

Islam and Democracy: A Comparison of Religious Sentiments in Indonesian and Turkish Presidential Elections

Dinda Oktaviani Azzahra¹, Nurudin Muhammad Saifullah², Aldi Nasrullah³, Adica Bunga Cinta⁴

¹ Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia. E-mail: doazzahra05.dd@gmail.com

² Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia. E-mail: nurudinmsaif@gmail.com

³ Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia. E-mail: aldinasrullah2019@gmail.com

⁴ Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia. E-mail: adicabungac@gmail.com

Abstrak

This research compares religious sentiment in government elections in Indonesia and Turkey, the governments of Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The aim is to identify similarities and differences in religious sentiment among voters in the two countries as well as to determine the effectiveness of presidential government and analyze democracy on religious sentiment in presidential elections in both countries. The research methodology used in this research is qualitative research. Data was collected from various sources, including academic journals and news articles. The study analyzed data using a qualitative approach to identify similarities and differences in religious sentiment among voters in the two countries. The findings of this research show that there are similarities and differences in religious sentiment among voters. This study also finds that the effectiveness of presidential government is influenced by religious sentiment. And this study analyzes democracy in relation to the comparison of religious sentiment in presidential elections in the two countries. Overall, this research highlights the importance of understanding the role of religious sentiment in politics and governance. It also emphasizes the need for policymakers to develop strategies that can effectively manage religious sentiment to enhance political stability and social cohesion.

Keywords: Religion, Politics, Indonesia, Turkey

INTRODUCTION

Presidential elections are a crucial moment in a country's political life, which not only reflect people's political preferences but also involve various aspects, including religious sentiments. Religious sentiment is often an important factor that influences voters' views and decisions, given the role of religion in shaping people's values and cultural identity. In the context of Indonesia and Turkey, two countries with long histories and deep cultural richness, presidential elections are not only political events, but also reflect the dynamics of the relationship between religion and politics. Indonesia, which has the world's largest Muslim population, and Turkey, which is also predominantly Muslim, offer an interesting comparative study of religious sentiment in the context of presidential elections. This research focuses on the presidencies of

President Joko Widodo in Indonesia and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey. Both leaders have had a significant impact on each country's political journey and exhibit unique dynamics in managing religious issues in a political setting.

Presidential elections in Indonesia have always been a pivotal moment in the history of this democracy. In this context, the role of Islam and how religious sentiment plays a key role in supporting or opposing presidential candidates has become a major substance in understanding Indonesian politics. President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) is a figure who espouses a vision of inclusiveness and economic progress, but is also faced with the challenge of maintaining a balance between secular aspirations and religious values in diverse Indonesia.¹

Meanwhile, Turkey, which has a complex political history, has shown unique dynamics under the leadership of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Erdogan is known as a leader who strengthens the role of religion in politics and incorporates Islamic elements in his government policies. Religious sentiment in Turkey, which has a strong history, is the main focus of this comparative study. Erdogan created a powerful religious narrative, transforming Turkey's political landscape and fuelling intense debates about the relationship between state and religion in a democratic context.

Both leaders, Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan, represent leaders who see an important role for religion in building political legitimacy. Joko Widodo, although known for his more secular approach, strategically tried to touch the conscience of Muslim voters by demonstrating his strong religious identity. Erdogan, on the other hand, made open use of religious rhetoric and built a political platform that emphasised conservative Islamic values.

The importance of religious sentiment in presidential elections is also evident in the dynamics of social and cultural changes taking place in Indonesian and Turkish society. These changes include the growth of religious groups that have significant influence in shaping public opinion. An in-depth understanding of these shifts is important in evaluating their impact on election outcomes and the direction of future government policies. In addition, this comparison will cover the role of mass media and social networks in shaping and amplifying religious sentiments in both countries. The role of the media in shaping religious narratives is often key in shaping public perceptions of candidates and religious issues raised during election campaigns.

Religion has always been an important factor in shaping the political landscape in many countries, including Indonesia and Turkey. Both countries have majority Muslim populations, and religion plays an important role in their political and social life. Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim-majority country. The country has a long history of religious diversity, with Islam, Catholic Christianity, Protestant Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism as major religions. The country has held several presidential elections since the transition to democracy in 1998, with the most recent taking place in 2019. During Joko Widodo's presidency, religion has become an important issue in the country's politics, with the rise of conservative Islamic groups and the growing influence of religion in people's lives.

Meanwhile, Turkey is a secular state with a majority Muslim population. It has a long history of secularism, with the separation of religion and state enshrined in its constitution. However, during the presidency of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, there has been a shift towards a more conservative and religious government. Erdogan's administration has been accused of undermining Turkey's secularism and promoting a more Islamic agenda. A comparison of religious sentiment in presidential elections and two-term governments in Indonesia and Turkey is important to understand the role of religion in politics and governance in both countries. This paper will compare religious sentiment in presidential elections and two-term governments in

¹ Muazidan Takalamingan Pascal Wilmar Yehezkiel, "Peran Partai Politik Mengatasi Politik Identitas Dalam Pemilu," *Tata Kelola Pemilu Indonesia* 4, no. 2 (2023).

Indonesia and Turkey, during the presidencies of Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan respectively.

The comparison of religious sentiment in the Indonesian and Turkish presidential elections of Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan is a complex and multi-faceted topic such as the political landscape, religious dynamics, and the influence of religion on the electoral process in both countries.² In Indonesia, Islam is the majority religion and its influence on politics is immense. The country has a history of religious diversity and tolerance, and the role of Islam in politics has evolved over time. Joko Widodo has been the president of Indonesia since 2014. His presidency has seen efforts to promote interfaith dialogue and harmony, as well as initiatives to tackle intolerance and extremism.

On the other hand, Turkey has a unique political landscape where secularism and Islam are central to the country's identity. Recep Tayyip Erdogan's time in power has been associated with a more conservative and Islamist political agenda. His leadership has witnessed a complex interplay between religion, politics and governance that has impacted the country's domestic and foreign policies.

A comparison of religious sentiment in the Indonesian and Turkish presidential elections of Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan requires a comprehensive analysis of various factors, including historical context, political developments and societal dynamics. This involves studying public discourse, election campaigns and the role of religious institutions in shaping the political landscape. This comparison can provide valuable insights into the intersection of religion and politics in diverse cultural and political contexts.

It can also contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of democracy, governance and religious pluralism in contemporary societies. The study of religious sentiment in the context of presidential elections in Indonesia and Turkey under Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan is a rich and complex area of research that requires careful analysis and scholarly attention. It offers an opportunity to explore the relationship between religion, politics and society in two different national contexts. The comparison of religious sentiment in the Indonesian and Turkish presidential elections under Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan is a topic that requires a comprehensive approach to understand the complexity of religious dynamics and their impact on the electoral process in both countries.

By involving voters, religious groups, and key political actors in the analysis, this study aims to investigate how religious sentiment played a role in the presidential elections in Indonesia and Turkey during the reigns of Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan. This comparative analysis is expected to provide greater insight into the complexities of the relationship between religion and politics in two different cultural contexts. The research will explore the extent to which factors such as religious issues, religious identity, and understanding of religious values influence voters' views and decisions. As such, it is hoped that this research can contribute to our understanding of the role of religion in contemporary politics, with a focus on presidential elections in Indonesia and Turkey.

METHOD

This research on "Comparison of Religious Sentiments in Indonesian and Turkish Presidential Elections (During Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan)" was conducted using a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is a form of research that reveals findings that cannot be found through the use of statistical methods or other quantitative measurements. This type

² Mohammad Naufal Eprillan Salsabil, "Sistem Presidensial Dan Dinamika Hubungan Eksekutif-Legislatif Studi Perbandingan Sistem Pemerintahan Di Indonesia Di Era Reformasi Dan Turki Pasca Referendum 2017," *UIN Syarif Hidayatullah*, 2019.

of research can be applied to investigate aspects such as community life, history, behaviour, organisational functions, social movements, or kinship relationships.³ This research utilises literature analysis from previous studies that have been conducted or writings that discuss similar topics, as well as secondary data found by the researcher to support this series of research.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Similar to the researcher is a study conducted by Mhd Alfahjri Sukri, which focuses on the Comparison of Civil-Military Relations in Indonesia during Abdurrahman Wahid and Erdogan in Turkey. The findings of the study state that there are differences and similarities in civil-military relations. The similarities can be seen in the strong civilian control at the beginning of the reign of Abdurrahman Wahid (1999) and Erdogan (2003) in Indonesia and Turkey respectively. Both leaders were able to maintain civilian control over the military through their political policies. However, the difference came at the end of the reigns of Gus Dur and Erdogan. At the end of Abdurrahman Wahid's reign (2000-2001), civilian control weakened, while during Erdogan's reign, civilian control was strengthened.⁴

Then, Arif Zamhari in research with the title Al-Quran Memorisation Education Institution: Comparative Study of Pesantren Tahfidl Sulamanyiah Turkey and Pesantren Tahfidl Indonesia. . The results of this study indicate that, in addition to focusing on memorising the Qur'an, the pesantren also emphasises the understanding of the books of turats. This finding shows a significant difference with tahfidl pesantren in Indonesia, which generally only focus on Al-Qur'an memorisation activities.⁵

Furthermore, Andrian Triwahyudi and Natasya Yunita Sugiastuti conducted a study entitled Comparison of Divorce Legislation and its Consequences on Child Custody between Indonesia and Turkey. The findings of this study show that both countries stipulate child custody after divorce for both parents, and the father is obliged to provide financial support to his wife. However, there are differences, because in Turkey, the obligation to provide maintenance to the wife is based on the consideration that she will become "poorer" after the divorce.⁶

From the review of previous research above, this research offers novelty by focusing on a discourse study related to the Comparison of Religious Sentiments in Indonesian and Turkish Presidential Elections (During Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan). Many studies have compared or contrasted various topics between Indonesia and Turkey, but none of these topics have raised the topic of presidential elections. This makes it something interesting to be researched further.

DISCUSSION

Similarities and Differences in Voters' Religious Sentiments in Indonesia and Turkey Under Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan

³ Eko Murdiyanto, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif (Sistematika Penelitian Kualitatif)* (Yogyakarta: Yogyakarta Press, 2020).

⁴ Mhd. Alfahjri Sukri, "Perbandingan Hubungan Sipil-Militer Di Indonesia Pada Masa Abdurrahman Wahid Dengan Erdogan Di Turki," *Al Ijarah : Jurnal Pemerintahan Dan Politik Islam* 5, no. 2 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.29300/imr.v5i2.3486>.

⁵ Arif Zamhari, "Lembaga Pendidikan Penghafal Al-Quran: Studi Perbandingan Pesantren Tahfidl Sulaymaniyah Turki Dan Pesantren Tahfidl Indonesia," *Kuriositas* 8, no. 2 (2015).

⁶ Andrian Triwahyudi and Natasya Yunita Sugiastuti, "Perbandingan Peraturan Perundang-Undangan Perceraian Dan Akibatnya Terhadap Hak Asuh Anak Antara Indonesia Dan Turki," *Reformasi Hukum Trisakti* 5, no. 4 (2023).

Indonesia and Turkey are two countries where the majority of the population is Muslim. Both countries have a long history of religious influence on their politics and society. This paper will explore the similarities and differences in the religious sentiments of voters in Indonesia and Turkey under Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim-majority country, with more than 230 million Muslims, who make up 87% of the total population. The country has a diverse religious landscape, with significant Christian, Hindu, Buddhist and Confucian populations. Indonesia has a long history of religious diversity and tolerance, with Islam being the dominant religion since the 13th century.

Turkey, on the other hand, is a Muslim-majority country, with over 99% of the population being Muslim. The country has a unique history, with a secular constitution established in 1923 after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. However, in recent years, there has been a resurgence of Islamic sentiment in Turkish politics, with the election of Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2002.

Religious Sentiments in Indonesia

In Indonesia, religion plays a significant role in people's lives, and the state officially recognises various religions. Nonetheless, Indonesia is also a country that upholds diversity and religious freedom. But in recent years, the facts on the ground speak that there have been increasing cases of religious sentiment among voters in the electoral process. This fact came to the fore with the election of Joko Widodo, who is a Muslim and is seen as a champion of Islamic values. Prior to the Indonesian presidential election in 2019, Joko Widodo as the elected president of Indonesia in the previous election had a lot of homework to complete in handling cases of religious sentiment. In fact, almost all of these religious sentiment cases also dragged his position as President of Indonesia at that time, as well as risking his name in future presidential elections.

One of the problems that has become a major sentiment in religion in Indonesia is blasphemy. The blasphemy issue has become an important factor in Indonesian politics, and many politicians use it to appeal to religious voters. In 2017, former Jakarta Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, also known as Ahok, was accused of blasphemy after making comments about the Quran. This led to widespread protests from conservative Muslim groups, who considered the comments an insult to Islam.

The blasphemy case involving Ahok sparked a huge reaction in Indonesia. Ahok's blasphemous speech sparked protests from Islamic groups, which led to the prosecution of Ahok. Reactions to the sentence were mixed, with some feeling disappointed that the sentence was considered too light. The case was also considered an example of political persecution, where Ahok was perceived as a blasphemer who used Quranic verses as a tool to influence voters. The reactions to this case reflect the complexity of religious sentiment in Indonesia, where religious issues can trigger emotional reactions and divisions in society.⁷

Another hot-button issue regarding religious sentiment in Indonesia a few years ago was the attempt to change the basic ideology of the Indonesian state into an Islamic state based on Sharia law in Islam. Many conservative Muslim groups in Indonesia are pushing for the implementation of Sharia law in the country. This has been a controversial issue, and many Indonesians oppose the idea of Sharia law. However, the issue has gained more attention in recent years, and many politicians have capitalized on the ideological divide to appeal to voters at the polls.

⁷ Irwan Ahmad Akbar, *Dinamika Kasus Penistaan Agama Di Indonesia (Polemik Pemaknaan Ayat-Ayat Penistaan Dan UU Penodaan Agama)* (UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2019).

The effort to change the ideology of the Indonesian state into sharia has a close relationship with the blasphemy case that occurred previously. The blasphemy case committed by the suspect Ahok caused a huge reaction to hardline Muslims in Indonesia. The Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), which was one of the opponents of Ahok's narrative during the campaign, as well as other hardline Islamic groups conducted massive demonstrations demanding the arrest of Ahok for alleged blasphemy. In addition to this, the large forum commonly referred to as "Action 212" has also created a large social interaction within the Muslim community in Indonesia.

The blasphemy case not only resulted in religious sentiment against the perpetrator, but also caused social inequality in Indonesian society. The existence of the "212 Action" made many Muslim groups call for a change in the basis of the State which was originally Pancasila to become an Islamic State based on sharia law. This of course received a lot of rejection from various groups, even from Muslims in Indonesia itself. Many scholars are also debating about changing the ideology of the State. This is a big gap that is utilized by legislative candidates before the vote to get as many votes as possible from supporters.⁸

Religious Sentiments in Turkey

Unlike Indonesia, Turkey was born as a secular republic that strictly separates state affairs from religious affairs. Although the majority of the population is Muslim, Turkey has a long history of the Baha'i faith and also has organizations for non-believers. Not only that, Turkey has a state institution that regulates religious affairs, Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, which was first established by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. This is an added value that Turkey has as a secular state that is able to separate religious and state affairs. Even so, cases of religious sentiment still arise in Turkey.

One of the main issues driving religious sentiment in Turkey is the issue of secularism. Turkey has a secular constitution, which was established in 1923 after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. However, in recent years, there has been a push by conservative Muslim groups to move away from secularism and towards a more Islam-oriented government. The issue of religion itself has been an important factor in Turkish State politics since the election of Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his AKP party in 2002. Erdogan is seen as a supporter of Islamic values and encourages a more Islam-oriented government. This has been a controversial issue, and many Turkish citizens are opposed to the idea of an Islamic government.

Erdogan's rule in Turkey has been criticized by some of its people who demand that Turkey remain a secular state. Although Erdogan has cultivated loyalty from conservative and religious supporters by promoting Islamic values in the country, policies that tend to favor sharia have created tensions among Turkish society. Erdogan has restored Turkey's Islamic roots, which helped him win the presidential election, but this has also sparked concern among those who support a secular state.

Since coming to power, Erdogan has influenced many Turks by navigating the world stage and showing an independent stance in relations with both East and West. However, unorthodox economic policies and the declining value of the Turkish economy have led to criticism of his administration. In addition, policies that tend to favor Islamic values have also raised concerns about the decline of secularism in Turkey. Erdogan's political history shows that he has used populist strategies and manipulated democratic institutions, which has led him to be perceived as an authoritarian populist. Critics argue that Erdogan has undermined the pillars of the secular republic built by the founder of Turkey's modern republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Although

⁸ Cik Hasan Bisri, *Kontroversi Pelaksanaan Syar'iat Islam Di Indonesia* (Bandung: Pusat Penelitian dan Penerbitan LP2M UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, 2018).

Erdogan has shown that Turkey can be a major player in geopolitics, policies that tend to favor Islamism have raised concerns about the decline of democracy and secularism in Turkey.⁹

Another issue driving religious sentiment in Turkey is the role of women in society. Erdogan has been criticized for his views on women's rights, and many have accused him of being anti-feminist. However, Erdogan defends his views, saying that he is promoting traditional Islamic values. The accusations of anti-feminism began when Erdogan made a statement in 2014 that women are not equal to men, feminists reject this fact and they reject motherhood. The statement sparked criticism from feminist groups and human rights activists, who considered it discriminatory and demeaning to women.

In 2016, Erdogan made another controversial statement about women in Turkey. In a speech he delivered on International Women's Day, Erdogan stated that a woman is above all a mother. This statement also drew criticism from feminist groups, who saw it as an attempt to limit women's role in society and curb their rights.

Erdogan's statement sparked religious sentiments among Turkish society, especially among feminist groups and human rights activists. However, there are also women's groups that support Erdogan and his conservative views on the role of women in society. These groups believe that women's roles should be limited to household duties and taking care of children, and that women should not be too active in the public sphere.¹⁰

Similarities and differences

The explanation of religious sentiment in Indonesia and Turkey clearly has significant differences in each country. Being a secular country is actually a challenge that a country has in creating equality for its people. As in Indonesia, for example, the many religions practiced by its people make it a homework for the Indonesian government to be fair in providing religious rights for its citizens. Especially in terms of law and legislation, the existence of secular laws is expected to be able to cover all religious communities in Indonesia.

In addition, the cases that had heated up in the two countries were different. Indonesia, which is a democratic country, had a blasphemy case when one of the legislative candidates in the governor's election campaigned. Meanwhile, Turkey has a long-rooted conflict with Erdogan's government because of his own statements that have been criticized by feminists and human rights for being anti-feminist and the role of women in the state.

While there are differences in the religious sentiments of voters in Indonesia and Turkey, there are also some similarities. One of the main similarities is the issue of Islamic law. Both countries have seen a rise in conservative Muslim groups pushing for the implementation of Sharia law. This has been a controversial issue in both countries, and many are against the idea of Sharia law. Due to the country's history, both countries' people want their countries to be free from secularism and change to Sharia law.

But on the other hand, the similarities between the two countries are also in terms of Secularism itself. The secularism that has grown in these countries since the beginning has been criticized by their own people. In both countries, there is a push by conservative Muslim groups to move away from secularism and towards a more Islam-oriented government. This has been a controversial issue and many oppose the idea of an Islamic government, leaving the country with two divided camps.

⁹ Arrasyidin Akmal Domo, Nurhasanah Bahktiar, and Zarkasih, "Revolusi Sosial Masyarakat Turki : Dari Sekularisme Attatur Menuju Islamisme Erdogan," *Sosial Budaya* 15, no. 2 (2018): 83–90.

¹⁰ Femri Resdifianti, Dini Septianti Nurkhasanah, and Ratih Kusuma Dewi, "Tuntutan Masyarakat Terhadap Keluarnya Turki Dari Konvensi Istanbul," *Indonesian Journal of International Relations* 6, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.32787/ijir.v6i1.302>.

The split in the camp is actually utilized by the two prospective leaders of the country to get votes in the upcoming elections. For example, Joko Widodo utilized the "212 Actions" which actually not only demanded that Ahok be imprisoned, but also dragged his own name on his position as President because Joko Widodo supported the party that endorsed Ahok as Governor of DKI Jakarta in the upcoming election. Joko Widodo, who had become a point of demand for the demonstration to step down from his position, actually utilized the situation to gain votes in the upcoming presidential vote. In the midst of the conflict, he actually participated in congregational prayers with the demonstrators. This is certainly a positive move to reduce the political pressure on his current position and his presidential candidacy in the upcoming election, but it risks giving legitimacy to anti-Ahok and anti-Chinese sentiments.¹¹. Recep Tayyip Erdogan has also done the same thing in utilizing cases of religious sentiment in his country. Erdogan, who initially received a lot of criticism from his people regarding significant legal policy changes from secular to Sharia. By enforcing laws that lean towards Islam, Erdogan has gained a lot of support from his people, the majority of whom are Muslims.

The Effectiveness of Religious Sentiments Influences Presidential Government in Indonesia and Turkey in the Era of Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan

Religious sentiment plays an important role in the political process in Indonesia and Turkey. In Indonesia, the majority of the population is Muslim, and Islam plays a key role in daily life and politics. Meanwhile, Turkey has a rich history in the context of Islam, but also faces unique political dynamics with efforts to maintain the secular principles laid down by the country's founders. Therefore, this comparison provides an interesting insight into the way religious sentiment plays a role in the political dynamics of both countries.

The effectiveness of religious sentiment can be measured through various indicators, including voter turnout, public attitudes towards government policies, and the role of religion in political decision-making. In Indonesia, presidential elections reflect high voter turnout with religious sentiment often influencing political choices. In this context, how president Joko Widodo interacts with religious sentiment is a determining factor.

Meanwhile, in Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan played a significant role in embracing religious sentiment to support his political base. Policies that emphasize conservative Islamic values appeal to voters who identify with religious values. In both instances, the effectiveness of religious sentiment was not only reflected in the election results, but also in the policies implemented by the government.¹²

In exploring the role of religious sentiment in presidential elections in Indonesia and Turkey, it is necessary to further examine how religious sentiment affects key aspects of politics and governance. One important aspect to look at is public participation in the political process, especially in elections. In Indonesia, high turnout is often closely linked to religious identity, especially in the case of Islam. Voters often tend to vote for candidates who are perceived to support Islamic values or have a commitment to issues that the Muslim community considers important.

Meanwhile, in Turkey, public participation in elections is also linked to religious sentiments, but with different nuances. Erdogan's base of supporters, the majority of whom come from conservative Islamic groups, are often highly committed to the importance of religion in government policy. Turkish elections are often arenas where religious sentiments are openly

¹¹ Lihat di <https://time.com/4598760/sidang-penistaan-agama-gubernur-jakarta-mengancam-sekulerisme-di-indonesia/> (diakses pada 25 November 2023, pukul 00:32)

¹² M Khamdan, "Islam Dan Mobilisasi Identitas Dalam Politik (Studi Kontestasi Gerakan Sosial Pada Pemilihan Umum 2014-2019)," *Repository.Uinjkt.Ac.Id*, 2021.

articulated, and the outcomes often reflect the complex dynamics between religious identity and political aspirations.

In addition to public participation, another important aspect is how religious sentiments affect public attitudes and perceptions of government policies. In Indonesia, attitudes towards religious issues often reflect how people assess the success or failure of the government in understanding and accommodating religious aspirations in public policy. Religion-related policies, such as religious education in schools or moral issues, can become a central point in shaping people's views on government performance.

In contrast, in Turkey, policies that reflect conservative Islamic values and religious identity often receive strong support from certain segments of society. Religious sentiment in Turkey can measure the extent to which people feel accommodated and represented by government policies. In this context, the influence of religious sentiment can be seen in public support for policies such as the ban on the veil, the role of women in society, and the recognition of religious symbols in public spaces.

Furthermore, it is worth looking at how religious sentiment plays a role in political decision-making at the government level. In Indonesia, President Joko Widodo, despite having a different background from Indonesia's Muslim majority, is engaged in efforts to build an image that is inclusive and committed to religious freedom. However, how religious sentiments influence his political decisions and government policies needs to be further explored.

On the other hand, Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey actively embraces religious identity in his policies and political actions. The influence of religious sentiment is seen in policies such as increasing the role of religion in education, changes in government structure, and efforts to change the face of Turkey into a more conservative Islam. These two presidents face different challenges and opportunities related to how they respond to and manage religious sentiment in their government policies.

However, it is important to note that while religious sentiment can be a driving force in the political process, it can also lead to potential conflict and polarization in society. How the government responds to the diversity of people's opinions and interests in the context of religion will be key to understanding the impact of religious sentiment on political stability. In addition, it should be noted that religious sentiment is not static and can change over time. Economic development, social change and political dynamics can affect how people articulate and respond to religious sentiments. Therefore, this study can contribute to understanding the evolution of religious sentiment and its impact on presidential governance in Indonesia and Turkey over a longer period of time.

The effectiveness of religious sentiment in influencing presidential governance in Indonesia and Turkey in the era of Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan can be analyzed through various bilateral meetings and interactions between the leaders of the two countries. In 2017, President Jokowi and President Erdogan expressed their appreciation for the unity and solidarity between their countries, and encourage further cooperation. Erdogan expressed his hope that the strong cooperation between Turkey and Indonesia would serve as an inspiring example for the world in the future. Erdogan, together with President Widodo, extended heartfelt greetings from the deepest hearts of Turkish citizens to Indonesian citizens. Erdogan emphasized his deep love for the people of Indonesia and is confident that the solidarity relationship between the two will become a global model in the future. President Erdogan reiterated his affection for the people of Indonesia, appreciating the unity and solidarity shown by Indonesian youth which is

recognized worldwide. Erdogan also emphasized that unity, togetherness, and solidarity among Indonesians are in line with the values upheld by Turkish society.¹³

In 2019, Erdogan plans to visit Indonesia to strengthen bilateral relations and increase trade between the two countries. President Erdogan once again extended his congratulations on President Jokowi's re-election as Indonesia's Head of State for the next five-year term. Erdogan became one of the first world leaders to reach out to President Jokowi with congratulations after the results were announced. The two leaders also agreed to increase trade between the two countries and discussed potential cooperation in the strategic industry sector. Turkey offered several cooperation projects that could benefit both parties. In addition, Turkey gave its full support to Indonesia's candidacy for the UN Human Rights Council for the 2020-2022 period.¹⁴

The effectiveness of religious sentiment in influencing presidential governance in Indonesia and Turkey under Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan is a complex and multifaceted issue. Both countries have a history of blending religion and politics, and Islam plays an important role in shaping their respective national identities. In Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority country, religious sentiments have been used to mobilize voters and influence policy-making. Similarly, in Turkey, Erdogan's Justice and Development Party has used Islam as a tool to consolidate power and suppress dissent.

However, the role of religion in politics is not without controversy, with critics arguing that religion undermines the principles of democracy and civil society. Ultimately, the effectiveness of religious sentiment in shaping presidential governments depends on a variety of factors, including the political climate, the strength of civil society, and the ability of people to hold their leaders accountable. Research on the comparison of religious sentiment in presidential elections in Indonesia and Turkey under Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan opens a window to understanding the complexity of the interaction between religion and politics in two different contexts. Religious sentiment not only reflects voter preferences, but also plays a crucial role in shaping government attitudes and policies. Overall, this study details the role of religious sentiment in presidential elections in Indonesia and Turkey during the Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan administrations and identifies the extent to which religious sentiment influenced political dynamics and government policies in these two contexts.

Democratic Analysis of the Comparison of Religious Sentiments in the Presidential Elections of Indonesia and Turkey during the Period of Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan

A comparison of religious sentiment in the Indonesian and Turkish presidential elections during the reigns of Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan can be analyzed from a democratic perspective. Both countries have experienced significant political developments in their presidential systems, which have impacted on the role of religion in politics.

In Indonesia, the presidential system is shaped by the history of colonial rule and the transition to democracy. Research on the presidential system in Indonesia during the Reformation era and Turkey after the 2017 Constitutional Referendum highlights the differences in the practice of the presidential system in the two countries. In Indonesia, the presidential system is still influenced by the power of political parties, while in Turkey it is influenced by executive power and coalition party solidarity.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan's leadership in Turkey is characterized by a complex relationship with democracy. Initially seen as a proponent of democratic reform, Erdogan's policies have

¹³ Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, "Melalui Vlog, Presiden Jokowi Dan Erdogan Dorong Solidaritas Kedua Negara," Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2023.

¹⁴ Kementerian Sekretariat Negara Republik, "Presiden Erdogan Berencana Berkunjung Ke Indonesia," Kementerian Sekretariat Negara Republik, 2023.

raised concerns about the state of democracy in Turkey. His shift towards a more authoritarian style of government has been the subject of much debate, and some experts have warned against doing the same.

The impact of Erdoğan's victory in the Turkish elections on Indonesia is a matter of discussion. Observers have noted the potential positive impact on bilateral relations and economic opportunities between Indonesia and Turkey. In addition, Erdogan's success is seen as a source of optimism for Islamic political parties in Indonesia, potentially influencing the upcoming legislative and presidential elections in 2024.

A comparison of religious sentiment in the Indonesian and Turkish presidential elections during the reigns of Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan reflects the evolving dynamics of democracy, the role of religion in politics, and the challenges faced by both countries in maintaining democratic principles.

Elections are one of the main pillars of democracy in many countries, including Indonesia and Turkey. During the presidencies of Joko Widodo in Indonesia and Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey, the aspect of religious sentiment has become a special concern in the democratic process, given that these two countries have different histories and cultural contexts. An analysis of the presidential elections in these two countries leads us to a deeper understanding of how religious sentiment affects democratic dynamics.

In Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority country, religious sentiment plays an important role in elections. Joko Widodo, or Jokowi, ran for president in 2014 and won the election with significant interfaith support. During his administration, Jokowi sought to build an image as an inclusive leader, creating policies that supported religious diversity. However, the 2019 presidential election witnessed increased polarization, with religious issues taking center stage.

On the other hand, Turkey, which has a history of being a secular country with a Muslim majority, experienced a significant political transformation under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Erdogan, who is the leader of the Islam-based party, AKP, has combined religion and politics in controversial ways. Presidential elections in Turkey tend to reflect the polarization between secular and conservative groups, as well as between supporters and opponents of Erdogan.¹⁵

A democratic analysis of the comparative religious sentiment in Indonesian and Turkish presidential elections under Jokowi and Erdogan shows some similarities and differences. In Indonesia, Jokowi was able to win interfaith support through his inclusive image, while in Turkey, Erdogan faced challenges due to policies that were perceived to favor conservative Islamic groups. These differences reflect the different religious and political dynamics in the two countries.

However, the main challenge in both countries is to maintain a balance between democratic principles and religious values. In Indonesia, the challenge arises in the context of pluralism and religious diversity, while in Turkey, polarization between secular and conservative groups creates political tensions. Therefore, a democratic analysis of comparative religious sentiment in presidential elections must take into account the historical, social and political context of each country to understand its complexity.

It is important to remember that religious sentiment in presidential elections not only reflects a country's internal dynamics, but also has an impact on international relations. The comparison between Indonesia and Turkey also reflects how a leader's image and policies in the

¹⁵ Candradewi Renny Puspitarini, *Kajian Kebijakan Politik Internasional Metode, Teori & Studi Kasus* (Surabaya: Jakad Media Publishing, 2020).

context of religion can affect diplomatic relations. For example, Indonesia's relations with other Muslim-majority countries and Turkey in a regional and global context are crucial.

In addition, the role of social media in reinforcing or criticizing religious sentiments must also be taken into account. In this digital age, information can spread quickly and influence people's perceptions, so understanding online dynamics is key in analyzing democracy.

In the face of these challenges, it is important to promote interfaith dialogue, improve political literacy, and strengthen democratic institutions. Governments, civil society and the media have a crucial role to play in shaping narratives that reinforce democratic values, pluralism and tolerance, while respecting religious freedom. Only with this approach can future presidential elections mirror a strong and inclusive democracy, and avoid polarization that is detrimental to political and social stability.

Analyzing these dynamics requires a comprehensive understanding of the historical, political and social contexts of both countries. Research and analysis of presidential systems, political developments, and the impact of leaders such as Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan provide valuable insights into the democratic process and the interaction between religion and politics in Indonesia and Turkey. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities of democratic governance and the diverse experiences in countries with significant Muslim populations. Overall, the presidential elections in Indonesia and Turkey under Jokowi and Erdogan provide valuable insights into how religious sentiment can influence democratic dynamics. Despite significant differences in the political and cultural contexts of the two countries, this analysis provides a deep understanding of the complexities of the relationship between religion and democracy in a changing global context.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a comparison of religious sentiment in presidential elections in Indonesia and Turkey, during the era of Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan, shows similarities and differences. Analysis of the data shows that religion plays an important role in the politics of both countries, but the extent of its influence varies. In Indonesia, religion is an important factor in the electoral process, but this does not necessarily result in faith-based policies. In contrast, Turkey's political landscape is heavily influenced by religion, and the government has implemented policies that reflect this influence.

A comparison of the two countries' presidential governance also reveals some similarities and differences. Both Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan face challenges in their respective countries, but their approaches to governance differ. Joko Widodo focuses on economic development and infrastructure, while Recep Tayyip Erdogan prioritizes religion and culture. The effectiveness of their governance is difficult to measure as it depends on various factors, including the political and economic climate of their countries.

The role of religious sentiment in presidential governance is also an important factor to consider. In Indonesia, Joko Widodo's administration has been criticized for not doing enough to address religious intolerance and discrimination. In contrast, Recep Tayyip Erdogan's administration has been accused of using religion to suppress dissent and undermine democratic institutions. The impact of religious sentiment on governance is complex and multifaceted, and this requires a different understanding of the political and social context in each country.

Overall, the comparison of religious sentiment in the elections and two-term presidential administrations of Indonesia and Turkey, under Joko Widodo and Recep Tayyip Erdogan, highlights the importance of understanding the role of religion in politics. While religion can be a unifying force, it can also be a divisive force, and its influence on governance can have both positive and negative impacts. Therefore, policymakers and citizens should be aware of the

potential impact of religious sentiment on politics and work towards creating an inclusive and tolerant society that respects a diversity of beliefs and opinions.

Then, suggestions for future research are expected to further analyze the social and political factors that influence religious sentiment in the context of general elections, explore the role of social media in shaping and spreading religious sentiment during election campaigns, examine public perceptions of the credibility and integrity of political leaders associated with religious identity, extend research to the next general election period to see trends in changes in religious sentiment over time, and examine changes in voter attitudes towards religious issues over time and the factors that influence them. These suggestions are expected to provide direction for further research that is more in-depth and comprehensive on the comparison of religious sentiment in the context of presidential elections in Indonesia and Turkey.

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