actually in line with the two benefits expressed by Gerring (2017),

first, Qualitative data are more significant when little is known about a subject, and the researcher wants to create a new notion, hypothesis, or causal mechanism. Exploratory analysis suits qualitative data. Social science knowledge usually starts qualitatively and later quantitatively. Data can only be translated from qual to quant. Second, , qualitative data are likely to be more useful insofar as a study is focused on a single case (or event) or a small number of cases (or events). Meanwhile, The literature review will examine the history of the available literature and discourse on voters behaviors, synthesizing them through comparison and contrast of research with similar focuses. The review will begin with an examination of the existing literature about voting behaviors factors. Basicly ,the application of literature review in a scientific research is to achieve quality research results (Ridwan et al., 2021).

RESULT AND DICUSSION

1. Theoritical framework

Participating in voting serves as a means of engaging in the political sphere, a desirable endeavor, particularly when the election holds significance, garners substantial media attention, and generates widespread discourse. especially in the era of social media which according to Teguh Supriyanto (2024), Social media has played a transformative role in enhancing political participation in the digital era, fundamentally reshaping how individuals engage with politics and interact with one another. These platforms serve as accessible spaces for citizens to obtain political information, articulate their views, and mobilize support for causes of interest.

According to Antunes (2010) , Fraile & Hernández (2020), Nyhuis et al (2016), and Rosema et al (2021) electoral behavior is significantly influenced by the social groups to which voters belong. This suggests that voting decisions are not merely a reflection of individual preferences but are shaped by the dynamics, norms, and values present within these groups. Social groups such as families, friends, communities, or even professional organizations act as critical frameworks that guide how individuals perceive political issues and candidates. the influences on voting and decision-making can be summarized into five key factors, each highlighting a distinct way in which social groups impact electoral behavior, that consist of :

- a. Individual Factors; Basicly each person has a preference ranking over the criteria, which turns rule selection into the traditional social choice problem and justifies rule selection based on people's perspectives on the criteria's importance. Due to criteria weights, decision-makers may favor alternative rules. According to Edlin et al (2007) from rational choice perspective, In rational-choice models, agents are generally presumed to exhibit self-interested preferences. However,they argue that distinguishing the assumption of rationality from that of selfishness demonstrates that (a) the act of voting can be a rational decision, and (b) a rational voter will make their choice based on an assessment of the anticipated social consequences of the election outcome, rather than solely considering its direct personal impact. This argument is illustrated through a simplified model in which voters decide both whether to participate in the election and whom to support by maximizing an expected utility function that incorporates both self-interested and socially motivated considerations. Using the Borda count, one can create a vector of weights that reflects people's priorities (2015). Koppensteiner and Stephan support previous findings that first impressions and self-evaluations affect voting decisions by conducting an experiment in which participants rated short video clips of politicians giving a speech. Results also indicate that when only nonverbal information is available people prefer

political candidates they perceive as having personality traits they value in themselves (2014).

- b. Policy Views and Supportive Constituents; Learn from U.S, According to data from 365 congressional staff interviews, three factors influenced US strategy in the Persian Gulf in January 1991: members' policy views, supportive constituents, and the president (for certain groups of members). Thus, while the study verifies the usual view of legislators' personal policy judgments as the main effect on foreign and defense policy votes, it also emphasizes that this influence does not work in a vacuum (Burgin, 1994). Basically, Policy views serve as a cornerstone of voting behavior, acting as a lens through which voters evaluate candidates. According to Antunes (2010), voters assess candidates based on their positions on key issues that resonate with their personal or group priorities. For instance, a voter concerned about rising healthcare costs may prioritize a candidate advocating for universal healthcare, while another focused on economic growth might support tax cuts for businesses. This alignment between voter and candidate policy positions is not merely a matter of preference but a reflection of how individuals perceive their own needs and the solutions they seek. The influence of policy views is amplified by their emotional and practical weight. Rosema (2004) argues that issues tied to a voter's livelihood such as employment or education carry greater significance than abstract concerns, driving stronger electoral preferences. For example, during economic downturns, voters may overwhelmingly support candidates promising job creation, even if other aspects of their platform are less appealing. This suggests that policy views are not static; they shift with circumstances and are prioritized based on urgency. Moreover, media and campaign rhetoric play a crucial role in shaping these views, framing issues in ways that either mobilize or polarize voters (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Thus, policy views act as a direct link between a voter's lived experience and their ballot choice. While policy views reflect individual or issue-based reasoning, supportive constituents highlight the social dimension of voting behavior. Antunes (2010) emphasizes that social groups whether family, friends, or community networks profoundly influence how voters interpret and act on their policy preferences. These supportive constituents provide a framework of trust, validation, and collective identity that can either reinforce or challenge a voter's inclinations. For instance, a voter favoring environmental policies might abandon that stance if their social circle dismisses climate change as a priority, illustrating the sway of group norms. Peer influence within supportive constituencies is a key mechanism. Rosema (2004) notes that discussions among peers can solidify or shift policy views, as voters seek alignment with those they trust. If a voter's family overwhelmingly supports a candidate for their stance on immigration, the voter may adopt a similar position, even if their initial views differed. This dynamic is particularly potent in tight-knit communities where social cohesion is valued over individual dissent. Furthermore, supportive constituents often act as echo chambers, amplifying shared policy priorities while filtering out opposing perspectives (Sunstein, 2001). This creates a feedback loop where group consensus strengthens voter conviction. Basically, The interplay between policy views and supportive constituents reveals a dynamic tension in voting behavior. On one hand, policy views provide the intellectual basis for a voter's choice, rooted in personal or ideological reasoning. On the other hand, supportive constituents exert a social pull, shaping how those views are expressed or prioritized. For example, a voter passionate about gun control might suppress that stance if their community overwhelmingly supports gun rights, highlighting how social pressures can override individual policy preferences. Conversely, a candidate's

policy platform can galvanize supportive constituents, uniting them around a shared cause such as economic reform and driving turnout (Campbell, 2006). This interplay also varies across contexts. In polarized elections, policy views often take precedence as voters cling to ideological lines, while supportive constituents reinforce these divisions through partisan loyalty. In contrast, during less divisive races, social ties may outweigh policy differences, with voters backing candidates endorsed by their peers regardless of specific platforms.

- c. Age, education, and income; Based on many research, Age reflects generational experiences, income ties choices to economic realities, and education determines the depth of political reasoning that determint voting behaviour (Babjáková et al., 2019; Bourne, 2015; Eggers & Vivyan, 2020; Hall, 2019; Kroeber et al., 2021; Marshall, 2016, 2019). Age significantly impacts voting behavior by shaping policy priorities and political engagement. Younger voters (18-30) often prioritize progressive issues like climate change or student debt relief, reflecting their stage of life and future-oriented concerns. In contrast, older voters (65+) tend to focus on stability issues like pensions or healthcare favoring candidates who preserve existing systems (Eggers & Vivyan, 2020; Kroeber et al., 2021; Marshall, 2019). Age also affects turnout: older voters consistently vote at higher rates, driven by habit and a stronger sense of civic duty, while younger voters may feel disillusioned or less invested. This generational divide highlights how life experiences tied to age influence both what voters care about and how actively they participate. Education shapes voting behavior by enhancing political awareness and critical thinking. Highly educated voters those with college degrees or beyond are more likely to base their choices on policy substance, researching candidates' platforms and weighing evidence (Antunes, 2010). They tend to support issues like science-based climate policies or education funding, reflecting their exposure to complex ideas. Less-educated voters, conversely, may rely more on heuristics like party loyalty or candidate charisma due to limited access to or interest in detailed policy debates (Rosema, 2004). On other side, Education also correlates with turnout: educated individuals vote more consistently, seeing elections as a means to influence systemic change. This disparity underscores education's role in determining both the depth and direction of electoral preferences. Meanwhile, Income influences voting behavior by tying policy views to economic self-interest. High-income voters often favor candidates advocating tax cuts, deregulation, or business-friendly policies that protect their wealth (ANES, 2020). Low-income voters, meanwhile, gravitate toward platforms promising social safety nets, affordable housing, or wage increases issues that address their daily struggles (Campbell, 2006). Income also affects turnout: wealthier individuals vote more frequently, benefiting from greater resources and political access, while lower-income voters may abstain due to disenfranchisement or time constraints. This economic divide shapes not only candidate support but also the intensity of electoral participation, reflecting class-based priorities.
- d. Voting technology; Technologies such as online voting, electronic voting machines (EVMs), and mobile voting applications reduce the physical and logistical challenges associated with traditional polling methods. For instance, online voting platforms can enable individuals with disabilities, those living in remote areas, or citizens abroad to cast their ballots more easily, thereby broadening electoral participation. Card and Moretti use county-level data on voting technologies in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections to test whether voting technology affects electoral outcomes. The result shows that there is a positive correlation between use of touch-screen

voting and the level of electoral support for George Bush. Models for the adoption of touch-screen voting suggest it was more likely to be used in counties with a higher fraction of Hispanic and Black residents, especially in swing states (Card & Moretti, 2007). But, the influence of voting technology on behavior is also shaped by perceptions of security, trust, and reliability, which can either bolster or undermine voter confidence. Concerns about hacking, data breaches, and system malfunctions have been prominent in discussions surrounding electronic and online voting systems.

- e. Party identification; The idea explains voting behaviour based on political party identification therefore voters have a logic of affiliation. For example, one would vote or affiliate to a party because they recognised the candidate or party, had confidence in the political organisation, etc. Harop and Miller (1987) described this as an expressive way for electorates or citizens to demonstrate their entrenched affiliation and allegiance to the party. People tend to identify with or align with a political party because they believe that group will better represent their political, social, and economic interests (Nma, 2015). The hypothesis was conceptualized by Green et al. (2002) as an individual's emotional attachment to the party based on their proximity to the political party, candidate, and other forums

2. The Multifaceted Determinants of Voting Behavior: Identity, Social Influence, Technology, and Structural Context

A critical analysis that incorporates long-standing theoretical discussions on political behavior into a framework that accounts for the dynamics of policy stances, group influence, and technology developments might deepen the conversation around voting behavior. A complicated feedback loop in which social influence and individual ideology reinforce one another drives the interaction between constituents' policy ideas and the pull of supporting constituencies in modern electorates. Modern understandings of expressive voting align with these results; according to these theories, voters act in a way that affirms their identity and demonstrates their commitment to a particular ideology (Jenke & Huettel, 2020). Classical rational choice models that not only to exhibit status quo bias, but also to make someone back to default option as a reference point Masatlioglu & Ok (2006) are supported and expanded by this dynamic, showing how social pressures may cause changes in voter preferences that contradict an issue-based approach. Age, wealth, and education further complicate this interaction by orienting voting behavior on different generational experiences and socioeconomic reality. Older voters, more accustomed to accepted political narratives and stronger civic emotions, may oppose fast changes in policy debates and be less vulnerable to the impact of new social trends than younger cohorts, often more progressive and sensitive to immediate peer influences.

A growing collection of studies emphasizes that the interaction between conventional political tendencies and digital mobilization techniques causes special patterns in young political involvement. Though generally marked by lower participation rates in traditional elections, recent empirical research shows that young voters show significant political activity via online platforms a phenomenon that practitioners and academics call "digital democracy." From a theoretical perspective, the frameworks of political socialization and resource mobilization converge to explain these trends, if Young people are not only influenced by familial, educational, and community-based networks (Bayat, 2017; Coe & Vandegrift, 2015; Lam-Knott & Cheng, 2020). The fast dissemination of political message in online spaces, where algorithmically tailored

content reinforces pre-existing prejudices and stimulates issue-specific involvement (Ibrahim & Lam, 2020; Lasén, 2015). Empirical data indicates that digital engagement through social media campaigns, virtual town halls, and peer-driven information exchanges provides youth with cost-effective, accessible, and instantaneous means of political expression, so negating conventional barriers such as geographic isolation or socioeconomic limitations.

Research also shows that younger generations are driven by both expressive identity politics and utilitarian calculations; some are driven by inherent wants to influence policy outcomes that affect their future, others participate as part of a group response to perceived injustices amplified by digital narratives (Bora et al., 2021; Genova, 2018; Jiang, 2023; Wielk & Standlee, 2021). Empirical evidence showing that young people seeking new forms of involvement online, where they are enabled to actively influence political discourse, sometimes result from political disappointment with traditional institutions reinforces this duality in motivation. Policymakers are advised to create integrated frameworks that acknowledge and use these digital and offline mobilization patterns as these spheres get more linked, so ensuring that the young electorate is involved not only during campaign cycles but also through continuous civic participation across many platforms.

Simultaneously, education also gives voters the tools to interact with policy ideas and separate complex information critically, lessening social identification signals' often excessive effect. This economic and educational stratification creates cause-and-effect relationships whereby the structural capacity (e.g., access to information, civic resources) to act on that alignment determines the intensity of electoral participation and ideological alignment. These link with more general theoretical discussions on political involvement and socioeconomic level's influence on policy choices and electoral mobilization.

Party identification also vital prism through which voting behavior might be read. Beyond mere cognitive alignment with a candidate or party, affiliative loyalty is increasingly defined as ideological closeness and a political organization's perceived capacity to handle current crises and deliver on socioeconomic pledges. Driven by expressive and social factors, voters' emotional connection with a party or candidate may result in voting actions reflecting deep-seated loyalties rather than a deliberate policy fit. This has significant cause-and-effect ramifications: In close or polarized elections, the interaction of personal beliefs, group pressures, and technological interventions generates an environment whereby even minor changes in trust or identity can produce disproportionately significant electoral swings.

Therefore, party identification moderates how policy perspectives are expressed in a competitive election environment, even if policy positions provide the logical underpinning for decisions. These observations show that voting behavior results from a complex process including identity politics, social pressure, generational experiences, and changing technical infrastructures rather than just a question of rational policy assessment.

3. Analyzing Voting Behaviours Based on 2024 Indonesia Election

The 2024 Indonesian presidential election offers a compelling case study for aligning three theoretical lenses sociological, psychological, and rational choice to explain how multifaceted voter behavior is shaped. Each lens provides a distinct yet interrelated perspective on how voters evaluate candidates and policies in the rich context of

Indonesia's diverse society. From a sociological standpoint, electoral behavior is deeply embedded in the social fabric of voter communities.

Social groups such as ethnicities, religious organizations, and local community networks serve as influential arenas in which political identities and affiliations are formed. In Indonesia's 2024 context, these groups not only articulate shared policy views but also generate a collective identity that guides individual voting decisions. For instance, ethnic and religious clusters mobilized support for candidates by framing issues in ways that resonated with their historical and cultural experiences. This approach aligns with research indicating that social group affiliations significantly influence voting behavior, especially in multiethnic democracies like Indonesia (Yahya et al., 2024).

From psychology approach, the innovative "gemoy" campaign, which rebranded a traditionally stern military figure into a more approachable and likable candidate, exemplifies how emotional appeal and first-impression effects can reshape public perceptions especially from Gen-Zs due to this label according to Boeky (2024) Prabowo is friendlier, more concerned with the welfare of the younger generation (as reflected in his agenda), and more likely to win over grassroots supporters and those who back the current Indonesian president. This transformation, mediated by digital channels, leveraged social media platforms to create viral content that tapped into voters' affective responses particularly among younger voters whose social media habits frame their political outlook (Mubarrod & Syarwi, 2024; Sihabudin et al., 2023; Sukandar et al., 2024).

From the perspective of political branding theory, the "gemoy" strategy aligns with the construction of a brand personality for political figures using familiar, culturally resonant cues. Studies have shown that this type of persona resonates with Gen Z's preference for informal and accessible communication, leveraging techniques similar to those in commercial brand marketing. This branding not only humanizes the candidate but also repositions him within an emotional landscape that favors charismatic over substantive portrayals, potentially downplaying critical policy discussions (Susetyawidianta & Gerald, 2024). Moreover, the digital nature of the campaign adds complexity by integrating emotional campaigning with elements of digital populism. Platforms like TikTok and Instagram provide arenas where semiotic content ranging from animated graphics to memes serves as potent vehicles for political messaging.

Basically The innovative "gemoy" campaign, which rebranded a traditionally stern military figure into a more approachable and likable candidate, exemplifies how emotional appeal and first-impression effects can reshape public perceptions. This transformation, mediated by digital channels, leveraged social media platforms to create viral content that tapped into voters' affective responses particularly, among younger voters whose social media habits frame their political outlook (Pricilla & Daulay, 2023). In contrast, rational choice theory provides another critical perspective by positing that voters act as utility-maximizers who assess both personal and communal costs and benefits when casting their ballots. Within this framework, decisions are viewed as strategic, with voters weighing tangible policy benefits such as 'free school lunch' programs and the broader social implications of a general consensus that may benefit their collective well-being (Feddersen, 2004; Mueller, 2003; Norris, 2004; Quattrone & Tversky, 1988).

The Indonesian election thus illustrates how rational calculations are not limited to immediate self-interest; rather, they incorporate socially motivated concerns and anticipated long-term outcomes. Voters, in this scenario, deliberate on whether the electoral outcomes align with their expectations for economic relief and improved social infrastructure, considering the reputational benefits or consequences of supporting certain candidates. On other side, sociological frameworks significantly contextualize

voting behavior. Pratiwi et al (2025) shows that factors such as educational level channel rational evaluations and forge sociological allegiances by reinforcing community ties and shared political narratives. Ekasari (2020) however, investigates individual experiences such as locus of control and perceived risk in their effects on voter decision-making, providing insights into how voters integrate external social influences into their political decisions. These studies highlight that sociological factors are critical for understanding both immediate determinants of voting and enduring bonds that influence political alignment over time.

When these theoretical frameworks are synthesized, a comprehensive picture of voter behavior in the 2024 Indonesian election emerges, where rational calculations, sociological allegiances, and psychological influences interact dynamically. The interplay between group norms and personal cognition observed in both the emotional rebranding via social media and the rational assessment of policy promises reveals that voter behavior is far from monolithic. Instead, it is a multidimensional phenomenon in which socio-cultural attachments reinforce or mitigate rational decision-making processes, while psychological appeals help translate abstract policy evaluations into concrete electoral choices (Congleton et al., 2019).

In addition to rational and sociological factors, psychological influences are pivotal in shaping voter behavior. Research from Levine (2005) provides a comprehensive account of how cognitive biases, emotional responses, and heuristic processing contribute to voters' decision-making processes. Meanwhile research from Kurtba (2015) adds that the psychological dynamics of the pre and post voting phases reveal the malleable nature of political attitudes, underscoring that emotions and perceptions can sometimes override purely rational considerations and then Bozkanat & Goksu (2020) further contribute to this understanding by demonstrating how persuasive communications, often embedded with emotional appeals, can prime voters' predispositions and blur the lines between rational deliberation and affective experiences toward politician although according to Baekgaard et al (2019) politicians always biased by prior attitudes when interpreting information and received aspiration.

Moreover, the integration of these three frameworks rational, sociological, and psychological illustrates that voter behavior in the 2024 Indonesian election is produced in a complex political ecosystem. Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier (2011) point out that voters often rely on heuristics when faced with information overload, a process encompassing both rational shortcuts and psychological responses. Hence, the interplay of these influences suggests that voter behavior is not driven by any single factor but rather by a multifaceted synthesis of decision-making processes. This comprehensive approach accounts for both immediate choices at the ballot box and deeper, long-term patterns of political alignment. This analysis demonstrates that understanding the outcomes of the Indonesian election requires acknowledging how the rational evaluation of policy and self-interest is simultaneously entwined with group identity and emotional persuasion. The contextual factors unique to Indonesia such as regional diversity, the role of local elites, and the transformative impact of social media ensure that each theoretical lens remains indispensable in explaining the observed voter behaviors. Future research might focus on further quantifying these interactions, ultimately contributing to more robust models of electoral participation that account for Indonesia's evolving political landscape.

4. Impact of Political Polarization and Electoral Integrity to Voting Behaviours

The phenomenon of political polarization has become central to debates about the health of democracies worldwide. Defined as the process whereby political attitudes

diverge towards ideological extremes, polarization not only deepens animosities between political groups but also alters the very foundations of democratic accountability and legitimacy (Westwood, 2016), (Zingher, 2022). In modern democracies, this division is fueled by factors such as intensified partisan media, strategic elite messaging, and the rapid spread of disinformation through digital platforms (Westwood, 2016).

In Indonesia, political polarization manifests itself through regional cleavages, patronage networks, and the pervasive use of money politics to secure electoral support (Nurdin, 2024). Deep-seated societal divisions often translate into polarized political identities that are exploited by political elites for electoral gain (Nurdin, 2024). Allegations concerning President Jokowi's interference in electoral processes illustrate that such behavior can erode public trust and undermine the neutrality of key electoral institutions such as the General Election Commission (KPU), the Election Supervisory Body (BAWASLU), and the Honorary Council of General Election Organizers (DKPP) (Jaidun, 2024). This interference challenges established democratic norms and compromises the electoral integrity fundamental to sustaining a vibrant democracy (Jaidun, 2024).

Additionally, the interplay between political polarization and electoral integrity has direct implications for voter behavior. Electoral manipulation and the pervasive influence of money politics have been shown to reconfigure voter allegiance and compliance in Indonesia. Research by Nurdin ((Nurdin, 2024)) demonstrates that material inducements often drive voter loyalty, diverting attention from ideological or policy-based considerations and encouraging short-term, transactional electoral decisions. This phenomenon transforms the democratic process into a contest of resources rather than ideas, undermining democratic accountability and reinforcing patronage patterns (Nurdin, 2024).

Digital and mass media dynamics further exacerbate the impact of polarization on electoral behavior. Hanida et al. (Hanida et al., 2025; note that the confluence of simultaneous national and local elections in Indonesia can trigger voter fatigue a situation where the volume of electoral contests and persistent political messaging results in lowered voter turnout and diminished electoral quality. Complementarily, research by Ullah et al. Ullah et al., 2020) highlights that biased media narratives and selective information flows contribute to the entrenchment of partisan identities. Such media-induced polarization distorts voters' perceptions of candidates and policies, leading to decision-making that is less informed and more emotionally driven. Ultimately, the combination of digital media manipulation and entrenched political divisions fosters an environment where electoral integrity is compromised and the democratic process is weakened (Hanida et al., 2025; , Ullah et al., 2020).

The growing polarization, combined with allegations of electoral interference such as those surrounding President Jokowi, poses significant challenges for Indonesia's democratic future. The erosion of institutional neutrality and the increasing use of money politics distort voter behavior and create a feedback loop that perpetuates polarization. This context necessitates urgent reforms aimed at reinforcing democratic accountability through enhanced transparency, independent electoral oversight, and strict adherence to political ethics (Jaidun, 2024). Only by addressing these systemic issues can Indonesia hope to safeguard the integrity of its electoral processes and restore public confidence in democratic institutions (Zingher, 2022).

CONCLUSION

The 2024 Indonesian general elections serve as a critical lens to examine the evolving interplay between tradition and modernity in shaping voter behavior within a

dynamic democratic context. Using sociological, psychological, and rational choice frameworks, this analysis reveals that electoral decisions emerge not solely from calculated reasoning or emotional impulses but from a complex convergence of social identities, digital influences, economic conditions, and institutional trust. Strengthening electoral integrity requires urgent reforms, including enhancing the independence of the General Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Agency (BAWASLU), enforcing transparency in campaign finance, and regulating digital campaigning. Integrating digital literacy into national curricula and mandating disclosure of political advertising mechanisms can transform online platforms into arenas for informed participation rather than manipulation.

Engaging Indonesia's predominantly young electorate demands innovative strategies that bridge digital activism with formal political participation. Interactive forums, virtual town halls, and collaborative policymaking platforms can channel youth energy into meaningful civic engagement. Yet, structural inequalities including disparities in education, income, and internet access continue to hinder inclusive participation, particularly in rural and marginalized communities. Solutions such as subsidized internet access, community-led voter education, and accessible technologies like secure mobile voting systems can help democratize electoral access. These initiatives must be complemented by investments in regional infrastructure to ensure that no demographic is excluded from the national political discourse.

Beyond policy interventions, future research must deepen our understanding of the shifting forces shaping democracy. Longitudinal studies on the effects of digital campaigns, especially on young voters, experimental interventions to combat misinformation, and ethnographic research into the local dynamics of identity politics are crucial. Investigating the intersection of socio-economic status and voting behavior, as well as the psychological mechanisms behind misinformation resistance, requires interdisciplinary collaboration. By blending data science with socio-political insights, Indonesia can offer a model of resilient democracy one that harmonizes pluralism and progress amid global polarization and digital disruption, offering valuable lessons in participatory governance for the world.

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