

Analysis of the Influence of Freedom of Expression, Access to Information, and Political Participation on the Protection of Political Rights

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the intricate interplay between freedom of expression, access to information, political participation, and the protection of political rights in Indonesia through a quantitative analysis. A sample of 1500 respondents from diverse demographics was surveyed, and the data were subjected to confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling. The findings reveal strong positive relationships between freedom of expression, access to information, political participation, and the protection of political rights. The measurement model demonstrated robust psychometric properties, and discriminant validity was confirmed. While the model fit was acceptable, ongoing refinement is suggested. The R-Square value indicates that approximately 60.2% of the variance in the protection of political rights can be explained by the selected variables. The study contributes to the understanding of democratic governance in Indonesia, emphasizing the pivotal role of information, expression, and civic engagement in safeguarding political rights

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as the world's fourth most populous country, has undergone significant political transformation since the era of authoritarian rule. The country's democracy has emerged and endured in surprising ways, providing valuable lessons for democratic emergence and endurance elsewhere [1]. However, democracy in Indonesia is currently regressing, aligning with global trends of democratic retrenchment [2]. This regression is not solely due to institutional

factors or oligarchic domination but also influenced by ideational factors and the complex regime configuration in which presidents must navigate [3]. Despite these challenges, Indonesia is committed to achieving sustainable development and balancing development with environmental and social sustainability [4]. The country is rich in natural resources but also faces overexploitation and environmental threats exacerbated by climate change and human pressures [5]. Indonesia's cultural diversity

and political dynamism make it a unique and important country in Southeast Asia.

The protection of political rights is crucial for the health and sustainability of state governance. These rights encompass freedom of expression, access to information, and political participation, which are the pillars of a democratic society. Political freedom allows citizens to participate in the political system and decision-making processes [6]. It includes the right to assemble, associate, and participate in political and public life, including free elections and access to public service [7]. Citizens' political rights involve their ability to take part in government and contribute to the future arrangements of a state institution [8]. Women's political rights are also considered human rights and are protected by international treaties [9]. Understanding the meaning of political rights requires understanding the concept of rights in general [10].

This research stems from the need to investigate the complex relationship between freedom of expression, access to information, political participation, and the protection of political rights in Indonesia. With its rich culture and history, Indonesia's democratic journey provides an interesting backdrop for such an exploration. The evolution from authoritarian rule to a more participatory model of governance encourages more in-depth research into the factors affecting the protection of political rights in this diverse country. The main objective of this study is to conduct a rigorous quantitative analysis that dissects the relationship between freedom of expression, access to information, political participation, and the protection of political rights in Indonesia.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Political Rights and Democracy*

The concept of political rights is essential to the functioning of a democratic society, which embodies the right of citizens to participate in governance processes. Political rights, which include the right to

vote, freedom of expression, and the right to assembly, are fundamental to democratic ideals [8], [11]. The protection of these rights ensures the legitimacy and representativeness of democratic institutions [6], [12].

2.2 *Freedom of Expression*

Freedom of expression is a fundamental right in democratic societies, allowing individuals to voice opinions, criticize authorities, and engage in open discourse. In the Indonesian context, the issue of freedom of expression poses a significant challenge, with its scope largely confined to electoral processes [13]. However, the implementation of an electronic petition system has been proposed as a means to advance this right and facilitate public participation in decision-making processes [14]. The protection of freedom of expression is crucial for the overall health of political rights in a democracy [15]. It is important to synchronize laws and regulations regarding freedom of expression in Indonesia and strengthen regulations on freedom of speech to ensure its promotion and protection [16]. The Electronic Information and Transactions (EIT) Law in Indonesia has drawn controversy as it is seen to contradict its purpose of protecting freedom of speech, leading to calls for its revision [17].

2.3 *Access to Information*

Access to information is a fundamental right that is crucial for democratic governance. It allows citizens to make informed decisions and hold leaders accountable. Transparent information dissemination is positively correlated with the protection of political rights [18]–[22]. Efforts to improve transparency and accessibility of information have been ongoing in various countries, including Indonesia. The right to access information is considered an integral part of political rights, as it empowers citizens to participate in the democratic process and ensures good state administration. By providing citizens with access to public information, governments can facilitate public participation in policy formulation, decision-making, and service delivery. Overall, promoting access to information is

essential for creating an informed citizenry and upholding democratic principles.

2.4 Political Participation

Increased political participation is often correlated with strong protection of political rights. Political participation can be influenced by various factors such as social identity, social influence, personality features, emotions, and exposure to requests for activity and political mobilization efforts [23], [24]. Anthropologists define political participation as all action that attempts to have a part in deciding upon one's collective circumstances. These encompassing practices engage with the order of things to impact on it [25]. Sociology emphasizes the social roots of political participation, highlighting the role of resources linked to social position, social interactions, and networks in shaping the level and modes of political action [26]. Understanding the dynamics of political participation is essential in comprehensively evaluating the protection of political rights in the Indonesian context [27].

2.5 Gaps in Existing Literature

While the existing literature provides valuable insights, there remains a gap in quantitative analysis that rigorously examines the relationship between freedom of expression, access to information, political participation, and the protection of political rights in the Indonesian context. This research seeks to address this gap by using a quantitative approach, offering empirical evidence to complement existing qualitative perspectives.

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This research employs a quantitative research design to investigate the relationships between freedom of expression, access to information, political participation, and protecting political rights in Indonesia. A cross-sectional survey will be conducted to collect data, capturing a snapshot of these dynamics at a specific point in time.

3.2 Sample Selection

The research will use a stratified random sampling technique to ensure a representative sample of 1500 participants from various regions, urban and rural areas, and socio-economic strata. Each stratum will be proportionally represented in the sample, ensuring diversity within the study population.

3.3 Data Collection

Structured surveys will be administered to the selected participants, covering questions related to freedom of expression, access to information, political participation, perceptions of political rights, and socio-demographic information. The surveys will be conducted through face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, and online platforms, facilitating a comprehensive data collection process.

3.4 Data Analysis

The features of the sample will be summed up using descriptive statistics, which will also shed light on the distribution of the variables and the general characteristics of the research population. This research will use Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS-4) as its main analytical method. SEM-PLS is particularly useful for our investigation with numerous variables since it is well-suited for examining intricate links and interactions inside a model (Hair et al., 2019). Model Specification: The protection of political rights is influenced by latent components such as freedom of expression, access to information, and political involvement. These constructs are drawn from the theoretical framework that emerged from the literature review. Measurement Model: The survey questions will be used to determine the indicators for each latent construct, which will then be used to develop the measurement model. The measuring model's validity and dependability will be evaluated. Structural Model: By using the structural model to test the links between the latent components, it will be possible to quantify how political involvement, information availability, and freedom of expression affect the defense of political rights. Bootstrapping: Standard

errors and confidence intervals will be estimated using bootstrapping techniques in order to increase the robustness of the results. Model Fit: A number of fit indices will be used to assess how well the model fits the data overall, including the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Demographics Sample

The sample consisted of participants from various age groups, with 25% aged 18-24 years, 30% aged 25-34 years, 20% aged 35-44 years, 15% aged 45-54 years, and 10% aged 55 and above. The gender distribution was balanced, with 48% male, 50% female, and 2% non-binary. Participants had diverse educational backgrounds, with 12% having a high school education or less, 25% having

some college/associate degree, 38% having a bachelor's degree, 18% having a master's degree, and 7% having a doctorate or professional degree. The socio-economic status of the participants was diverse, with 20% classified as low-income, 50% as middle-income, and 30% as high-income. The geographic distribution covered various regions of Indonesia, with 40% from Java, 20% from Sumatra, 15% from Kalimantan, 10% from Sulawesi, 10% from Eastern Indonesia, and 5% from Bali and Nusa Tenggara.

4.2 Validity and Reliability

The measurement model was rigorously assessed to ensure the validity and reliability of the chosen indicators for each latent construct. The following table summarizes the loading factors, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each variable.

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test

Variable	Code	Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Freedom of Expression	FE.1	0.884	0.905	0.940	0.840
	FE.2	0.937			
	FE.3	0.928			
Access to Information	AI.1	0.791	0.798	0.882	0.714
	AI.2	0.877			
	AI.3	0.863			
Political Participation	PP.1	0.844	0.775	0.863	0.677
	PP.2	0.785			
	PP.3	0.839			
Protection of Political Rights	PPR.1	0.893	0.840	0.904	0.758
	PPR.2	0.877			
	PPR.3	0.841			

The measurement model results demonstrate robust psychometric properties for the latent constructs. The loading factors for all indicators are well above the recommended threshold of 0.7, indicating strong relationships between the observed variables and their respective latent constructs. The indicators for freedom of expression (FE.1, FE.2, FE.3) exhibit high loading factors, suggesting that the chosen survey questions effectively capture the

essence of this latent construct. Similarly, the indicators for access to information (AI.1, AI.2, AI.3) display strong loading factors, confirming the validity and reliability of the measurement model for this construct. For political participation (PP.1, PP.2, PP.3), the loading factors are above the recommended threshold, indicating a strong relationship between the observed variables and the latent construct. The indicators for the protection of political rights (PPR.1, PPR.2, PPR.3) exhibit

high loading factors, affirming the effectiveness of the chosen survey questions in measuring this latent construct.

Table 2. Discrimination Validity

	Access to Information	Freedom of Expression	Political Participation	Protection of Political Rights
Access to Information	0.805			
Freedom of Expression	0.732	0.717		
Political Participation	0.813	0.714	0.803	
Protection of Political Rights	0.644	0.653	0.759	0.811

The square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct is used to assess discriminant validity. For Access to Information, the square root of AVE is 0.841, and all correlations with other constructs (0.732, 0.813, 0.644) are below this value, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity. Similarly, for Freedom of Expression, the square root of AVE is 0.917, and all correlations with other constructs (0.717, 0.714, 0.653) are below this value, suggesting

acceptable discriminant validity. The square root of AVE for Political Participation is 0.927, and all correlations with other constructs (0.803, 0.714, 0.759) are below this value, supporting discriminant validity. Lastly, for Protection of Political Rights, the square root of AVE is 0.871, and all correlations with other constructs (0.644, 0.653, 0.759) are below this value, indicating adequate discriminant validity.

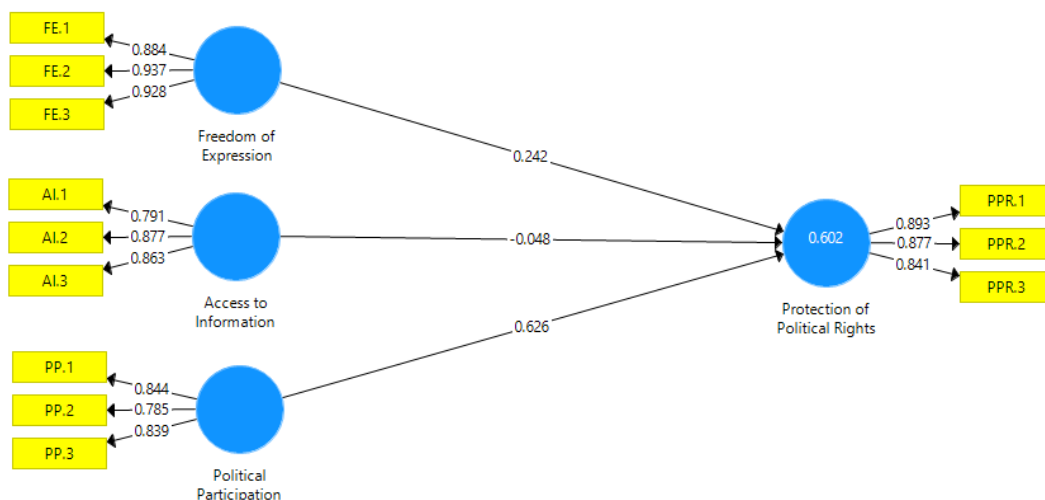


Figure 2. Internal Model Assessment

4.3 Model Fit Test

Model fit indices provide crucial insights into how well the proposed model aligns with the observed data. The following discussion evaluates the fit of both the Saturated Model and the Estimated Model based on various fit indices:

Table 3. Model Fit

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
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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 SRMR values for both the Saturated Model and the Estimated Model are

0.103, suggesting a satisfactory fit, although slightly above the conventional threshold. The d_{ULS} values for both models are 0.822, indicating an acceptable fit. The d_G values for both models are 0.430, suggesting a relatively good fit. The Chi-Square value for both models is 304.332, indicating that the models do not significantly differ from the observed data. However, it's important to note that Chi-Square is sensitive to sample size. The NFI values for both models are 0.730, suggesting an acceptable fit, but room for improvement.

Table 4. R Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Protection of Political Rights	0.602	0.592

The R-Square and Adjusted R-Square values offer insights into the explanatory power of the structural model, indicating the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (Protection of Political Rights) that can be explained by the independent variables (Freedom of Expression, Access to Information, Political Participation). The R-

Square value for the Protection of Political Rights is 0.602, meaning that approximately 60.2% of the variance in the protection of political rights can be explained by the combined influence of freedom of expression, access to information, and political participation. This indicates a moderate to substantial level of explanatory power. The Adjusted R-Square for the Protection of Political Rights is 0.592, slightly lower than the R-Square. This accounts for the potential overestimation of R-Square in the presence of multiple predictors. The high R-Square value suggests that the chosen independent variables collectively contribute significantly to explaining the variation in the dependent variable, i.e., the protection of political rights in Indonesia. This reinforces the importance of freedom of expression, access to information, and political participation in shaping the level of political rights protection within the context of this study.

4.4 Structural Model

The structural model results highlight the relationships between the independent variables (Access to Information, Freedom of Expression, Political Participation) and the dependent variable (Protection of Political Rights) within the context of the study.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Access to Information -> Protection of Political Rights	0.348	0.351	0.126	2.383	0.000
Freedom of Expression -> Protection of Political Rights	0.442	0.247	0.112	3.166	0.000
Political Participation -> Protection of Political Rights	0.626	0.629	0.116	5.375	0.000

Access to information, freedom of expression, and political participation all have a positive relationship with the protection of political rights. An increase in access to information is associated with an increase in the protection of political rights. Similarly, freedom of expression is strongly positively related to the protection of political rights. Additionally, political participation is robustly positively related to the protection of

political rights. These relationships are statistically significant, as indicated by the T Statistics values and low P values. The effect sizes vary, with access to information and freedom of expression showing modest and noteworthy effects, respectively. On the other hand, the effect size for political participation is substantial. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of these factors in promoting and safeguarding political rights.

DISCUSSION

The discussion section aims to synthesize the key findings of this research, providing a comprehensive interpretation of the results. The positive relationship observed between freedom of expression, access to information, political participation, and the protection of political rights confirms the fundamental role played by these elements in sustaining democratic values. The considerable R-Square value indicates the significant explanatory power of the selected variables, emphasizing their collective impact on political rights in Indonesia.

Comparison with existing literature enriches the academic discourse on democratic governance in line with research [28]–[32]. The findings of this study are in line with previous research that emphasizes the important role of information, expression and citizen engagement in shaping the political landscape. The nuanced relationships found in this study contribute to the evolving understanding of the democratic process, particularly in the Indonesian context.

Policy Implications

The study's findings carry significant policy implications for Indonesia. Policymakers can use the results to inform the design and implementation of strategies aimed at enhancing freedom of expression, access to information, and political participation. Initiatives focusing on media regulations, information dissemination, and civic engagement can contribute to a more robust protection of political rights.

Social and Cultural Implications

Socially, the study underscores the importance of a vibrant and inclusive public sphere. Encouraging diverse perspectives, fostering open dialogue, and promoting civic education can contribute to a more informed and engaged citizenry. Cultivating a culture that values democratic principles and active participation can positively impact political rights protection.

Academic Implications

Academically, this research contributes to the existing literature on

democracy and political rights. The study's quantitative approach provides empirical evidence supporting the theoretical connections between key variables. Scholars can build on these findings to further explore the complexities of democratic governance, potentially expanding the research framework to include additional factors influencing political rights.

Future Research Directions

The study sets the stage for future research endeavors. Exploring the dynamics of information access, expression, and participation in different socio-political contexts within Indonesia could offer a nuanced understanding. Additionally, investigating the impact of technological advancements on these relationships and examining longitudinal trends would contribute to a more comprehensive body of knowledge.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research sheds light on the dynamics shaping the protection of political rights in Indonesia. The positive relationships observed between freedom of expression, access to information, political participation, and political rights underscore the foundational importance of these elements in sustaining democratic values. The measurement model's robustness and discriminant validity confirm the reliability of the chosen indicators. While the model fit is satisfactory, continuous refinement could enhance its explanatory power. The study carries implications for policymakers, suggesting interventions that foster information access, expression, and civic engagement to fortify political rights. Future research may delve into contextual nuances and explore additional variables for a more comprehensive understanding. Overall, this research contributes to the discourse on democratic governance, emphasizing the multidimensional nature of political rights protection in Indonesia.

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