Literature study of people's views on the use of mosques as a place for Democratic Parties

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ABSTRACT

Mosques have become important centers in social, religious, and political life in various contexts, including the United States, Europe, and Indonesia. This paper aims to explore the public's views on the use of mosques as a place for democratic parties and their implications in social and political contexts. This research method involves an in-depth literature study of various academic sources, including scientific journals, books, and research reports. Findings from literature studies show that in the United States, literature studies show a positive relationship between mosque attendance and political engagement, with mosques serving as community centers that facilitate political discussion and participation. In Europe, trends show a link between mosque attendance and political participation, highlighting the role of religion in strengthening community engagement. In Indonesia, the historical and cultural context of mosques affects people's views on the use of mosques for political activities. Some people see it as a legitimate form of political activism, while others see it as a violation of the mosque's primary purpose as a place of worship. The social and political implications of using mosques for democratic activities include their impact on social dynamics, election results, and democratic legitimacy. The importance of understanding the diverse views of society and the implications of using mosques for political activities is to formulate inclusive and sustainable policies and strengthen the foundations of democracy in Indonesia.

Keywords: democracy, political participation, politics

Introduction

Islam as '*addiin'* And democracy as a system is being talked about in the majority of Muslim society lately (Gouda & Hanafy, 2021) Package with a mosque which is the central place of various lives of Muslims.

The use of places of worship, including mosques, as locations for social and political activities has been a concern in the scientific literature (Alawadi et al., 2023). Mosques have an important role in the social and spiritual life of Muslims, not only as a place of worship but also as a center of community activities (Ali et al., 2022 ; Abdallah, 2022 ; Haerdy & Kusuma, 2022). In recent years, there has been an increasing tendency to use mosques as venues for democratic parties, especially in the electoral process (Westfall, 2019; Azabar et al., 2020; Colussi et al., 2021; Fox & Menchik, 2022). This suggests that mosques can serve as an important arena for political and democratic participation in many Muslim-majority countries (Driessen, 2018; Öcal, 2020).

Literature studies show that the use of mosques in the context of democracy has several advantages, including increasing public participation in the political process and providing space for inclusive political discussion (Peucker, 2018; Bahri et al., 2024). As a place that is considered sacred and neutral, mosques can also minimize the potential for conflicts and political tensions that often arise during the election process ((Donker, 2019; Audi, 2020; Moutselos, 2019; Putrie et al., 2020). In addition, the existence of mosques in almost every region makes it easier for people to be involved in the democratic process (Saputra et al., 2023). However, there are also challenges and criticisms of the use of mosques as a place for democratic parties.

Some experts argue that this could lead to the politicization of religion and blur the line between religion and politics (Campbell, 2020; Williamson et al., 2022; Zrinščak, 2022; Merzenina, 2024) . In addition, there are concerns that the use of mosques for political purposes could create exclusivity and discrimination against minority groups (Sleijpen et al., 2020; Gouda & Gutmann, 2021; Batul, 2022; Bhat, 2024) Therefore, it is important to deeply understand the dynamics and implications of the use of mosques in the context of democracy (Bacchus, 2023). The importance of understanding the dynamics of using mosques as a venue for democratic parties is also driven by significant social and political changes in many Muslim-majority countries (Wani, 2019). This change reflects the evolution of the role of mosques from a mere place of worship to a center of wider community activity, including political activity (El-Torky, 2018; Pratama, 2023; Sahib & Katakalos, 2024).

Research shows that the involvement of mosques in the political process can strengthen democratic institutions by providing a platform for political education and raising citizens' awareness (Gyene, 2019). In addition, the literature indicates that mosques have the potential to support social inclusion by allowing various community groups to participate in the democratic process (Çetin, 2019; Ng et al., 2022). The existence of mosques as open and neutral spaces helps facilitate dialogue between different communities, which can ultimately promote political and social stability (Alexander, 2019; Rid, 2021; Chidongo, 2023). However, the effectiveness of mosques in this role is highly dependent on the local context and local political dynamics (Putrie et al., 2018; Cappelletti, 2022). On the other hand, some studies show that the use of mosques for political purposes can be controversial and cause tension.

The main criticism is that this could lead to the politicization of religion which could reduce the independence of mosques and change public perception of their function (Laxer, 2019; Sembiring et al., 2023). In addition, there is a risk that the use of mosques for political activities could be exploited by certain groups to strengthen their own political agendas. The combination of the social and political role of mosques in Muslim society makes its use in democratic parties even more relevant. The mosque has served as a place for gathering and discussion, allowing the public to discuss political issues openly. Additionally, mosques often have a high moral legitimacy in the eyes of the public, which can provide a significant boost in increasing political participation (Bensaid & Machouche, 2019; Kollar et al., 2023) However, it is important to pay attention to the local context and the variability of the use of mosques in the democratic process. For example, in some countries, mosques are used as voter information centers, while in others, they may focus more on organizing communities for voting (Fleischmann et al., 2018; Fadil, 2023). In addition, the use of mosques for political purposes must be carefully managed to avoid conflicts and maintain the neutrality of religious institutions (Hirschkind, 2018; Goldstein, 2022).

Research also shows that the use of mosques as a venue for democratic parties can help overcome some barriers to political participation, especially in rural or remote areas. In many communities, mosques are often the only institutions that have the capacity to effectively gather and inform the community (Nurdin, 2024). As such, it is important to develop policies that consider both the benefits and risks of using mosques as a venue for democratic parties. Further research is needed to explore how mosques can

be used effectively to support democratic processes without sacrificing their integrity and primary function as places of worship. Therefore, understanding the dynamics, implications, and potential use of mosques as a place for democratic parties requires a holistic and multidisciplinary approach. Literature studies are an important instrument in exploring the diversity of views and research that has existed so far (Abdullah et al., 2024). By exploring the existing theoretical framework and empirical findings, this study aims to provide deeper insights into the issues related to the use of mosques as a venue for democratic parties in Muslim communities.

Method

This study uses a literature study method to examine the use of mosques as a place for democratic parties. Literature studies are an appropriate approach to understanding how mosques have been used in the context of politics and democracy, as well as to identify various perspectives and findings from previous research (Azmi et al., 2021; Ahmanideen & Iner, 2023; Bahri et al., 2024). Using this method, the research can summarize and analyze a variety of secondary data from relevant books, scientific journals, and articles (Nikolov et al., 2018; Pederson et al., 2020).

Data collection was carried out through a comprehensive literature search in various academic databases such as JSTOR, Google Scholar, and ProQuest. The keywords used include "mosque", "democratic party", "political participation", and "political mobilization". In addition, literature published in books and journals recognized in the field of Islamic and political studies is also included. The study focuses on literature published in the last 20 years to ensure the relevance and up-to-date data. The data obtained were analyzed using a descriptive-qualitative approach. Each selected article or book is analyzed to identify key themes related to the use of mosques in the context of politics and democracy. This analysis involves manual coding to identify categories and subcategories, as well as grouping findings based on theme similarities. The results of this analysis are then synthesized to provide a comprehensive picture of the role of mosques in the democratic process.

Results and Discussion

Mosques and Political Behavior in the United States

A number of well-developed studies have explored the ways in which religious institutions create political communities by helping congregations develop basic civic skills (R. K. Brown & Brown, 2003; Jones-Correa & Leal, 2001; Peterson, 1992; Schwadel, 2002; Smidt, 1999; Verba et al., 1995) and expand their social network (LaPalombara & Putnam, 1994; Schwadel, 2005). Religious institutions also provide a forum for pilgrims to get information on political issues and discuss public affairs (R. K. Brown & Brown, 2003; Wald, 2004). The general consensus is that the relationship between religion and politics is not about the belief systems promoted by religious institutions, but rather the way in which they facilitate social interaction. In theory, the effect should be transferred to any religious tradition that involves similar church dynamics. And indeed, a growing body of literature asserts that similar mechanisms also occur in mosques in the context of Western democracies.
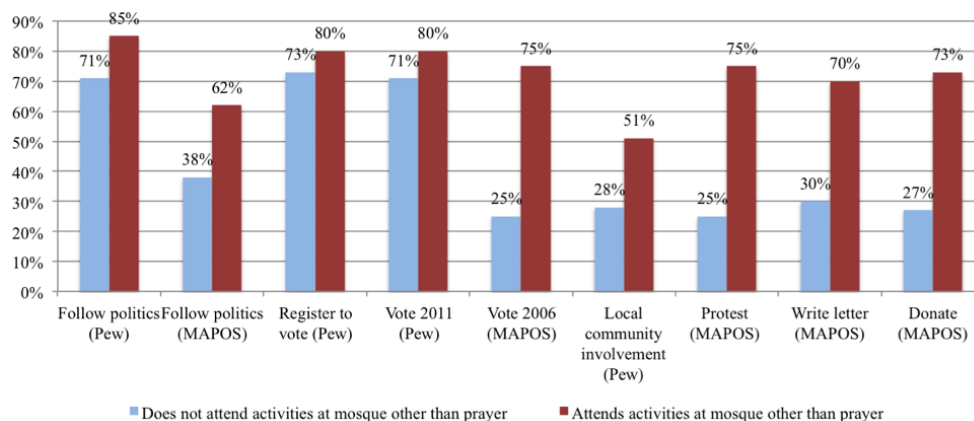
Source: Kumar, (2018)

Figure 1. Political Engagement Rate based on extra prayer attendance at mosques across Muslims in the U.S.

Evidence from the United States consistently shows a positive relationship between mosques and political engagement. Read (2015) found that those who were heavily involved in mosques tended to be civically active in a number of secular community activities and organizations. Similarly Jamal (2005)Jamal found a link between mosque participation and civic and non-electoral political activity in New York, while Ayers & Hofstetter, (2008) found a positive relationship between religious practices (attendance at mosques, prayers, volunteerism) and political participation. Data *Muslim American Public Opinion Survey* (MAPOS) in 2007-2008 revealed that respondents who were involved in mosque activities were more likely to identify as Americans and participate in politics than respondents who were not involved in mosque activities (Dana et al., 2011). Using original data from a survey of American Muslims in 22 locations across the United States, Dana et al., (2017) found that those who were involved in their mosques were 50 percent more likely to be politically active compared to those who were not involved in political activities. in their mosques. Westfall, (2019) showed that there was a positive relationship between attendance at the mosque for social and religious activities, but there was no relationship with attendance for prayers. This shows that religious institutions must be involved in the social life of their worshippers in order to have a substantive political effect.

Figure 1 illustrates the impact shown in the literature with the frequency of political participation data from the 2011 Pew Muslim American Survey and MAPOS referenced above. Both surveys measured attendance at mosques for reasons other than prayer, capturing behaviors that were less tied to rituals and more open to cross-class and gender participation. Measurements of mosque attendance and political engagement refer to the previous year and are all measured dichotomously, where respondents report that they do or do not perform the mentioned behavior. Pew's data sampled 1,033 adult Muslims, 37 percent of whom attended mosques for reasons other than prayers, while MAPOS sampled 745 Muslims, 65 percent of whom regularly attend mosques outside of prayer. Attending mosques was associated with significantly higher levels of political engagement across all variables, with a very striking difference in the MAPOS data.

Mosques and political behavior in Europe

Research on the level of involvement of Muslim communities in other Western contexts is less convincing but seems to show a similar trend (Kumar, 2018). Using World Values Survey Data, Norris (2013) found that there are many similarities across the Atlantic region in terms of the positive impact of religious participation in strengthening community engagement, which is measured through self-reported voluntary activism in religious organizations, membership in the wider secular community. associations, and patterns of political activism. Oskooii & Dana, (2017) found that attendance at mosques by Muslim ethnic minorities in the UK was associated with increased levels of self-reported electoral and non-electoral political participation, such as protesting or signing petitions, compared to adherents of Christian ethnic minorities. Giugni et al., (2014) It uses data from the original survey of Muslims in Sweden to support the argument that religious association involvement is a strong predictor of political participation and protests.

Phalet, Bayso and Verkuytem (2010) found that the significance of Muslim identity is associated with different political goals and actions in the various Muslim ethnic groups in the Netherlands and caution against simple assumptions about all Muslims regarding the relationship between religion and politics.
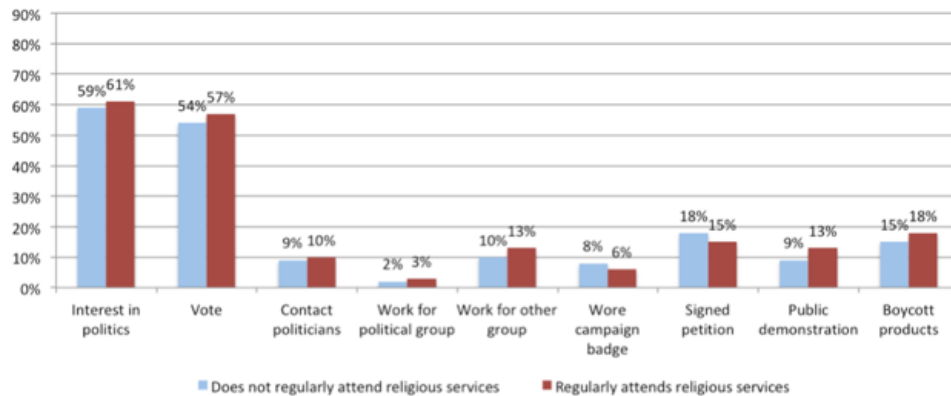
Source: Kumar, (2018)

Figure 2. The level of political engagement based on the presence of regular religious services across Muslims in Europe

Despite these caveats, Figure 2 shows simple descriptive statistics regarding the impact using a sample of 3,522 individuals in the Muslim sample of the European Social Survey/*Muslim sample of the European Social Survey* (ESS) from 2002 to 2014, the same data set used by Isani in this collection. Since the survey was not explicitly designed to sample Muslims, the question posed was how often respondents attended worship outside of special occasions, which was encoded back into the dichotomous variable of routine attendance (at least monthly). Forty percent of the sample reported regular attendance, and there was no difference between attendance at worship and other social or religious activities. Based on the findings of the study which shows that attending different types of worship gives different results of participation (Westfall, 2019), a general indicator of attendance at worship should reduce the influence of attendance on political engagement. In general, the results in Figure 2 show that the reported rate of Muslim political participation in Europe is much lower than in the U.S. data, with slight differences based on attendance at religious services. The only significant differences are in voluntariness, signing petitions (with a relationship that is contrary to the hypothesis), participating in demonstrations, and participating in boycotts. It is not appropriate to draw many conclusions from direct comparisons of trans-Atlantic data sources because of differences in the measurement of variables of religious attendance and political engagement, and also because ESS data are collected over several years and across countries. countries with very different political systems. These comparative data are largely suggestive, hinting at low levels of engagement and potential dynamics in European and American contexts.

Mosques and Politics in Indonesia

Historical and Cultural Context of Mosques in Indonesia

Research on the role of mosques in the context of Indonesian politics must take into account the rich history and culture of mosques. From the colonial era to the modern era, mosques have become the center of social, religious, and political life for the Indonesian Muslim community. For example, in the Dutch colonial era, mosques were often a meeting place and political movements against colonialism. Work Aziz (2018) Commenting on how mosques were considered centers of resistance and important political meetings at the time.In addition, the culture of the mosque as a center of religious and social activities also affects its political role. The mosque is not only a place of worship, but also a place of religious learning, an educational center, and a social assistance center for the surrounding community. Study by Hamzah (2020) highlighting how the culture of this mosque shapes the identity of the Indonesian Muslim community and influences their views on the role of mosques in politics.

In this context, understanding mosques as social, religious, and political institutions is very important in analyzing the role and perception of the public towards the use of mosques for political activities,

including democratic parties. Understanding the history and culture of mosques will help researchers to explore how the use of mosques for political activities affects the social and political dynamics of Indonesian society more comprehensively Hamzah (2020).

The role of mosques in the context of Indonesian politics was not only limited to the colonial period, but also continued to develop during the post-independence period. Mosques remain an important place in political mobilization and the delivery of political messages for various community groups. In fact, in some cases, mosques are also used as a political stage to strengthen the legitimacy of the government or to criticize existing policies.The role of mosque culture in the daily life of Indonesian people also reflects the diversity and plurality in it. Indonesia has a variety of religious and cultural traditions that are reflected in the spatial layout, architecture, and activities carried out in mosques. Therefore, the use of mosques for political activities must be understood in the context of this complex culture (Aziz, 2018).

However, keep in mind that views of mosques as places for political activities can vary among people. Some see mosques as sacred places and should be defended from political use, while others may see them as a means to rally political support or fight for certain interests Hamzah (2020). As such, an in-depth analysis of the historical and cultural context of mosques in Indonesia is essential to understand how society views and reacts to the use of mosques for political activities, including democratic parties. Without a solid understanding of the history and culture of mosques, it will be difficult to evaluate the political, social, and cultural implications of the use of mosques for political purposes in Indonesia.

Public Perception of the Use of Mosques for Political Activities

The use of mosques as a place for political activities, including democratic parties, invites various perceptions from the Indonesian people. Some people see the use of mosques for political activities as a positive thing, because it is considered a form of using public space to voice political aspirations and increase people's political participation. However, on the other hand, there are also views that are skeptical or even opposed to the use of mosques for political activities.Study by Rahman (2019) shows that some segments of society consider the use of mosques for political activities as a form of violation of the sovereignty of spirituality and the main purpose of mosques as places of worship. They argue that mosques should be guarded as holy places that are free from political interference or certain political agendas. This view reflects concerns about the possible politicization of religion and disruption to spiritual tranquility inside mosques.

However, on the other hand, there are also people who see the use of mosques for political activities as a legitimate form of political activism and are important in encouraging wider political participation (F. Rahman, 1998). They argue that mosques as community centers should be open to political discussion and debate, as long as they are done in an orderly manner and do not interfere with worship activities.The use of mosques for political activities also reflects local and national political dynamics. For example, in some regions of Indonesia, the use of mosques for political activities can be a tool to strengthen political support in general elections or to rally the masses in political demonstrations (Miichi, 2015). This created polarization among the community, where one supported and the other opposed the use of mosques for political activities.

The importance of understanding the public's perception of the use of mosques for political activities is so that related policies or decisions can take into account various viewpoints and existing interests. Considering the diverse views and concerns of the community will help in designing a more inclusive and sustainable approach to the use of mosques as a venue for political activities in Indonesia (McDuie-Ra, 2009). The public's view of the use of mosques for political activities can also be influenced by factors such as personal political experience, political affiliation, and religious interpretation. People who have a positive or negative experience of political activities in mosques may tend to have different views on the practice.

In addition, political affiliation can also affect the perception of the use of mosques for political activities. For example, supporters of certain political parties may see the use of mosques for political activities as something positive if it benefits their party, while supporters of different parties may oppose it. This reflects the political polarization that exists in Indonesian society and the ways in which politics can influence the perception of religious practices (Parray, 2017).

Religious interpretation also plays an important role in shaping people's views on the use of mosques for political activities. Some clerics or religious leaders may support the use of mosques for political activities

as a form of da'wah or moral struggle, while others may denounce it as a misuse of the holy site for world political interests (F. Rahman, 1998).

The importance of understanding the various public perceptions of the use of mosques for political activities is so that the policies or actions taken can take into account the various interests and values that exist in the community. Efforts to manage or regulate the use of mosques for political activities must take into account complex cultural, religious, and political sensitivities, and seek to facilitate dialogue and consensus among the various parties involved (Parray, 2017). A deep understanding of public perception can also help in designing effective communication and education strategies to educate the public on the importance of maintaining a balance between political and spiritual activities within the mosque. Thus, the discussion of public perception of the use of mosques for political activities is an important part in formulating inclusive and sustainable policies related to the use of mosques as a place for political activities in Indonesia (McDuie-Ra, 2009).

Social and Political Implications of the Utilization of Mosques for Democratic Activities

The use of mosques as a place for democratic activities has significant implications, both socially and politically, in the Indonesian context. First of all, the use of mosques for democratic activities can affect the social dynamics of the community. Mosques as community centers have the potential to become meeting places that unite various community groups, so that they can increase political awareness and citizen participation in the democratic process. However, on the other hand, the use of mosques for political activities can also reinforce social polarization, especially if there is an emphasis on political or religious differences that exist in the community (Wahid, 2019). The political implications of using mosques for democratic activities are also very significant. The use of mosques as a place for political campaigns or democratic parties can affect the results of general elections and political dynamics at the local and national levels. For example, the use of mosques for political campaigns can help candidates or political parties to expand the reach of their political message and strengthen the political support base at the community level. However, it can also cause conflict between political groups that compete to control the use of mosques and gain support from worshippers (Salim, 2021).

In addition, the use of mosques for democratic activities also has implications for the legitimacy of democracy itself. If mosques are used effectively as a venue for open and inclusive political discussion, it can increase the legitimacy of the political process and strengthen the foundations of democracy in Indonesia. However, if the use of mosques for political activities is considered a form of abuse of power or neglect of the public interest, this can damage public trust in political institutions and the democratic process as a whole (Rahman, 2019).Therefore, it is important for the government, civil society, and other relevant parties to pay attention to the social and political implications of using mosques for democratic activities. Efforts must be made to ensure that the use of mosques for political activities takes place within a framework that is consistent with the principles of democracy, religious freedom, and human rights, as well as taking into account the interests and aspirations of the various community groups involved.

Conclusion

This literature study reveals the significant role of mosques in the political context in the United States, Europe, and Indonesia. In the United States, mosques serve as an important forum for political participation and the formation of civil society. In Europe, although the evidence is less convincing, trends show a link between mosque attendance and political participation, highlighting the role of religion in strengthening community engagement. In Indonesia, the historical and cultural context of mosques influences people's views on the use of mosques for political activities, with some seeing it as a legitimate form of political activism and others opposing it. The social and political implications of using mosques for democratic activities include their impact on social dynamics, election results, and democratic legitimacy. With a deep understanding of public views and the political implications of using mosques for political activities, an inclusive and sustainable approach is needed in designing policies and strengthening the foundations of democracy in various contexts.

In the context of conclusion, it is important to realize that mosques are not just places of worship, but also have an important role in shaping the social, political, and religious identity of their people. The implications of using mosques for political activities affect not only local political dynamics, but also fundamentally in strengthening or undermining the foundations of democracy and political legitimacy.

Thus, research and discussion of the relationship between mosques and politics is an important step in understanding the complexity of modern society that is multicultural and multireligious. It is important to acknowledge the complex and diverse role of mosques in various contexts, as well as to consider their political implications in designing inclusive and sustainable policies. With a deeper understanding of the role of mosques in social and political life, communities can better harness their positive potential in strengthening political participation and supporting a sustainable democratic process.

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