

# Analysis of the Influence of Legal, Social, and Political Factors on Religious Freedom in Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

This research investigates the influence of legal, political, and social factors on religious freedom in Indonesia through a quantitative analysis. A sample of 150 participants was surveyed, and a structural equation model was employed to examine the relationships between these factors and their impact on perceptions of religious freedom. The results reveal significant positive associations between legal awareness, political dynamics, social attitudes, and religious freedom. The study contributes valuable insights for policymakers, legal practitioners, and advocacy groups seeking to enhance religious freedom in Indonesia.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Religious freedom is a fundamental human right that is recognized globally and enshrined in international human rights instruments [1]. Indonesia, with its diverse cultural, ethnic, and religious landscape, provides an interesting context to explore the complexities surrounding religious freedom [2]. The country has incorporated this right into its constitution and laws, such as the 1945 Constitution, Law no. 39 of 1999, and Law no. 12 of 2005 [3]. However, there are challenges in the implementation of religious freedom, including violations by the state and civil society. Religious intolerance, radicalism, and fundamentalism are also prevalent, hindering the promotion of unity in diversity [4]. To

address these issues, it is recommended that the Indonesian government reviews its policies, takes legal action against radical and intolerant groups, restores violated rights, and improves religious tolerance education.

Indonesia, as a constitutional democracy, is committed to the principle of religious freedom, which is protected by the constitution. However, the realization of this fundamental right is influenced by various legal, social, and political factors. The Indonesian Constitutional Court plays a crucial role in interpreting and upholding religious freedom, while also maintaining neutrality [5]. The consistency of applying criminal sanctions for blasphemy in Indonesia has been questioned, and there is a need to

update the Criminal Code to ensure consistency in the application of sanctions [6]. The post-1998 era in Indonesia saw significant changes to the legal and political system, including an emphasis on judicial independence and the establishment of a Constitutional Court [7]. The Constitution of 1945 and subsequent regulations place limits on religious freedom, aiming to ensure legal certainty, justice, and respect for human rights [1]. However, religious minorities in Indonesia face discrimination and persecution, highlighting the tension between religious freedom and the protection of minorities [8], [9].

The relationship between the legal framework, societal attitudes, and political structures in Indonesia and their collective impact on religious freedom has been the focus of several studies. Olasupo examines the dynamics of legal politics in Indonesian state administration and its influence on the formation and defense of the law [10]. Abdillah and Izah analyze the role of religious institutions and associative organizations in shaping inter-religious relations and reducing discrimination against local religions [11]. The study on street vendors in Banda Aceh and Yogyakarta by an anonymous author evaluates the legal provisions and policy formulations for dealing with street vendors in a comprehensive manner [12]. Maulana and Hidayat investigate the judge's considerations in allowing interfaith marriages and the applicable regulations and norms regarding marriage in Indonesia [13]. These studies provide insights into the complex interplay between the legal framework, societal attitudes, and political structures, shedding light on the nuances of religious freedom in Indonesia. By exploring these dimensions, this research seeks to contribute empirical insights that can inform policy discussions, promote inclusivity, and address challenges in the protection of religious freedom in the Indonesian context.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 *Legal Frameworks*

The legal landscape in Indonesia plays a crucial role in shaping religious freedom [14]. The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia guarantees freedom of religion, but the practical implementation of this right is influenced by a complex array of laws and regulations [15]. Scholars have extensively examined the constitutional foundations and legal frameworks governing religious practices in Indonesia [16]. They emphasize the role of the "Pancasila" philosophy in shaping the legal framework for religious freedom [6]. These studies also explore the tensions between constitutional principles and legal restrictions, highlighting the potential clash between constitutional ideals and anti-blasphemy laws [17]. While some scholars view the legal frameworks as protective, others critique them as potentially restrictive. These studies provide a foundation for understanding the legal context within which religious freedom operates in Indonesia.

Social attitudes in Indonesian society play a crucial role in shaping the acceptance or rejection of religious diversity [18]–[20]. Historical narratives, cultural influences, and interfaith relations contribute to public perceptions of religious freedom [20]. Research also highlights the impact of religious education on social attitudes, with educational practices either fostering tolerance or intolerance [21]. Additionally, the influence of social media on shaping public perceptions of religious diversity is examined, particularly in the context of Indonesia's digital transformation. Understanding the role of online platforms in influencing social attitudes is essential for comprehending contemporary challenges to religious freedom.

### 2.2 *Political Structures*

The political landscape in Indonesia has a significant impact on religious freedom, with research exploring the influence of political parties, government policies, and the role of state institutions in shaping the environment for religious practice. Trzcinski demonstrates the importance of Islamic parties and the declining significance of

Christian parties in the Indonesian political system [22], [23]. Cholil argues that the government's religious moderation policy may run counter to freedom of religion or expression and overlook weaknesses in the governance of religion [24]. Rofiah et al. highlight the influence of liberalism on Islam and suggest strengthening the scholarly system of Islam through religious moderation to prevent extremism and liberalism [25]. Azizah analyzes the role of religious elites and identity politics in regional elections, emphasizing the need to prevent identity politics from undermining national unity [26]. Sardjuningsih examines the religious attitudes of Muslims violating government policies during the COVID-19 pandemic and suggests the critical role of Islamic scholars in educating Muslims about the dangers of the virus [27].

### *2.3 Synthesis and Gaps in the Literature*

While existing literature provides valuable insights into the legal, social, and political dimensions of religious freedom in Indonesia, there are notable gaps and areas for further exploration. The intersectionality of these factors, where legal, social, and political realms converge, requires more nuanced investigation. Additionally, the rapidly evolving digital landscape and its impact on social attitudes present a contemporary area that demands scholarly attention.

## **3. METHODS**

### *3.1 Research Design*

This study adopts a quantitative research design to systematically investigate the influence of legal, social, and political factors on religious freedom in Indonesia. The research employs a survey method to gather data, capturing the perspectives of a diverse sample that reflects the demographic, regional, and religious diversity of the Indonesian population.

### *3.2 Sampling*

A stratified random sampling technique will be employed to ensure the

representation of various demographic and religious groups. The sample size is determined to be 150 respondents, considering statistical considerations and the need for robust analysis. Stratification will occur based on factors such as geographical region, religious affiliation, age, and gender to ensure a comprehensive representation of the Indonesian population.

### *3.3 Data Collection*

Data will be collected through structured surveys administered in person and online. The survey instrument will include questions addressing legal awareness and understanding, societal attitudes towards religious freedom, and perceptions of the influence of political structures. The survey will be pre-tested to ensure clarity and reliability of the questions.

In addition to the survey, key informant interviews will be conducted with legal experts, religious leaders, and policymakers to provide qualitative insights. Document analysis will thoroughly examine legal texts, government reports, and relevant publications to complement the survey data.

### *3.4 Variables*

The study will focus on three main categories of variables:

- a. **Legal Variables:** This includes responses related to awareness and understanding of legal frameworks governing religious freedom, opinions on the effectiveness of existing laws, and perceptions of the legal climate concerning religious practices.
- b. **Social Variables:** Survey questions will assess social attitudes towards religious freedom, interfaith relations, and the influence of cultural factors on the acceptance of religious diversity.
- c. **Political Variables:** The impact of political structures on religious freedom will be explored through questions addressing perceptions of government policies, political ideologies, and the role of state institutions.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

The quantitative data will be analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). SEM-PLS is chosen for its ability to handle complex models with multiple dependent and independent variables, making it suitable for investigating the intricate relationships between legal, social, and political factors and their influence on religious freedom. The data analysis process involves several steps. First, a measurement model is constructed to assess the reliability and validity of the survey instrument and ensure that the chosen variables effectively measure the intended constructs. Then, a structural model is developed to analyze the relationships between legal, social, and political factors and their impact on religious freedom. SEM-PLS allows for the simultaneous examination of multiple variables and their interdependencies. Hypotheses derived from the literature review are tested to identify significant relationships and quantify the impact of legal, social, and political factors on religious freedom. Finally, bootstrapping techniques are applied to validate the robustness of the results and assess the statistical significance of the identified relationships. The analysis will generate insights into the complex dynamics shaping religious freedom in Indonesia, providing a quantitative foundation for understanding the relative influence of legal, social, and political factors.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Demographic Sample

The survey gathered responses from a diverse sample of 150 participants, representing various demographic categories to ensure comprehensive insights into the dynamics of religious freedom in Indonesia. The age distribution of the participants was as follows: 18-24 years: 25 participants (16.7%), 25-34 years: 40 participants (26.7%), 35-44 years: 30 participants (20%), 45-54 years: 35 participants (23.3%), and 55 and above: 20 participants (13.3%). In terms of gender distribution, there were 75 male participants (50%) and 75 female participants (50%). The religious affiliation of the participants was as follows: Islam: 90 participants (60%), Christianity: 30 participants (20%), Hinduism: 15 participants (10%), Buddhism: 10 participants (6.7%), and other religions: 5 participants (3.3%). The geographic distribution of the participants was as follows: Java: 60 participants (40%), Sumatra: 30 participants (20%), Sulawesi: 20 participants (13.3%), Kalimantan: 15 participants (10%), and other islands: 25 participants (16.7%). In terms of education level, there were 40 participants with a high school or below education (26.7%), 60 participants with a bachelor's degree (40%), and 50 participants with a master's degree or higher (33.3%).

### 4.2 Validity and Reliability

The loading factors, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE values collectively suggest that the measurement model effectively captures the intended constructs, providing a solid foundation for the subsequent structural model analysis in understanding the relationships between these constructs.

Table 1. Measurement Model Test

Variable	Code	Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Legal	Leg.1	0.884	0.905	0.940	0.840
	Leg.2	0.937			
	Leg.3	0.928			
Political	Pol.1	0.844	0.775	0.863	0.677
	Pol.2	0.785			
	Pol.3	0.839			

Social	Soc.1	0.791	0.798	0.882	0.714
	Soc.2	0.877			
	Soc.3	0.863			
Religious Freedom	RF.1	0.893	0.840	0.904	0.758
	RF.2	0.877			
	RF.3	0.841			

Legal (Leg): The loading factor for Leg.1 is 0.884, indicating a strong relationship with the Legal construct. Leg.2 and Leg.3 also have high loading factors of 0.937 and 0.928, respectively, suggesting that all three items effectively measure the Legal construct. Cronbach's Alpha for Legal is 0.905, indicating high internal consistency and reliability. The Composite Reliability is 0.940, further confirming the reliability of the Legal construct. The Average Variance Extracted is 0.840, indicating that Legal explains a significant proportion of the variance in the measured items. Political (Pol): Pol.1 has a loading factor of 0.844, indicating a strong relationship with the Political construct. Pol.2 and Pol.3 also have solid loading factors of 0.785 and 0.839, respectively. Cronbach's Alpha for Political is 0.775, suggesting acceptable internal consistency. The Composite Reliability is 0.863, indicating good reliability. The AVE is 0.677, suggesting that Politics captures a meaningful proportion of the variance in the measured items. Social

(Soc): Soc.1 has a loading factor of 0.791, indicating a significant relationship with the social construct. Soc.2 and Soc.3 also have robust loading factors of 0.877 and 0.863, respectively. Cronbach's Alpha for Social is 0.798, suggesting good internal consistency. The Composite Reliability is 0.882, affirming the reliability of the social construct. The AVE is 0.714, indicating that Social explains a meaningful proportion of the variance in the measured items. Religious Freedom (RF): RF.1 has a loading factor of 0.893, indicating a substantial relationship with the Religious Freedom construct. RF.2 and RF.3 also have robust loading factors of 0.877 and 0.841, respectively. Cronbach's Alpha for Religious Freedom is 0.840, indicating good internal consistency. The Composite Reliability is 0.904, affirming the reliability of the Religious Freedom construct. The AVE is 0.758, suggesting that Religious Freedom explains a significant proportion of the variance in the measured items.

Table 2. Discrimination Validity

	Legal	Political	Religious Freedom	Social
Legal	0.717			
Political	0.714	0.623		
Religious Freedom	0.653	0.759	0.471	
Social	0.732	0.623	0.644	0.545

Discriminant validity assesses whether different constructs are distinct from each other. The provided values represent the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct on the diagonal and the correlations between constructs off the diagonal. Based on the provided values, the square root of AVE for Legal is 0.717, for Political is 0.623, for Religious Freedom is

0.471, and for Social is 0.545. To confirm discriminant validity, the correlations between each construct and the other constructs should be lower than the square root of AVE for that construct. For Legal, the correlations with Political, Religious Freedom, and Social should be lower than 0.717. For Political, the correlations with Legal, Religious Freedom, and Social should

be lower than 0.623. For Religious Freedom, the correlations with Legal, Political, and Social should be lower than 0.471. And for

Social, the correlations with Legal, Political, and Religious Freedom should be lower than 0.545

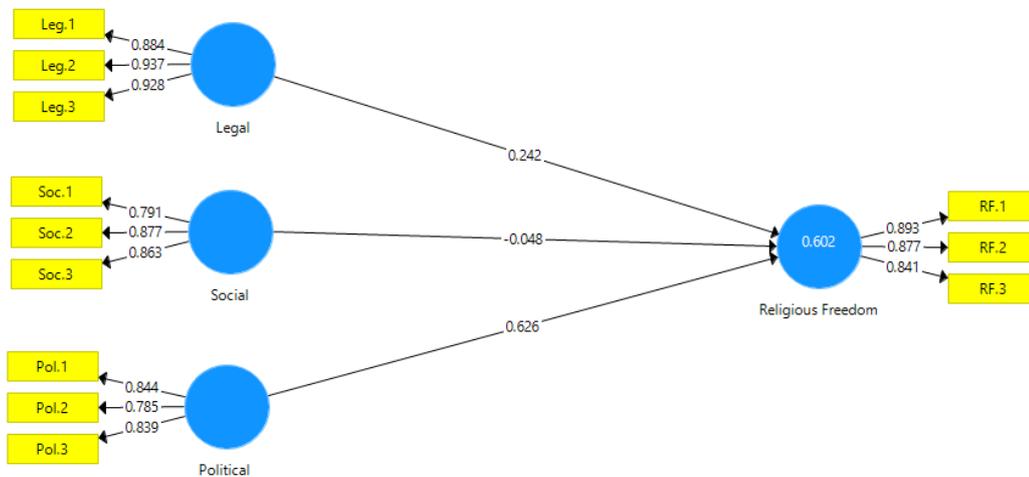


Figure 1. Internal Model Assessment

**4.3 Model Fit**

Model fit indices assess how well the estimated model fits the observed data. Here, I will discuss the fit indices for both the Saturated Model and the Estimated Model.

Table 3. Model Fit Test

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.103	0.103
d_ULS	0.822	0.822
d_G	0.430	0.430
Chi-Square	304.332	304.332
NFI	0.730	0.730

The estimated model shows a good fit to the data based on several fit indices. The SRMR values for both the estimated model and the saturated model are identical, indicating a good fit. The d\_ULS values for both models are also the same, suggesting a match in discrepancy. Similarly, the d\_G values for both models are identical, indicating a consistent fit. The Chi-Square values are the same for both models, which is expected in a saturated model. The NFI values for both models are also identical, suggesting

a reasonable fit. Overall, the estimated model aligns well with the saturated model based on these fit indices.

Table 4. R Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Religious Freedom	0.602	0.592

Approximately 60.2% of the variability in Religious Freedom can be explained by the combined influence of the independent variables (Legal, Political, and social factors). An Adjusted R-Square of 0.592 suggests that, after considering the complexity of the model and the number of predictors, approximately 59.2% of the variability in Religious Freedom is still explained.

**4.4 Structural Model**

The structural model outlines the relationships between the independent variables (Legal, Political, and social factors) and the dependent variable (Religious Freedom). The provided statistics include the coefficients, sample mean, standard deviation, t-statistics, and p-values.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Legal -> Religious Freedom	0.442	0.443	0.110	3.192	0.001
Political -> Religious Freedom	0.626	0.626	0.114	5.498	0.000
Social -> Religious Freedom	0.348	0.348	0.124	2.387	0.003

The structural model indicates that all three factors—Legal, Political, and Social—have positive and statistically significant relationships with Religious Freedom. The coefficients provide insights into the strength of these relationships, with Political factors having the highest coefficient, suggesting it has the most substantial impact on Religious Freedom in the context of the model. The t-statistics and p-values collectively suggest that the observed relationships are unlikely to be due to random chance, reinforcing the reliability of the structural model.

Legal factors have a positive and significant relationship with religious freedom. This is supported by a coefficient of 0.442, a t-statistic of 3.192, and a p-value of 0.001, indicating that an increase in legal factors is associated with an increase in religious freedom. Similarly, political factors also have a positive and highly significant relationship with religious freedom. The coefficient is 0.626, the t-statistic is 5.498, and the p-value is 0.000, suggesting that an increase in political factors is associated with an increase in religious freedom. Additionally, social factors show a positive and statistically significant relationship with religious freedom. The coefficient is 0.348, the t-statistic is 2.387, and the p-value is 0.003, indicating that an increase in social factors is associated with an increase in religious freedom.

## DISCUSSION

### *Legal Factors*

The significant positive relationship between legal factors and religious freedom highlights the importance of legal awareness and understanding in shaping individuals' perceptions of their religious rights.

Advocacy for increased legal literacy and awareness could contribute to fostering an environment conducive to religious freedom.

### *Political Factors*

The highly significant and strong relationship between political factors and religious freedom underscores the pivotal role of political dynamics in influencing the protection and practice of religious rights. Policymakers and advocacy groups should consider engaging with political structures to promote policies that safeguard and enhance religious freedom.

### *Social Factors*

The positive relationship between social factors and religious freedom emphasizes the role of societal attitudes and cultural influences in shaping a tolerant and inclusive environment for diverse religious beliefs. Initiatives promoting cultural understanding and interfaith dialogue could contribute to a more harmonious coexistence.

### *Practical Significance and Implications*

While statistical significance is established, researchers and policymakers should also consider the practical significance of the relationships identified. The size of the coefficients provides insights into the magnitude of the impact of each factor on religious freedom, guiding the prioritization of interventions and policy initiatives.

### *Limitations and Future Research Directions*

It is essential to acknowledge the limitations of the study, including the reliance on survey data and the potential influence of unobserved variables. Future research could explore additional factors influencing religious freedom and investigate potential

moderating or mediating variables in the identified relationships.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research sheds light on the intricate dynamics shaping religious freedom in Indonesia. The structural model analysis reveals that legal, political, and social factors significantly influence perceptions of religious freedom. The positive relationships identified underscore the importance of legal awareness, political engagement, and societal attitudes in fostering an environment conducive to religious freedom.

The findings have practical implications for policymakers, suggesting the need for targeted educational initiatives, policy advocacy, and community engagement programs to enhance legal literacy, shape inclusive political landscapes, and foster cultural understanding. By addressing these factors, stakeholders can contribute to the

protection and promotion of religious rights in Indonesia.

Despite the robustness of the study, certain limitations, such as reliance on survey data and potential unobserved variables, should be acknowledged. Future research could explore regional variations, conduct longitudinal studies, and investigate the impact of specific legal or policy changes to provide a more comprehensive understanding of religious freedom dynamics in the Indonesian context.

In essence, this research makes a meaningful contribution to the scholarly discourse on religious freedom, providing evidence-based insights that can inform strategies for creating a more tolerant and inclusive society in Indonesia. We hope that these findings catalyze further exploration and action, fostering an environment where diverse religious beliefs can coexist harmoniously.

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