

Political Interest And Mental Health Across Generations And Religions

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Abstract

This study investigates the intricate relationship between political interest and mental health across generations and religions in Indonesia. The objective is to analyze how political engagement influences mental well-being and to understand the varying impacts of generational and religious contexts on these dynamics. Using a literature review methodology, the research synthesizes existing academic sources, including journal articles and studies, to provide a comprehensive overview of the topic. The findings reveal that political interest acts as both a potential source of purpose and a significant stressor. For older generations, such as Baby Boomers and Generation X, political engagement is often rooted in historical experiences of authoritarianism, leading to skepticism and selective involvement. In contrast, Millennials and Generation Z exhibit a more pragmatic approach, heavily influenced by social media, yet they face heightened anxiety and mental health challenges due to political polarization and societal pressures. Moreover, the study identifies the role of religion as a crucial factor in shaping political perceptions and mental health responses. While religious beliefs can offer emotional support, they may also contribute to internal conflicts when political and religious values clash. Overall, the research underscores the necessity of fostering a supportive political and social environment that promotes mental well-being across diverse generational and religious backgrounds, highlighting the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration between political science and psychology to address these complex issues effectively.

Keywords: Political Interest, Mental Health, Across Generation, Religion

A. Introduction

Political interest is one of the important indicators in democratic life, which reflects the extent to which individuals or groups of people are involved in political discussions and participation. On the other hand, mental health is an issue that is increasingly concerned, especially in the context of modern life that is full of stress and uncertainty (Campbel, 2020). In Indonesia, the relationship between political interest and mental health is becoming increasingly complex because it is influenced by cross-generational factors and religious differences that reflect the diversity of society. In the context of political science, political interest is understood

as the awareness, attention, and involvement of individuals in political activities, either directly or indirectly. Whereas in psychology, mental health reflects a person's emotional, psychological, and social state that contributes to the way they think, feel, and act. The interaction between these two concepts can create significant dynamics in social life, especially in a country as diverse as Indonesia.

Political interest in Indonesia is greatly influenced by the country's long history which is full of social and political dynamics. Since the reform era, people have been increasingly active in participating in various political activities, such as general elections, demonstrations, and public discussions. However, this political interest is not always positive. At times, dissatisfaction with political conditions, such as corruption and injustice, can trigger feelings of frustration and stress. Among the younger generation, for example, many feel that their voices are not heard, which can lead to mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. An example that can be seen is that political interest in Indonesia has experienced a significant difference between generations. The older generation, such as the Baby Boomers and Generation X, generally have a high political interest because they have experienced major periods of change in Indonesia's political history, such as the 1998 reforms. Meanwhile, Millennials and Generation Z tend to be more pragmatic and selective in politics, often influenced by social media and issues close to their lives, such as the environment, human rights, and government transparency (Amelia, 2024).

In a cross-generational context, political and mental health interests often differ between older and younger generations. Older generations, who may have grown up in authoritarian governments, are often more skeptical of politics and more likely to avoid political involvement. On the other hand, younger generations tend to be more idealistic and eager to get involved in politics, although they are also more susceptible to mental health problems due to social and political pressures. Religion also plays an important role in this relationship (Saiin, 2020). In Indonesia, where religion is an integral part of daily life, religious beliefs can influence how one views politics and mental health. Some individuals may feel that their faith can help them cope with mental health issues, while others may feel depressed by social expectations related to religion and politics. Political interest in Indonesia has experienced significant differences between generations. The older generation, such as the Baby Boomers and Generation X, generally have a high political interest because they have experienced major periods of change in Indonesia's political history, such as the 1998 reforms. Meanwhile, Millennials and Generation Z tend to be more pragmatic and selective in their politics, often influenced by social media and issues close to their lives, such as the environment, human rights, and government transparency (Zainuddin, 2024).

Politics involves mental health, this is because the mental health of individuals can be affected by their political involvement. In some cases, active involvement in politics can improve psychological well-being because it provides a sense of purpose and meaning. However, under

certain conditions, politics can also be a source of stress and anxiety, especially when a person feels frustrated with the system or experiences social pressure due to differences in political views. The phenomenon of political polarization in Indonesia shows how differences in political views can cause social conflicts that have an impact on mental health. Social media is often a forum for political disputes that make individuals experience emotional pressure due to heated debates and hate speech. Many people experience social anxiety or even depression due to pressure to fit into a certain group (Hidayat, 2018). A clear example of the impact of politics on mental health in Sindo.com can be seen from the increasing phenomenon of "political fatigue" or political fatigue among the community. Many individuals feel tired and depressed because they are constantly faced with political news that is full of controversy and conflict. This condition is often experienced by community groups who feel that their voices are not heard or have no influence in the political process.

Political interests and mental health are two aspects that are interrelated and very relevant in the Indonesian context, especially in facing cross-generational and cross-religious challenges. Understanding these relationships is important for creating a healthier and more politically engaged society. Efforts to improve mental health should be part of a broader political strategy, so that all individuals, regardless of religious background and generation, can actively participate in the political process without experiencing a negative impact on their mental health. As such, there needs to be collaboration between various disciplines, including political science and psychology, to create a supportive environment for individuals to live mentally healthy and politically active lives.

B. Literature Review

1. Political Interest Across Generations and Religions

Political interest is one of the important indicators in democratic life, which reflects the extent to which individuals or groups of people are involved in political discussions and participation. On the other hand, mental health is an issue that is increasingly concerned, especially in the context of modern life that is full of stress and uncertainty (Wally, 2023). In Indonesia, the relationship between political interest and mental health is becoming increasingly complex because it is influenced by cross-generational factors and religious differences that reflect the diversity of society. In the context of political science, political interest is understood as the awareness, attention, and involvement of individuals in political activities, either directly or indirectly. Political interest refers to the extent to which a person is interested and active in understanding and following political developments. This involves aspects of awareness,

involvement, and participation in various political activities such as general elections, public policy discussions, and social actions related to politics. In the context of cross-generational and religious relationships, political interest is a dynamic phenomenon and is influenced by various social, cultural, and historical factors of each group (Sanusi & Darmawan, 2016).

Political interests in Indonesia can be differentiated based on generations who have different political and social experiences. Each generation has a unique mindset and way of interacting with politics, depending on the era in which they grew and developed (UM West Sumatra, 2023).

1. Baby Boomers Generation (1946-1964) This generation experienced various major political events in Indonesia, such as the Old Order era, the New Order, and the Reformasi. They tend to have a high interest in politics because they have felt the direct impact of changes in the political system. Their participation in elections is also relatively high because they believe that politics has a major impact on their lives.
2. Generation X (1965-1980) This generation grew up during the transition from the New Order to the Reformasi, so they had experience in both authoritarian and democratic political systems. They tend to be more skeptical of politics than previous generations, but still have a fairly high interest in political developments in Indonesia.
3. Millennial Generation (1981-1996) The millennial generation has a more pragmatic approach to politics. They tend to be interested in specific issues such as the environment, human rights, and government transparency. Social media has become the main tool for them to access information and discuss politics. However, their participation rates in formal politics such as elections are often lower than in previous generations.
4. Generation Z (1997-present) This generation grew up in the digital era with wider access to information. They are more active in voicing their political opinions through social media, but are often more interested in political activism than electoral politics. They are also more critical of political figures and public policies than previous generations.

Religion also has a great influence on the political interests of individuals. In Indonesia, where religious diversity is very rich, religious beliefs often play a role in shaping one's political views. Many individuals see politics as a reflection of their religious values. For example, some

people may feel that political policy should be aligned with their religious teachings, so they are more likely to get involved in politics when issues they consider important to religious beliefs arise. On the other hand, there are also challenges that arise from differences in political views based on religion. When politics and religion interact with each other, polarization often arises that can cause conflict. For example, in the context of general elections, differences in political views between religions can be a source of tension. This can create an environment where individuals feel pressured to vote for a candidate or party that aligns with their religious beliefs, even though they may have different views on certain policies (Aghazadeh & Mahmoudoghli, 2017).

2. Mental Health Across Generations and Religions

Mental health is a person's psychological, emotional, and social well-being that allows them to face life's challenges, work productively, and contribute to society. Across generations and religions, mental health is influenced by a person's life experiences, culture, and spiritual values (Bamford, 2023). Each generation has a different perspective on mental health. Older generations often grow up in a culture that is less open to discussions about mental health. They may perceive mental problems as a disgrace or a sign of weakness, so many of them do not feel comfortable seeking help. This can lead to undiagnosed and untreated mental health problems, leading to more serious consequences later in life. On the contrary, the younger generation is more open to discussing mental health issues (Harisson, 2021). They grew up in an era where information about mental health is more accessible, especially through social media. Many of them feel more comfortable sharing personal experiences and seeking support. However, while the younger generation is more open, they also face unique challenges, such as pressure from social media and high expectations from society. This can lead to anxiety and depression, which are becoming increasingly common mental health problems among them.

One of the main challenges in mental health is stigma. Stigma can come from society, family, or even from within oneself. Many people feel embarrassed or afraid to talk about mental health issues for fear of negative judgment. Among older generations, this stigma is often stronger, causing many people not to seek help even if they need it. On the other hand, the

younger generation, although more open, also faces stigma, especially related to how they interact on social media. When they share about mental health issues, there is a risk of getting negative comments or bullying. This can worsen the situation and make individuals feel more isolated (William, 2024).

Mental health is an important aspect of an individual's well-being that affects the way we think, feel, and interact with others. In a cross-generational context, mental health is becoming an increasingly relevant issue, given the differences in experiences, values, and challenges faced by each generation based on the NHS England survey (2022);

1. **Older Generations:** Older generations often grow up in cultures that are less open to discussions about mental health. Many of them consider mental health problems to be a disgrace, so they are reluctant to seek help. This can lead to mental health problems going undiagnosed and untreated, potentially leading to more serious consequences later in life.
2. **Generation X:** This generation is starting to see a change in the way they look at mental health. Although the stigma still exists, they are more open to discussing mental health issues than previous generations. However, they also face challenges such as work pressures and family responsibilities that can affect their mental health.
3. **Generation Y (Millennials):** Millennials are a generation that is more open when it comes to discussing mental health. They grew up in an era where information about mental health is more accessible, especially through social media. Nonetheless, they also face unique challenges, such as pressure from social media and high expectations from society, which can lead to anxiety and depression.
4. **Generation Z:** Generation Z is known as a generation that is very sensitive to mental health issues. They are more open to talking about personal experiences and seeking support. However, they also face greater pressure from the social and academic environment, which can negatively impact their mental health.

Akbar, et al. (2024) explained that there are several factors that affect mental health across generations as follows;

- **Stigma:** Stigma against mental health is still a barrier for many individuals, especially among the older generation. This makes them reluctant to seek help even if they are experiencing mental health problems.
- **Social Support:** Support from family, friends, and community is essential in maintaining mental health. A supportive environment can help individuals feel more connected and reduce feelings of loneliness.
- **Social and Economic Pressures:** Each generation faces different pressures, both socially and economically. For example, the younger generation may feel pressured by high expectations in education and career, while the older generation may face pressure from family and work responsibilities.
- **Access to Information:** The younger generation has better access to information about mental health through the internet and social media. This helps them recognize the signs of mental health problems early and seek necessary help.

Religion also plays a significant role in mental health. In many cultures, religion is a source of strength and support for individuals facing difficulties. Religious beliefs can provide meaning and purpose in life, as well as a supportive community. However, not all religious experiences are positive. Some individuals may feel pressured by religious demands, or feel unwelcome if they have different views. In an interfaith context, attitudes towards mental health also vary. Some religious teachings may encourage their followers to seek help when faced with mental problems, while others may assume that the problem can be solved through prayer or meditation. This creates its own challenges in understanding how people from various religious backgrounds respond to mental health issues (Ambarwati, 2024).

If we connect the two political interests and mental health based on cross-generation and religion, then it can be seen that political interests and mental health have a complex relationship that can be seen from different generations. Younger generations, particularly Generation Z, show higher levels of stress and anxiety than previous generations, which is largely influenced by the political and economic uncertainty they face. This uncertainty can lead to prolonged feelings of anxiety, especially when they feel that their future is not as secure as expected (Khalish, N: 2024). In addition, the pressure to excel in academics and careers also contributes to

mental health problems among this generation. With the increasing awareness of social and political issues, young people often feel pressured to get involved and contribute, which can add to their mental burden (Khalish, N: 2024).

In the context of religion, political interests can also affect an individual's mental health. Many people find emotional support and community within their religion, which can help reduce stress and anxiety. However, when there is tension between religious beliefs and political views, this can lead to internal conflicts that negatively impact mental health. For example, individuals who feel pressured to choose between their religious values and the dominant political views in society may experience anxiety and confusion (Khalish, N: 2024). Therefore, it is important to understand how the interaction between political interests and mental health can vary depending on the context of generation and religion.

C. Research Methods

Research on political interest and mental health across generations and religions can be carried out through literature review methods. The literature review method is a research approach that collects, analyzes, and summarizes information from various existing sources, such as books, journal articles, and research reports. In the context of analyzing political interests and mental health across generations and religions, this method is very useful for understanding the relationship between the two issues. By exploring and analyzing a variety of relevant academic sources, this research can provide in-depth insights into how generations and religions affect the way a person does politics and maintains their mental health. This method also allows researchers to understand trends and challenges faced by society in various social and cultural contexts.

D. Results

1. Political Interest in Cross-Generations

Norris (2020) explained that political interest is a person's interest in political issues, government policies, and the democratic process that takes place in a country. Political interest is not only limited to understanding politics, but also includes active involvement in political discussions, participation in general elections, and social action. Political interest refers to a

person's interest and attention to political issues, political activities, and decision-making processes in society. It includes an understanding of how government works, the policies implemented, as well as how individual and group actions can affect daily life (Putnam, 2000).

Political interest usually starts from awareness of social conditions and the surrounding environment. Someone who cares about issues such as education, health, and the environment tends to be more interested in politics, as they want to understand how government policies can affect those issues. Political interest can also be seen from a person's desire to get involved in political activities, such as voting in general elections, joining political organizations, or participating in demonstrations (Norris, 2020). This participation shows that a person feels that they have a role in the decision-making process. People who have political interests are usually actively seeking information about news and political developments. They also often engage in discussions with others regarding political issues, which can broaden their understanding and views (Twenge, 2017). Political interest is also influenced by emotions. Certain issues, such as social injustice or environmental crises, can trigger feelings of anger or frustration, which encourages individuals to become more politically involved.

One of the factors that influence a person's political interests is the generation in which he grew up and developed. Each generation has different experiences, challenges, and perspectives on politics, which ultimately forms a distinctive pattern of political interest (Pew Research Center: 2020).

A. Political Interest in the Baby Boomers Generation (1946-1964)

Baby Boomers are a generation born after World War II and experienced a period of economic stability and rapid development in various fields. They grew up in an era when politics had a very significant role in people's lives. Many of them witnessed major events such as the Cold War, civil rights movements, and political reforms in various countries. The political interest of the Baby Boomers generation tends to be high because they are experiencing an era where political involvement is considered essential for social change. They are active in various social and political movements, such as anti-war protests, civil rights advocacy, and the struggle for democracy. They are also more likely to follow political news from traditional media such as television, radio, and newspapers. However,

as they get older, some Baby Boomers tend to be more conservative in their political views. They prefer stability to radical change. Even so, many of them remain active in politics, both as loyal voters and as part of social and political organizations.

B. Political Interest in Generation X (1965-1980)

Generation X grew up in the era of transition from the traditional political system to the modern era with increasingly rapid technological advancements. They witnessed major changes such as the fall of the Berlin Wall, economic globalization, and the political transition from the Cold War era to a more open democracy. The political interests of this generation tend to be more pragmatic than Baby Boomers. They focus more on policies that have a direct impact on their lives, such as economic policies, social welfare, and job security. They also tend to be skeptical of governments and political institutions, as many of them witnessed political scandals and economic instability in their youth. In terms of media, Generation X is starting to switch to digital media, but still relies on television and newspapers as the main source of information. They also tend to be more selective in consuming news and are more interested in issues that are directly related to their personal lives.

C. Political Interest in the Millennial Generation (1981-1996)

The Millennial Generation is a generation that has undergone a major transition in the development of technology and information. They grew up in the age of the internet and social media, which made access to political information easier and faster. This causes them to have a broader understanding of global issues than previous generations. Millennial political interests tend to be oriented towards social issues such as human rights, climate change, gender equality, and social justice. They are more open to change and tend to support progressive policies aimed at creating a more inclusive society. One of the hallmarks of Millennial political participation is the use of social media as a tool to voice opinions and organize social movements. They are more involved in online activism and use digital platforms to discuss and disseminate political information. However, the main challenge for this generation is the low participation rate in general

elections compared to previous generations. Many Millennials are disillusioned with the existing political system and feel their voices have no effect on real change.

D. Political Interest in Generation Z (1997-2012)

Generation Z is the generation born in the digital era, where the internet, social media, and advanced technology have become a part of their daily lives. They have unlimited access to information and it is easier to access various political perspectives from around the world. Generation Z's political interests are heavily influenced by global issues such as climate change, racial justice, and education policy. They are more vocal in voicing their opinions and do not hesitate to criticize political systems that are considered unfair (Khakim, 2023). Unlike previous generations, Generation Z is more active in digital advocacy and often uses social media platforms such as TikTok, Twitter, and Instagram to spread political awareness and organize social campaigns. In addition, Generation Z is also more supportive of authentic and transparent political leaders. They tend not to be easily influenced by traditional political propaganda and prefer leaders who can communicate directly with the people through digital platforms. However, the challenge for Generation Z in politics is the increasingly sharp polarization due to information circulating on social media. They are often exposed to hoax news and disinformation that can affect their political views. Therefore, digital literacy and critical thinking skills are very important for this generation to be able to sort information better.

Various cross-generations have characteristics in political interest, this is actually influenced by several main factors that affect cross-generational political interest, including:

- a) **The Influence of Technology and Media:** Technological developments have changed the way generations receive and interact with political information. The older generation tends to rely on traditional media, while the younger generation is more active in consuming digital news and social media.
- b) **Education Level:** Education plays an important role in increasing political awareness. Generations with better access to education tend to have higher

political interests because they better understand the impact of policies on their lives.

- c) **Economic and Social Conditions:** Generations that grew up in stable economic conditions tended to be more optimistic about politics, while those facing economic crises were more skeptical and less confident in the political system.
- d) **Family and Environmental Influence:** Political values are often passed down from generation to generation through family and social environment. If someone grew up in a politically active family, they are likely to also have a high interest in politics.

2. Mental Health Across Generations

Mental health is a condition in which a person can function optimally in daily life, both emotionally, psychologically, and socially. This includes the ability to cope with stress, relate to others, and make good decisions. Good mental health allows individuals to enjoy life, contribute to society, and face challenges in a positive way (Ambarwati, et al, 2024). The WHO defines mental health as a state of well-being in which individuals are aware of their abilities, can cope with normal life stressors, can work productively, and can contribute to their communities. This suggests that mental health is not just about the absence of mental disorders, but also about overall well-being. According to the APA, mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social aspects that affect the way a person thinks, feels, and acts. Mental health also plays a role in how a person handles stress, relates to others, and makes choices. Mental health disorders can affect all of these aspects, so it's important to keep mental health balanced.

According to Twenge, J. M. (2017) mental health in different generations has several differences in the way they deal with and maintain mental conditions, in his research twenges are divided into several generations, namely;

1. Mental Health in Baby Boomers

The Baby Boomers generation tends to experience mental health challenges related to aging, loneliness, and chronic diseases. They face a shift in role from active

workers to retirees, which often impacts a sense of loss of identity and purpose in life. In addition, many of them experience the loss of a partner or peer, which can increase the risk of depression and anxiety. Access to mental health services for this generation is still limited due to social stigma and lack of awareness about the importance of mental health.

2. Mental Health in Generation X

Generation X often faces pressure from various directions, including job demands, family responsibilities, and finances. Many of them are of productive age and have to balance work and family life, which can increase stress and the risk of burnout. Although this generation is more open to talking about mental health than Baby Boomers, they still face challenges in seeking professional support due to stigma and time constraints.

3. Mental Health in the Millennial Generation

Millennials face unique pressures related to economic instability, social demands, as well as the influence of social media. They often feel anxious about the future, especially related to work and home ownership. Additionally, high expectations from society and social media can lead to feelings of inadequacy or inadequate accomplishments. However, Millennials are more open to seeking mental health help and supporting awareness about the importance of therapy and self-care.

4. Mental Health in Generation Z

Generation Z is the generation that is the most vocal in voicing mental health issues. They face challenges such as academic anxiety, social media pressure, and economic uncertainty. However, they are also more open to therapy, meditation, and digital coping strategies than previous generations.

3. Political Interest in Religion

Political interest in religion refers to the tendency of individuals or groups to use religion as a tool or foundation in political activities. This phenomenon often appears in the form of politicization of religion, where religious teachings, symbols, or identities are utilized to achieve certain political goals. In Indonesia, as a country with the largest Muslim population in the world, the interaction between religion and politics is a very relevant and

complex issue. Political interest in religion is better known as the politicization of religion (Eberle, 2017).

Politicization of religion is a process in which religion is used as an instrument to gain political power. This can happen in various ways, such as the use of religious symbols in political campaigns, mass mobilization based on religious identity, to the implementation of policies based on certain religious teachings. The goal is to gain legitimacy, support, or sympathy from a particular religious group in order to win political contests. The politicization of religion has a significant impact on social and political dynamics. On the one hand, it can increase the political participation of people who feel represented by their religious identity. However, on the other hand, the politicization of religion has the potential to cause social polarization, discrimination against minority groups, and horizontal conflicts. In addition, the use of religion as a political tool can reduce the noble values of religion to a mere political commodity, which ultimately harms the essence of religious teachings themselves.

Research conducted by the Center for Islamic and Community Studies (PPIM) UIN Jakarta (Abdallah, 2020) shows that religious identity is often a consideration for a person to make choices during elections. Identity politics provides quite free maneuvers in social life and is a concept that has a tendency on two sides, negative and positive. In the Indonesian context, religious identity is often used by religious majority groups, which has negative implications of identity politics. Some of the key aspects of political interest in religion include (Aghazadeh & Mahmoudogli, 2017):

- 1) Legitimacy of Religion: Religion can be used to reinforce or legitimize political actions and thoughts, including aspirations and decisions.
- 2) Politicization of Religion: Religion and religious symbols can be used to achieve certain political goals, such as mobilizing mass support. However, the politicization of religion can increase political polarization and reduce the ability of religious leaders to speak out on public issues.

- 3) The Influence of Religion on Political Views: Religion influences an individual's beliefs about politics and policy. Religion can also be a lens that influences how political events are interpreted.
- 4) Role of Religious Organizations: Religious interest groups play a role in the legislative process by lobbying for changes in laws that reflect certain religious values. However, the involvement of religious interest groups in politics can cause tensions related to religious freedom and democratic participation.
- 5) Motivation and Identity: Religion serves as an ideology and identity for political subjects. Religious identity can influence a person's political behavior

4. Mental Health by Religion

Mental health is an important aspect of human life that includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. In general, good mental health allows individuals to realize their potential, cope with life pressures, work productively, and make positive contributions to their communities. Religion, as a system of spiritual beliefs and practices, has a significant role in supporting and nurturing an individual's mental health (Ghuloum, 2024). In a religious perspective, mental health is not only defined as the absence of mental disorders, but also includes the ability of individuals to adjust to themselves, others, and the surrounding environment. This is in line with the view of Zakiah Daradjat (Sudirman, 2019) who states that mental health is the realization of harmony between soul functions and the ability to deal with problems that occur, so that individuals feel happiness and their abilities.

Religion serves as a guideline for life that provides meaning and purpose to individuals. Through religious beliefs and practices, one can find inner peace, hope, and strength in facing various challenges in life (Dein, S: 2020). Some of the roles of religion in supporting mental health include (Robinson, 2015): Meaning of Life, Religion helps individuals understand the purpose of life and provide meaning to the events experienced, so that they can accept and face difficult situations more calmly. Social support: Religious communities are often a strong source of social support, where individuals can

share experiences, get advice, and feel part of a caring group. Self-control, Religious teachings encourage individuals to control negative emotions such as anger, envy, and resentment, which can be detrimental to mental health. Lastly, as a practice of worship as therapy: Religious activities such as prayer, meditation, and ritual worship can serve as a form of therapy that calms the mind and soul.

In religion, mental illness is often identified with reprehensible traits such as greed, envy, envy, arrogance, and emotionality. These traits are considered psychiatric disorders that can damage mental health. Therefore, religion emphasizes the importance of moral development and self-control to prevent and overcome mental disorders (Setiawan, 2022). To build and maintain mental health, religion offers a variety of approaches, including:

- Controlling Lust: Religion teaches the importance of controlling lust and negative emotions in order to achieve peace of mind.
- Soul Development and Moral Education: Through moral education based on religious teachings, individuals can develop good character and a healthy mentality.
- Understanding and Practicing the Contents of Scripture: Studying and practicing the teachings of Scripture can provide life guidance that helps individuals deal with various problems wisely.
- Level-Based Education and Teaching: Religion encourages education that matches the individual's level of understanding to form a healthy and strong mentality.

5. Political Interest and Mental Health Across Generations and Religions

The relationship between political interests and mental health is a complex and multidimensional topic, especially when viewed in a cross-generational and religious context. Political interests, which include an individual's participation and involvement in the political process, can affect a person's mental health in a variety of ways. Similarly, religion plays an important role in shaping individuals' perceptions and responses to political dynamics, which in turn impacts their mental well-being (Benardi, 2021)

Political interest refers to the extent to which an individual is interested, engaged, and participates in political activities, such as elections, political discussions, or involvement in political organizations. This involvement can provide a sense of purpose

and meaning in life, which contributes positively to mental health. However, excessive exposure to political conflicts, negative news, or polarization can increase levels of stress, anxiety, and even depression in individuals (Gimbrone, 2022). Political psychology also examines the behavior of individuals who do not want to pay taxes because of distrust of the government. This kind of mistrust can create feelings of anxiety and insecurity, which negatively impact the individual's mental health (Ford, 2023).

Different generations have different levels of political interest and responses to diverse political dynamics. Generation Z, for example, is growing up in the digital era with extensive and fast access to information. They tend to be more exposed to various political issues through social media, which can affect their mental health. Constant exposure to negative or conflictual political news can increase the risk of stress and anxiety in this generation. Gen Z's mental health levels affect their political participation, where individuals with good mental health tend to be more active in participating in politics. Conversely, older generations may have different ways of managing political information and may be less affected by rapidly changing political dynamics. However, they can also experience stress related to politics, especially if they feel alienated or disagree with the current political direction (Nasution, 2024).

Religion is often a source of emotional and social support for individuals. Religious values and teachings can help individuals manage stress and anxiety that may arise from political involvement (Nasution, 2024). For example, teachings on patience, acceptance, and hope can provide a framework for individuals to understand and overcome stressful political dynamics (Bagget, 2020). However, religion can also be a source of conflict, especially when used as a political tool or when there are differences in the interpretation of religious teachings. This kind of conflict can increase stress and anxiety levels in individuals who are involved in or affected by it.

The interaction between political interests, mental health, and religion is dynamic and mutually influencing. Individuals who have a high political interest and are supported by a supportive religious community may have better coping mechanisms in dealing with political stress. Conversely, individuals who feel politically or religiously isolated may be

more susceptible to mental health problems. It is important to understand that the impact of political interest on mental health can vary between generations and be influenced by the context of the religion adhered to. Therefore, a holistic and context-sensitive approach is needed in understanding and managing these relationships.

E. Conclusion

The relationship between political interest and mental health in a cross-generational and religious context is that involvement in politics can have both positive and negative impacts on an individual's mental health. A high level of political interest can provide meaning and purpose in a person's life, especially when they feel they have a role in determining the direction of public policy and the future of society. However, excessive involvement in politics, especially in situations fraught with conflict and instability, can trigger stress, anxiety, and even depression. This is caused by various factors, such as dissatisfaction with the political system, polarization in society, and the rise of negative news and hoaxes spread through social media.

Different generations have diverse ways of responding to politics and its impact on mental health. Generation Z, for example, tends to be more active in following political developments through social media. They have extensive access to information, but often face difficulties in sorting out what is true and which is only propaganda. As a result, constant exposure to negative political news can lead to mental exhaustion, feelings of hopelessness, and anxiety about the future. In contrast, older generations may have a calmer approach to political dynamics, although they can also experience stress if they feel alienated or disagree with existing policies. Therefore, the approach to politics and how a person processes political information has a profound effect on their mental health.

In the context of religion, the role of spirituality is crucial in helping individuals manage the pressures that arise due to political dynamics. Religious teachings often provide inner peace, teach patience, and provide hope in the midst of political uncertainty. Worship practices such as prayer, meditation, and self-reflection can be an effective means of reducing stress and maintaining mental balance. Additionally, religious communities can also serve as a source of social support that helps individuals feel more accepted and cared for. However, religion can also

be a source of conflict when used as a political tool or when there is a sharp difference in interpretation. In some cases, the intersection between religion and politics can increase social tensions, ultimately negatively impacting the mental health of individuals who feel trapped in the situation.

The relationship between political interests, mental health, and religion is complex and mutually influencing. Individuals who have high political interest but do not have good coping mechanisms, such as social support or soothing religious beliefs, tend to be more susceptible to political stress. Conversely, those who have a supportive religious community and understand how to manage emotions well can be better able to deal with political pressure without experiencing a significant negative impact on their mental health. Therefore, a balance in political engagement, moderate religious understanding, and awareness of the importance of mental health are the main keys in facing political challenges in various generations.

In looking at how different generations deal with politics, it is important to recognize that technology and social media have changed the way people understand and respond to political issues. Generation Z grew up in a digital age where political information can be accessed quickly, but this also makes them more vulnerable to manipulation and hoaxes. They often engage in political debates on social media which can add to psychological pressure, especially if the discussion leads to an unhealthy debate or even a personal attack. Older generations may be more accustomed to traditional methods of communication and have different ways of responding to political developments. However, they can also experience political anxiety, especially if they feel that the values they hold are no longer in line with the changing times.

In the context of religion, generational differences also affect how a person uses religious teachings to manage their mental health and political involvement. Older generations may rely more on religious teachings in the face of political uncertainty, while younger generations tend to seek a more rational and data-driven approach to assessing a political situation. However, in the midst of these differences, religious teachings that emphasize peace, tolerance, and balance remain relevant for all generations to maintain their mental health in the face of often uncertain political realities.

The importance of religious education in shaping mental health cannot be ignored either. Islamic religious education, for example, teaches the values of balance and self-control that can help individuals deal with political pressures more wisely. When a person has a strong understanding of religion and is not extreme, they can more easily accept political differences and not get caught up in conflicts that can damage their mental health. Additionally, worship practices such as prayer and dhikr can provide psychological calming that helps individuals focus more on solutions rather than getting caught up in excessive political anxiety.

By looking at these various aspects, it can be concluded that the balance in political involvement, moderate religious understanding, and awareness of the importance of maintaining mental health are the main factors that need to be considered in facing political challenges in various generations. Politics does have an important role in social life, but uncontrolled involvement and unbalanced coping mechanisms can have a detrimental impact on mental health. Therefore, every individual needs to understand their limitations in consuming political news, engaging in political discussions, and using religion as a tool to calm themselves down and find meaning in a dynamic political life.

In the midst of changing times and technological developments, awareness of the importance of mental health in politics needs to be increasingly considered. If not managed properly, high political interest can become a psychological burden that interferes with the well-being of individuals. Therefore, building an environment that supports mental health, both through religious communities and social support, is crucial in dealing with political complexity in the modern era. Thus, the balance between political interests, mental health, and religion is not only an individual need, but also a collective responsibility to create a more harmonious and mentally healthy society.

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