Identity Movements, Religious Organisations and Social Harmony in North Sumatra

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This article aims to analyse the roles of religious organisations in political participation and the electoral patterns through a case study of two elections in North Sumatra; the 2018 Governor election and 2019 Presidential election. The authors approached the research qualitatively using critical network analysis to explain the values system and political motivations of religious organisations. Religious leaders influenced the level of religious activism and radicalism through various activities. Social harmony played an important role in preventing activism and radicalism, albeit in ways difficult to predict. The findings provide a deeper understanding of how the religious identity movement through religious organisations increased, while at the same time, the social interest in politics decreased. This study contributes to analysing the relationship between religious organisations' roles and the influence of social harmony on political participation, innovatively and systematically, and can be used as a reference in managing subsequent elections.

Key words: *Identity Movements, Religious Organisations, Radicalism, Social Harmony, Political Participation, North Sumatra.*

Introduction

The phenomenon of identity-based social movements, especially religious-based organisations, does not seem to attract much interest from experts. In fact, within two decades, Indonesian political studies have transitioned from money-based patronage (Masaaki & Rozaki, 2006; Mietzner, 2007; Hadiz, 2010; Aspinall, 2003) to an identity-based one (Hadiz, 2017). In Indonesia, changes in political attitudes are influenced by various factors, such as the relationship between the state and society (Wilson, 2015; Mudhoffir, 2017). Political activities have shifted from peaceful activities to controversial ones that might lead to violence, even though they are still patronage-dominated. The study of

religious-based political participation (Mudhofir, 2017; Ufen, 2011) shows a political reaction shift from passive to even radical, which is very different from previously (Hadiz and Rakhmani, 2017). Religious organisations have become much more active in influencing society's political preference, even radical behaviours. The increase of radical behaviours is reflected by the tendency of identity-based issues, monitored by the state in the last three years (Tempo, 2018; Alam, 2020).

North Sumatra Province was chosen as the research location, since it has diverse cultural backgrounds, as a reflection of Indonesia. It also experienced identity movements emerging during the Governor and Presidential Elections in 2018 and 2019 (Simanihuruk & Sitorus, 2019).

The research question investigated is how do various religious organisations in North Sumatra, whether they are official or not, turn out to be politically active? To address the question, the authors explore the demographic conditions, socio-cultural context and personal values influencing the political motivations of religious organisations in North Sumatra.

North Sumatra Province is one of 34 provinces inhabited by a diverse population of 13.9 million or 18 percent of the total population of Indonesia (Census, 2015). The population consists of 11 ethnics groups: seven indigenous ethnic groups and four ethnic groups from various regions of Indonesia (Table 1). The demography of North Sumatra is divided into four categories (Figure 1). The East Coast and the South mountains are dominated by Javanese with a Muslim majority (63.91%). The western mountainous region (West Coast) and Nias Islands are inhabited by mostly Batak ethnics and Nias, who are mostly Christian (33.27%). In addition, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism make up 2.8 percent of the total population of North Sumatra (Table 2). Thus, North Sumatra is claimed as a miniature of Indonesia.

Figure 1. Demographic Map of North Sumatra

North Sumatra is a destination for migrants from outside Sumatra whose descendants are now becoming a large part of the population. After various Batak ethnicities, Javanese is the largest ethnicity, as one-third (33.4%) of the North Sumatra population, and most are Muslim. Their presence began during the late colonial period when they were brought in as labourers on various plantations. North Sumatra is also a homeland to the Chinese ethnic minority, an impact of Chinese workers' migration to the plantations in East Sumatra in the 19th century (Reid, 1970). They have distinctly accepted cultures, which rarely happened during the New Order. Most of them still speak Hokkien and belong to Buddhism.

Table 1: Ethnics Group in North Sumatra

Ethnicity	Population	Percentage
Javanese	4,655,224	33.4
Tapanuli or Toba (Indigenous)	3,570,864	25.62
Mandailing (Indigenous)	1,570,790	11.27
Nias (Indigenous)	886,444	6.36
Melayu (Indigenous)	816,755	5.86
Karo (Indigenous)	709,434	5.09
Chinese	377,714	2.71
Minang	370,745	2.66
Simalungun (Indigenous)	284,331	2.04
Aceh	135,197	0.97
Pakpak (Indigenous)	101,746	0.73
Others	458,554	3.29
Total	**13,937,797**	**100**

North Sumatra is also inhabited by generous religions (Table 2). Islam, as the largest, is considered a cross-sectorial religion, uniting many ethnic groups and clans but possibly sometimes interfering with followers of other religions. Of all Chinese in North Sumatra, 88 percent belong to Buddhism (2015 Census). The Protestant minority in Medan is divided into several churches and sects, including local Batak ethnic churches.

Table 2: Religions in North Sumatra

Religion	Population	Percentage
Islam	8,907,646	63.91
Protestant	3,883,070	27.86
Catholic	754,035	5.41
Buddhist	338,688	2.43
Hindu	48,782	0.35
Confucius	2,788	0.02
Parmalim (Indigenous Belief)	1,394	0.01
Total	**13,936,403**	**100**

Literature Review

Radicalisation and Political Involvement

Radical movements in Indonesia have been engaged in social, political and economic system discourse, beginning at the battle for independence through to today (Fealy, 2004; Galamas, 2015). Every period of governance is always marked by the role of Islamic extremist religious organisations differently opposing the government, which they see as secular (Yusuf, 2015; van Bruinessen, 2003; Hefner, 2001; Muzakki, 2014; Mudhoffir, 2017). Terror and radical acts have emerged very strongly since the reforms in 1999 and declined just after 2007 (Mubarok & Hamid, 2018). That decline was impacted by the active shift to become moderate by negotiating with certain political forces having the same perspectives and objectives.

Radicalism cannot be just considered as an absolute term, but its relative meaning has to be considered (Sedgwick, 2010). Experts generally agree that radicalisation is a gradual process of socialisation or conversion towards violence (Maskalialiunaiṫe, 2015; McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008; Patel, 2011; Schmid & Price, 2011). Radicalisation is "a process in which a person adopts a belief system that justifies the use of violence to carry out social change and comes to actively support and use violence for political purposes" (Maskaliᵘnaiṫe, 2015, p. 9). Radicalisation becomes a validation to have violent behaviours and actions which have no absolute ending. Other experts claim that the peak of radicalisation is terrorism (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008; Soliman, Bellaj, & Khelifa, 2016). The definition of radicalism is very different from violence, expression, subject to justification from a series of events, and highly contextual (Sedgwick, 2010, p. 491).

The "conveyor belt" theory about radicalisation has been refuted by other radicalisation studies through the concept of political participation. There are actually two types of political actions which come first, the activism intention that belongs to non-violent and law-abiding actions (joining a group, contributing, volunteering, or attending a public meeting) and second, the radical intentions which involve violent and illegal actions such as protesting with breaking the law even through violence (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2009). Furthermore, the researchers investigate how the two dimensions influence each other outside the conceptualisation of radicalisation as the "conveyor belt" explains. Researchers have explored political activism and radicalism with the concept of individual perspectives, instead of the concept of radicalism as a result of increased activism.

Most studies in Indonesian politics explain various conceptions of political phenomena, but there is still a relationship between them (Van Klinken & Nordholt, 2007). The increase of both religious activism and radicalism in Indonesia's politics over the past ten years has become a new phenomenon that needs to be analysed, starting from the description of religious organisations and their networks. This study adopts the conceptualisation and actualisation of activism and radicalism (Moslenko & McCauley; 2019), as well as the concept of liberation theology to describe various political actions. The results of the investigation will verify whether the radical intentions in Indonesia came from past activism as it happened in Western countries, or not.

Socialisation Process

This paper involves three theories, which are liberation theology, critical organisational networks, and value systems. The three theoretical conceptions focus strongly on the analysis of target informants, investigation and context. Figure 2 summarises the framework of this paper. The three theories illustrate how the socialisation process builds a tendency that religious leaders and their followers must participate in politics. The causality between past/future activism and radicalism will be investigated through the radicalisation process (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Theoretical Framework of the Study
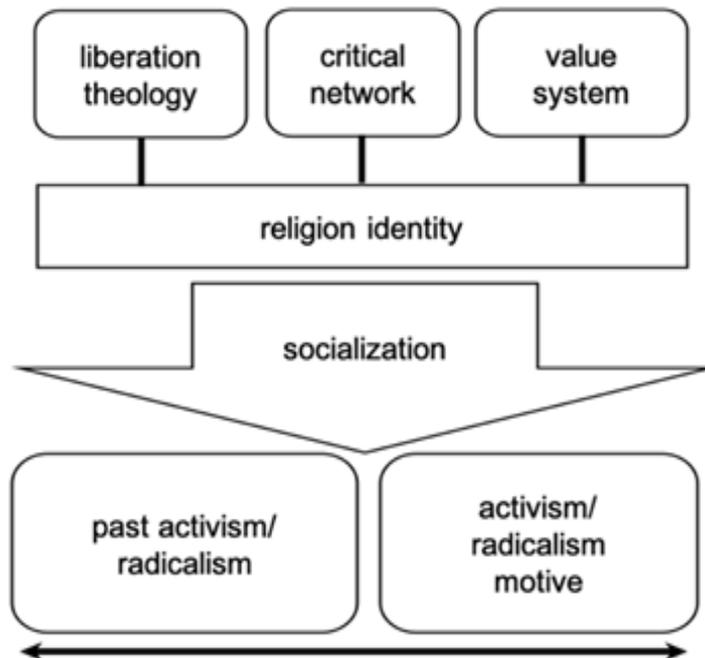
The Liberation Theology

Political awareness and collective action are the basic ideas of liberation theology in the relationship between religion and state. The basic principle of the religious presence is to free people up from all suffering in this world (Cook, 1983; Petras & Veltmeyer, 2011; Nickoloff, 1993). Liberation has the understanding that religion must be believed in a prophetic view, of which role is to build new systems and values. Therefore, religions will turn out to be a significant medium of socialisation in fostering the social framework (Enginer, 2009). Liberation theology basically grew out from famous cases in Latin America with the spirit of the churches of the poor (Crook, 1983). However, Islam also has the same essence related to the thoughts of egalitarianism, equality and social justice (Enginer, 2009).

The theology, which basically functions diametrically as an imaginary connector between God and humans and fellow humans, changed to the imaginary connector from God to humans through clerics and countries in between. The politicisation of religion is used to recruit members, to doctrine the concept of liberation and welfare, and to construct a habit of critical thinking. Those three activities are usually initiated by power struggles that are always associated with religious doctrine (Hadiz, 2017). In Indonesia, this assumption is justified by the situation that most Muslims hold extreme views in political participation. They broaden up their ideology through their religious groups. Although there is little research explaining political motivations behind the influence of liberation thoughts, it is still argued that accepting liberation thoughts will trigger members of religious organisations to

become concerned with social and political issues (Hefner, 2000; Berman, 2013; Bayat, 2013).

Critical Organisation Network

The dynamics of political participation can be explained from various perspectives, such as resource mobilisation and social networks theories (Passy & Giugni, 2001; Lim, 2008). This study employs critical network theory to explain political participation through the social context and networks inherent in the figures' characteristics (Kitts, 2000; Mutz, 2002). The critical network, in this case, is a network that organises groups to act, attract society, provide political advice and to be active in political activities (Crossley, 2008). Brooke (2015) says that social networks grow critically in religious organisations and can generate collective actions from their members (Bayat, 2013; Hadiz, 2017).

Voluntary and religious organisations will generate a collective action because these social associations carry out communal recruitment, are critical, and seem willing to work together democratically. However, other research findings explain another nature of social networks, which is focusing on the effects of cross-network pressures and disagreements in the same scope (Lim, 2013; Passy & Giugni, 2001). These studies explain that both social organisations and networks have two different functions in political participation, where they can encourage individuals to do something but are also capable of preventing people from participating.

The Value System

Individual interests, orientations and identities are important aspects considered to see the trends in political participation. As stated by Stern, Dietz, Abel, Guagnano, and Kalof (1999) various types of political support can be obtained from supporters of the movement according to their beliefs, abilities and obstacles, to provide protection for them. Various personal behaviours not only depend on external factors but are also influenced by personal dynamics, while socio-structural positions will always experience problems when the personal dynamics are ignored (Kitts, 2000; Stern et al., 1999). The research findings have been interpreted in various contexts, such as the environmental movement and the protest movement. However, the values and orientation systems rarely look at the cultural backgrounds of Indonesia, which is not only compliant with one political ideology. Muda and Suharyanto (2020) found that the beauty of harmony lies in people who feel safe and comfortable to live together in one community even though they are from different ethnic groups, clans and religions.

In addition to the values and ideology of Unity in Diversity, some local cultural values also promote a social order that is not influenced by position nor wealth, and encourages to

disobey authority as well. It is likely that these values were the factors causing the low political participation in North Sumatra (Sianipar, 2011). It reflects the preference of North Sumatra people to prioritise social harmony and social order over individual interests.

This research will consolidate the three conceptions discussed above; liberation theology, critical organisation networks and value systems as a ground floor from which to investigate the behaviours of activists, leaders and members of religious organisations, and their networks in North Sumatra.

Methodology/Materials

This research is approached qualitatively with a model of a case study. The case study model aims to investigate how the involvement of leaders, members and networks of Islamic organisations held a very dominant role in encouraging political participation in the 2018 North Sumatra Governor Election and 2019 Presidential Election. This research was specifically conducted in North Sumatra. Although the centre of the identity movement in North Sumatra took place in the capital city of Medan, the religious organisations here represent the Muslim movements in North Sumatra.

Informants are selected by snowball sampling until the theoretical saturation is achieved (Kvale, 1996). The criteria in selecting informants are (a) willingness; (b) active figures or members of an organisation; and (c) engaged in political activities through the organisation for at least one year. Interviews were digitally recorded, notes were taken during interviews, important notes were made based on main topics identified in each interview, and further explorations were carried out in subsequent interviews (Glaser 2014). Interviews lasted between two to three hours, both in personal and group settings. Transcripts were written verbatim in Indonesian and then translated. The research data gained were read several times to identify relationships among themes that emerge in fieldwork. The transcripts were then reread using "theoretical reading" (Kvale, 1996: 235). All personal information has been deleted to ensure the confidentiality of the participants.

The data were obtained through semi-structured interviews, observations and literature studies. Some initial information was linked to news about identity politics on both social and conventional media. The researchers had held some preliminary information and recognised the figures that played a role in encouraging the identity movements during the governor and presidential election in North Sumatra. This has surely helped researchers collect research data.

The researchers attended the religious organisation activities and conducted direct interviews. The authors also observed the religious lecture material and found important political advice

from the organisation leaders. The interview questions were arranged according to four main points; the condition of the organisation pre- and post-political participation, the political motivations, obstacles, and the strategies. The researchers also collected documents such as minutes of meetings, members, networks of religious organisations, and several notebooks. The involvements of social media and local media also have a role in the implementation. The whole data were then analysed using data coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) which include the process of coding, rereading and regrouping findings in accordance with the categories. This research is limited to investigate the involvement of religious organisations and their networks in increasing political participation to pursue their interests. This limitation was set for the researchers so as not to search for other insignificant data about political issues.

Results and Findings

Social, Cultural and Political Participation in North Sumatra

Most political studies in North Sumatra focus on the undercurrent life of social associations. North Sumatra has a sharp political and business culture, and harsh street life. This is because the dominant groups of thugs (gangsters) and patronage networks have access to political parties and elites (Hadiz, 2010; Ryter, 2000; Amin, 2017). However, these organisations have diminished due to police crackdowns that began in the early 2000s, due to internal conflicts. Pemuda Pancasila and the Ikatan Pemuda Karya (IPK) that were previously always dominant in business and politics have declined in the last ten years. During the Medan Mayor Election in 2010 (Aspinall & Warburton, 2011) and the North Sumatra Governor Election in 2018 (Simanihuruk & Sitorus, 2019; Riza & Junaidi, 2019), there was a massive shift in issues from patronage to identity, involving religious organisations which are specifically Islam.

The direct election system at the local level in the last ten years shows a tendency to increase apathy and conformism in North Sumatra. The emergence of a new middle-class society and the economic growth do not have any impact on political participation in North Sumatra. Those apathetic and political conformist attitudes were reflected by the number of voters, which was less than 50 percent in elections before 2018, and also less than the national average target of 75 percent in the legislative elections. This put North Sumatra at the third lowest of political participations. In 2018, the governor and presidential elections were increased by 13.4 percent and 14 percent, respectively.

Figure 3. Voter Participation in North Sumatra (2008 – 2019)
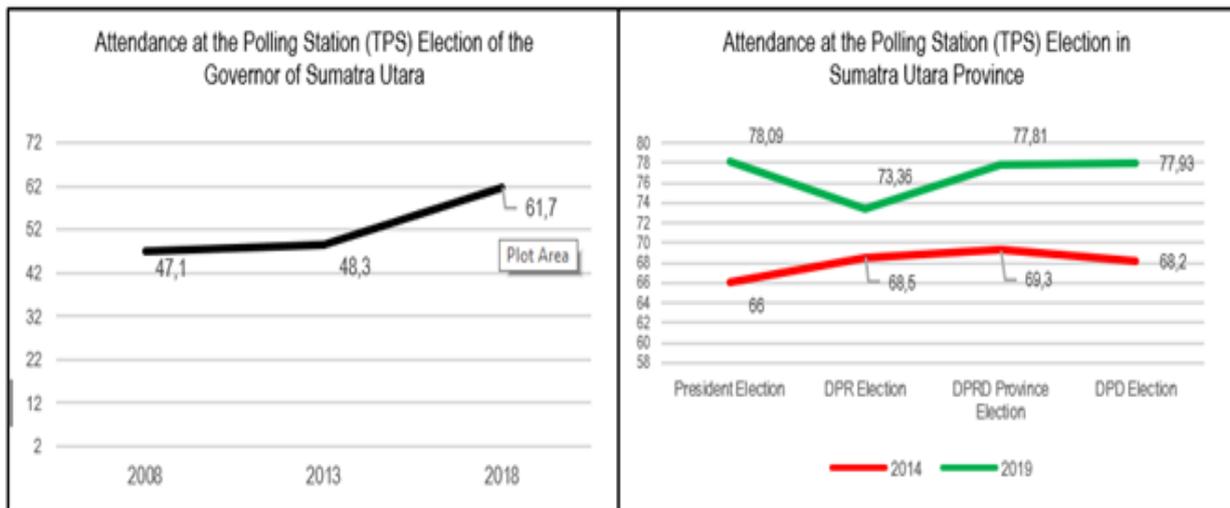
There were various demonstrations regarding identity politics and economic inequality issues in 2016 - 2017 (Schonhardt, Sentana, Made, 2016). Over two million people attended the demonstrations from various regions. The highlighted topic was that Indonesian democracy was dominated by oligarchic interests that marginalised Muslims, except for Muslims who were considered 'moderate.' The marginalised Islamic groups are those who are rigid in implementing religious practices that copy the Middle Eastern traditions. The demonstrations also raised the issue of dissatisfaction with eradicating corruption, and the transactional situation has become common in Indonesian politics (Hadiz, 2017; Tempo, 2017). These movements are known as the 212 and 411 movements.

These movements were spread through the media, which linked to various religious organisations. Although the protest movements were carried out peacefully, the police continued to monitor religious lectures in mosques, that emphasised the obligation to elect leaders favouring the Muslim interests. The various religious organisations then held dialogues with political party leaders, legislative candidates and regional leader candidates to have a political agreement that favours 'Muslim interests'. They assisted the candidates' campaign teams by employing their networks. This obviously turned out to be a new political force in the fight of pro-democracy versus pro-establishment.

The candidate pair for 2018 North Sumatra Governor election, Edi Rahmayadi-Musa Rajeckshah (Eramas) raised the religion issue and succeeded in defeating rival Djarot Saiful Hidayat-Sihar Sitorus (Djoss). Afterward, during the Indonesia Presidential Election, the former campaign team converted their support to the presidential candidate pair of Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno (Prabowo-Sandi), while the latter gave their support to Joko Widodo and Ma'ruf Amin (Jokowi-Amin).

By blowing up the religion issue, the new political power represented by Eramas won the election with 3.3 million voters (57.58%) over Djoss with 2.4 million voters (42.42%). Overall, the number of voters was increased by 13.14 percent from the previous election (see Figure 3). The situation became intense during the Indonesia Presidential Election because Jokowi-Amin had to face political issues of religion, spread by his opponent's supporters. The Islamic organisations network even further strengthened the anti-Islamic issue addressed at Jokowi-Amin, despite Amin being an Ulema (Islamic cleric).

Regarding those socio-political phenomena, it is not surprising then to question how the political view of North Sumatran society has changed from apathetic and conformist to active. Initiated by the 212 movement, the cynical and pessimistic citizens turned into provocative ones with the issue of religion. The use of social media in politics to attract society has become massive, without any journalistic ethics (Harahap, 2019; Ferdiawan, Nurjanah, & etc. 2019). Empirical studies have found that engagement between political elites and society through social media is very effective in generating political awareness, support and participation during the 212 Movement (Gunawan, Thahara, & Risdianto, 2019). And on the contrary, fake news was increasing during the presidential campaign.

The political issue of religion ahead of the voting day was indeed getting tighter. The campaigns that were mostly used in North Sumatra were broadly shared on Facebook. Some Facebook fan-pages became intensive discussion media among the users. During the Governor Election, Djoss used many news media that were affiliated with Jokowi-Amin and the media at 2017 Governor Election. These buzzers were also taken part in the 2018 North Sumatra Governor Election. Meanwhile, ERAMAS only employed local news media and created new social media accounts. The accounts were then used by Prabowo-Sandi. Most of the websites were created only a few months before the elections. However, they quickly gained popularity, exceeding the existing local media. The details can be seen in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Traffic Comparison of Local Site Visits Period October 2017-April 2019
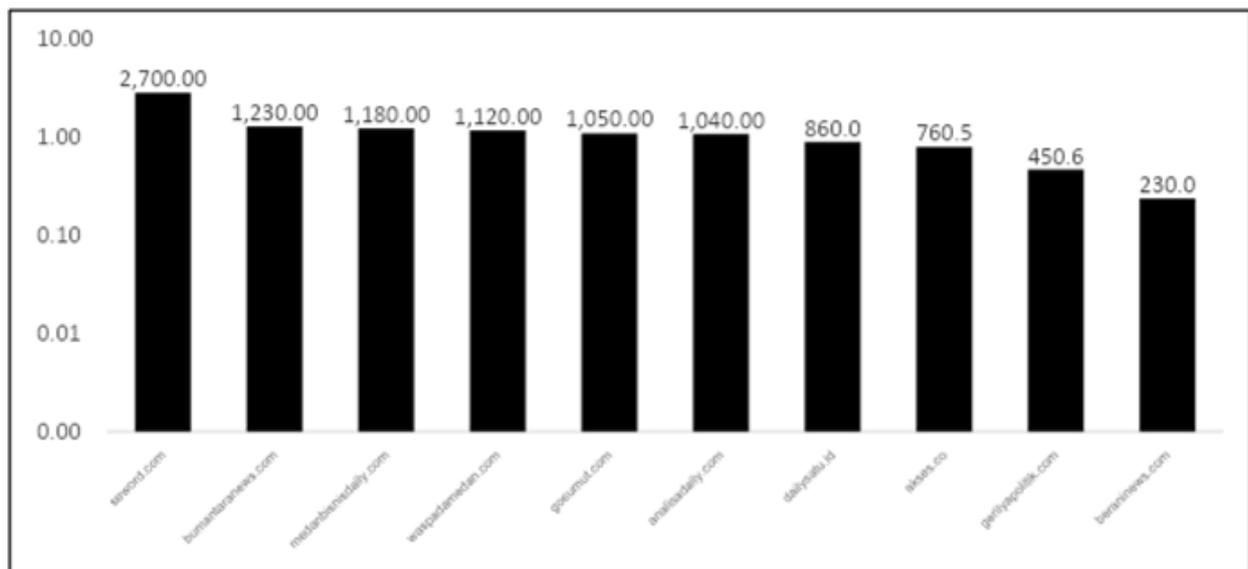
The Existence of Religious Organisations in North Sumatra

It is rare for research investigating political participation from the religious organisations approach to be found. Religion has greater legitimacy than ethnicity as a source of political influence, as reflected in the 2010 mayor election in Medan (Aspinall & Warburton 2011). The religious organisations were getting more active in local politics after the presence of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (Osman, 2018), which networked with religious leaders across North Sumatra. They likely turned out to be new political forces at the end.

Based on the interviews, the religious organisations spread throughout varied locations and motives of establishment, but they have interrelated and organised activities. Their activities used face-to-face meetings, social media, lectures at mosques, dawn in congregation and loose and structured recitation, and binding agreements with politicians, especially candidates for legislative members. The intensity of local politics has become a massive concern since 2010 and has the potential to become a new political force at the local level.

Understanding Activism and Radicalism

The religious organisations network is arranged in a circle to map the radicalness level of its members (see Figure 5). The classification in the circle is also used to distribute tasks based on the complexity level that has been decided together.

Figure 5. Radicalism Circle of Religious Organisations in North Sumatra
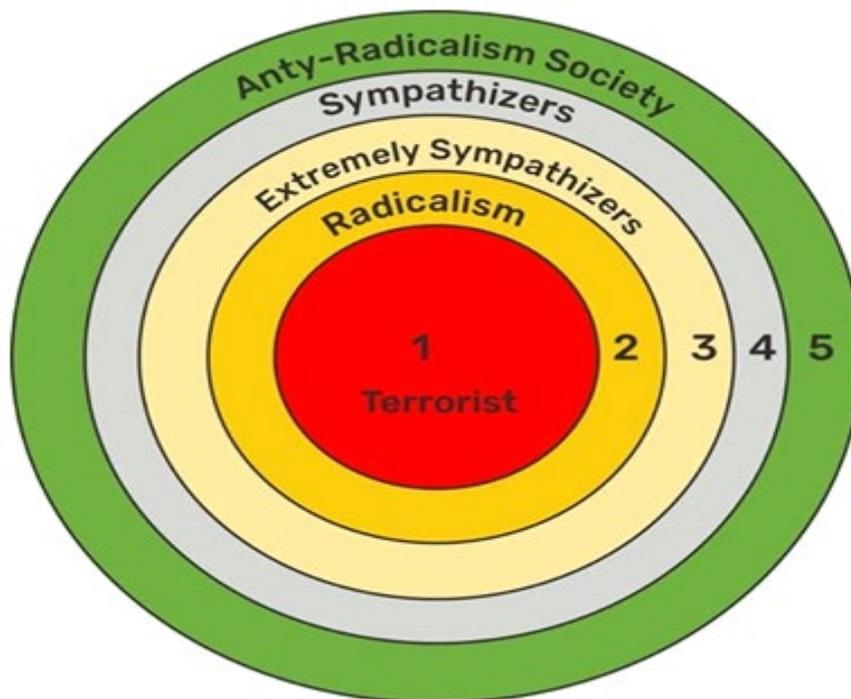
The circle pattern influences political preferences so much. Based on a survey conducted by the Indonesian Survey Circle, 51.7 percent of voters stated they strongly considered the political advice of religious leaders. Political participation will increase when religious leaders become the authority (LSI, 2019).

The main targets of the identity movement in political participation are young people and Islamic women recitation groups. The main consideration is that young people have rational freedom in determining political decisions, while women are seen for being loyal to their political choices. This information was mentioned in the interviews with informants from young people and women.

The religion issue was not bound by age, gender, education or status, since it was packed with religious verses stating the obligation to choose Muslim leaders. The religious gathering also had an impact on increasing voter participation as it was attended by thousands of worshipers (Marzuki, 2019).

The value of liberation theology is the major issue in the campaign of religious identity. As Islamic clerics conveyed that religion must be a medium of continuous liberation that embeds the human rights to determine political rights and be free from poverty. Furthermore, the campaign material was distributed in a systemic and massive way through social media, without obeying journalistic ethics. They concluded that liberation theology, using Islamic

values, gave great potential to Muslims to show their political participation. The increased potential of conflict at the grassroots level is responded to differently by various figures, members, and networks of religious organisations.

Regarding those different perspectives, an informant who was very instrumental in political participation in North Sumatra stated that the province is indeed diverse and admitted that religious principle influenced their decision on the election. However, after the election, the citizens will get past it and live in harmony. The importance of maintaining unity despite differences in political choices was also the value that was kept by citizens as they forbid and avoid the actions of treason and radicalism during the election and the campaign.

Questions about understanding the value system-generated mixed responses. Some were protesting the Unity in Diversity value system since there is a significant gap between the way the government treat the poor and the elites.

Religious Identity and Social Harmony

Based on theories of socialisation, the findings show that the socialisation model exposing religious issues attracted more attention in North Sumatra, without being influenced by gender, age, education or wealth. The groups of young people and women were the most prominent in showing the intention of activism, without any intention of radicalism in political participation. This finding indicates that individual backgrounds generated various social patterns of political behaviours ahead of the governor and presidential elections. Likewise, those who support the intention of activism, who were previously political activists or close to political groups, might become more active and radical. However, the intention of radicalism weakens due to the socialisation to prioritise peace and maintain social harmony.

Religious organisations used social media as the main platform in spreading the religion issue. It could be easily accessed and became the daily conversation theme in mosques, even in public spaces. This finding shows that democracy could develop discussions for each political motivation, even though the strongest is due to religious factors, which were shown in voting to choose religious, political figures.

The religious issue is a manifestation of the liberation concept, which explains that religious material can change perceptions about the perceived injustice of treatment and can increase political participation. The arising effects trigger critical thinking about the freedom concept. However, this does not imply that liberation theology influenced the violence movement in North Sumatra.

As Hefner (2000) points out, in Indonesia, it is still debatable whether accepting the liberation view will increase the interest of religious organisations in social and political matters. Post-reform, religious political movements have significantly increased. This emphasises that the power struggle involved organisations versus Islamic interests (Hadiz, 2019). This finding explains that it was not easy to predict radicalism, especially in political elections. Based on these observations, the government and police department monitored mosques and dispersed protests on the grounds of violating public order.

The religious organisation network can trigger radicalism through its members. The leaders and religious organisations in circle 1 (Figure 5) strongly indicated that past radicalism would increase the radicalism potential of recruited members. Conversely, this group also has the potential to remain apathetic in politics. They used social media, religious gatherings, and discussions with friends or family. They are reluctant to receive information from outside their networks. Once they receive information from outside, this has the potential to eliminate radical intentions, as illustrated in Figure 3. Important reasons that trigger long-term radicalism are the background of political attitudes, difficult economic conditions, questioning election results, and distrust of news from media such as TV and newspapers.

Towards the election period, the position of the circle (see Figure 5) will move dynamically because each circle has the potential to become radical and vice versa, with the understanding that the grouping can change due to internal and external influences. The dynamics in the election period are more likely to impact the emergence of radicalism than before. The background of the actors and network members determines the quality of their activism to influence collective action in political participation among social diversities. In addition, the emergence of internal conflicts among members also created difficulties for the leaders who recruited them. This finding completes several previous research opinions, such as Bayat (2007), Lim (2013), and Passy and Giugni (2001) that explain both social bonding and the network worked in two different functions, either to encourage or to prevent.

This study explains that social network figures have difficulty in deciding related to the internal problem. The internal situation of religious organisations only ensured their members to follow the intentions of activism, but this becomes difficult to follow if it relates to the intentions of radicalism, except for those who have past radicalism sentiments.

Literature studies on the values of social harmony in Indonesia called Unity in Diversity (Bhinneka Tunggal Ika) provide an interesting discussion. One of the social harmony values in North Sumatra is Dalihan Na Tolu, which teaches the beauty of harmony without any educational background and social status. Both values rely on obedience to authority and denying identity issues in a system. Based on these values, researchers found a strong and basic understanding, though not entirely, that those who respect social harmony tend to pay

serious attention to people with a radicalism background. These two values guide inter-human actions that are very contrary to individualist culture. The collectivist culture connects their personal well-being with the group, whereas individualist identity focuses solely on personal goals (Soliman et al. 2016).

Figure 6. Patterns of Activism and Radicalism in North Sumatra
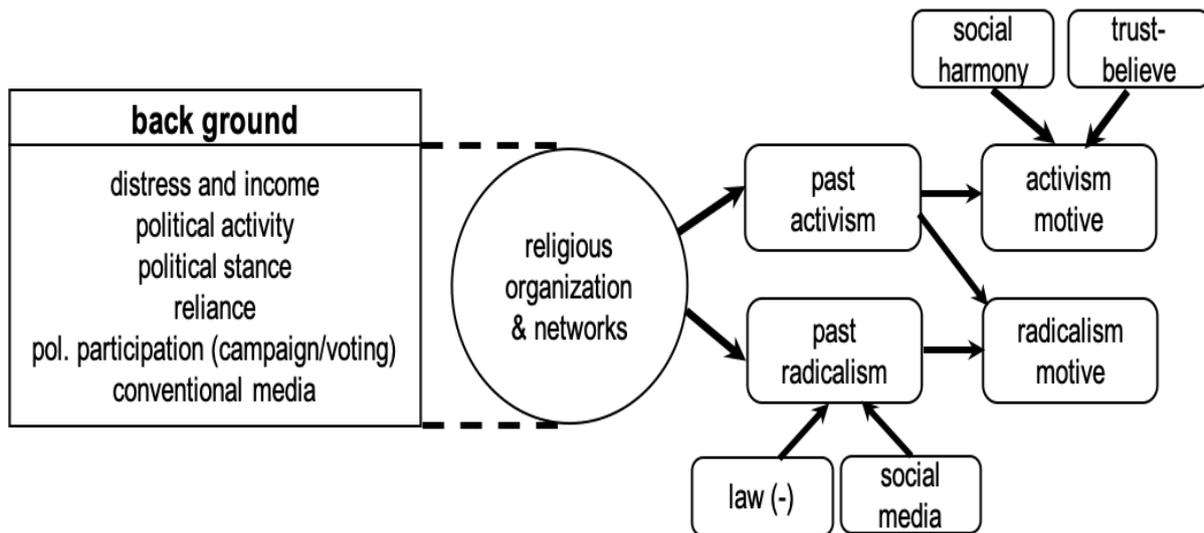
The link between social harmony and radicalism in this view is that people who are members of a religious organisation have started a new activity, renounced their confrontational identity, and obeyed the rules for their survival. The patterns of political participation with activism and radicalism intentions of the past and present can be seen in Figure 6. Based on the study, although hidden social hierarchy exists, social harmony is still guided by the mainstream culture. The group of young people and women recruited were asked to continue to do 'hospitality', because all forms of disputes within the group would face social pressure and punishment. Most of these groups, except those with radicalism exposure, continue to uphold the value of harmony, avoid radicalism acts, and accept the current system (albeit with a little force). Regarding beliefs and intentions of activism, young people and women's groups have become active in political activities. The collectivists community will build trust and respect each other's relationships so that the fabric of social life provides benefits in everyday life. Therefore, by upholding the trust value, it will avoid political expression towards violence so as not to endanger the society.

Conclusion

This study explains the motives of increasing political participation from the intentions of activism and radicalism influenced by backgrounds such as difficulties and the economy, political activities and many more. Religious identity is the main trigger of the emergence of

voters who are deliberately organised by certain groups in the interests of gaining power. The religious organisations will move quickly and dynamically during the political process leading to the elections being conducted in democratic procedures. Potential conflicts will always appear in every election, even though the values of social harmony become a binding factor for mutual respect in society. Young people and women become the favourite targets since they are easily engaged in political participation. The use of social media greatly accelerates the dissemination of the change in motive from rational to religious basis which justifies the freedom of the right to improve lives.

This research can be used as a reference for the government to develop strategies to prevent the cleaving of society during the political seasons. The government must continuously promote social harmony as a local value and strength to be nurtured by the community to accept differences in thoughts, attitudes and choices in the democracy process. The government should also monitor the use of social media and prepare clarification on various misunderstandings due to the variety of ways of community acceptance. One thing to be considered by the government is that the emerging religious identities do not necessarily give birth to radicalism, because the people involved in politics understand the value of social harmony.

This research is inseparable from limitations in exploring in depth the interrelationships in the changing attitudes of voter participation. First, this research is only carried out in the North Sumatra region, which might be different from other regions in Indonesia. Some explanations about past and future activism may not yet have full causality. Second, although young people and women are central actors in the political movement in North Sumatra, this does not mean that they represent the group in general, and vice versa. Other trends in the population of young people and women were not examined in this study. Therefore, it is recommended to include the aspect in different contexts and perspectives.

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