

Party Realignment: Ethnic Identity versus Egocentrism among Malaysian Voters

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the dynamics of voting intention concerning party realignment among voters in Malaysia using a Theory of Reasoned Action-based model. It delves into the roles of attitudes and subjective norms in shaping party preferences and aligns with quantitative methodology. A comprehensive self-administered survey questionnaire engaged 450 participants from diverse ethnic backgrounds in the Batang Kali State Constituency to elucidate party realignment complexities. They are chosen using stratified random sampling, based on a race proportion of 5:1:1. The findings reveal that voter attitudes wielded a more significant impact than subjective norms associated with ethnic identity. This outcome underscores the pivotal role of attitudes in influencing decision-making, while the influence of subjective norms remains limited. The research highlights the subjective norm's role in a multicultural context, clarifying that it is not the primary catalyst for party realignment. Instead, personal beliefs (people's egocentric behaviour) play a substantial role in shaping voter attitudes. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the interplay between subjective norms (ethnic identity), attitudes (egocentrism), and party realignment within Malaysia's diverse social landscape. Moreover, they hold significant implications for formulating effective political strategies and government policies within a multicultural society.

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Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature by exploring party realignment, ethnic identity, and egocentrism in Malaysian politics, offering insights beyond simplistic ethnic narratives.

1. Introduction

The Malaysian political landscape has witnessed a cyclical pattern of electoral outcomes characterized by unpredictability and significant shifts in voter allegiances across successive elections. This phenomenon has led to lopsided victories for different parties in one election, followed by landslide wins for opposing parties in subsequent polls. The data in [Table 1](#) and [Table 2](#) below provide concrete evidence of this phenomenon. After the GE14, a cyclic pattern of political transitions between PH and BN emerged as a prominent feature of Malaysian politics. In GE14, swing votes witnessed a significant decline in support for the BN and a simultaneous rise in support for the PH ([Moniruzzaman & Farzana, 2018](#)). However, the political landscape saw a notable shift as voters reversed their allegiance from PH to BN, especially as indicated in a series of by elections after the GE14. This pattern of political transitions has emerged as a defining hallmark of Malaysian politics. The display of transferable allegiances towards a party is notably fluid and defies easy definition. The recent outcomes of GE15 underscore the heightened complexity, as voters have departed from traditional norms, shifting their support and delivering a majority of votes to the newly formed coalition Pakatan Nasional (PN).

Table 1: Voters' Allegiance Pattern

VOTE MOVEMENTS IN MALAYSIAN ELECTIONS				
	GE11 (2004)	GE12 (2008)	GE13 (2013)	GE14 (2018)
Registered Voters	9.8 mill	10.9 mill	13.3 mill	14.9 mill
Voters Turnout	73.9%	75.99%	84.84%	82.32%
Voters Turnout Growth	-	2.1%	8.85%	-2.252%
Non-attendance % Popular Votes		24.01%	15.16%	17.68%
BN	62.10%	50.30%	47.38%	33.80%
PR/PH	33.20%	46.50%	37.10%	47.92%
PAS (Gagasan Sejahtera)	-	-	14.10%	16.99%
Change of Votes				
BN	-	-11.80%	-2.92%	-13.58%
PR/PH	-	13.30%	-9.40%	10.82%
PAS (Gagasan Sejahtera)	-	-	-	2.89%

Source: [Moten \(2013\)](#), [Moniruzzaman and Farzana \(2018\)](#), and [Suruhanjaya Pilihanraya Malaysia \(2019b\)](#)

According to [Staerkle' \(2015\)](#), the recurring shift in voter support is linked to inconsistencies in political psychology. Numerous factors contribute to this situation, including political beliefs and values, the cognitive decision-making process, political communication and media effects, racism and ethnic prejudice, ethnic identity, and collective action. In this study, the cyclical voting behaviour is believed influenced by subjective norms associated with ethnic identity with the presence of egocentric attitudes.

However, there are conflicting views on the significance of these variables, thus warranting further research. As emphasized by [Mohamad, Othman, and Ali \(2020\)](#), there is a need for a more comprehensive analysis of Malaysian behaviour in casting their ballots. Therefore, a comprehensive examination, thus enabling prediction of the party realignment proclivity among Malaysians is imperative.

Table 2: Vote Swing Fluidity

CONTEXT	Registered Voters	Voters' Turnout		Pre GE14 v/s Post GE14			Turnout Gap	Shift of Votes		
		GE14	Post GE14	BN	PR/PH	PAS		BN	PR/PH	PAS
GE14		The opposition PH wrested control of the Malaysian government for the first time.								
9 May, 18 Sg Kandis Aug 4, 18	50800	86%	49%	11518	23998	7573	-37%	-1933	-8571	-
Seri Setia Sept 9, 18	52650	84%	44%	9878	29250	4563	-40%	-	-15525	5135
Balakong Sept 9, 18	61659	82%	43%	5874	41768	6230	39%	-1899	-19260	-
Port Dickson Oct 13, 18	75212	82%	58%	18515	36225	6594	-24%	-	-5209	862
Cameron Highland Jan 26, 19	32048	76%	69%	10307	9710	3587	-7%	1731	-910	12%
Semenyih Mac 2, 19	53257	88%	73%	14464	23428	6966	-15%	5316	-5562	
Rantau Aug 13, 19	20472	-	79%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tanjung Piai Nov 16, 19	53528	83%	74%	20731	21255	2962	-9%	4735	-10875	

Source: Consolidated from MySPR Semak: Semakan Keputusan Pilihanraya by [Suruhanjaya Pilihanraya Malaysia \(2019a\)](#)

This study aims to identify the root causes of inconsistency in voters' political psychology and behavioural intentions and to develop accurate methods to predict and understand these shifts in future elections. While several established theories, such as the theory of rational choice, affective intelligence theory, and expectancy disconfirmation theory, are commonly utilized to comprehend voters' political psychology related to this vote change phenomenon, it is essential to note that these theories predominantly stem from a Western perspective (Arnett, 2008; Rozin, 2006; Staerkle', 2015; Lago, 2019). More Malaysian studies are needed to understand these dynamics. This gap underscores the need for perspectives and research relevant to the Malaysian context, considering the cultural and regional differences integral to comprehending political psychology. It is imperative to incorporate the socio-political context of Malaysian psychology into future research endeavours to ensure a more comprehensive understanding of voters' behaviour and decision-making processes within the Malaysian electoral landscape.

The study developed a model based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) to examine the factors contributing to this volatility of voters' intentions on party realignment by explicitly focusing on attitudinal and social normative factors to understand the impact on political behaviour and electoral choices in Malaysia. The Theory of Reasoned Action asserts that attitude and subjective norms significantly shape intention. This research hypothesised that there is significant relationship between (1) voting attitude and subjective norms associated with ethnic identity, and (2) voting attitude and ethnic identity, on voters' voting intention.

This study involved 450 respondents from the Malay/Bumiputra, Chinese, and Indian communities in the Batang Kali State Constituency, Selangor, Malaysia. It utilized a proportion-stratified random data-collection sampling method, maintaining a 5:1:1 ratio. Using SmartPLS-SEM, the data from the self-administered survey questionnaires were analyzed. The IBM-SPSS application was used in conjunction with this analysis to ensure a comprehensive review of the data gathered.

2. Literature Review

Scholarly agreed that the voters' behaviour is fragile and changes over time. Therefore, it is difficult to draw conclusions and make predictions regarding voters' behaviour in every election. There is a likelihood that what is expressed today will change on polling day (Rothschild & Wolfers, 2012; Marcus, 2000; Fabrigar & Petty, 1999). Blais (2004) and Willocq (2016) supported the prognosis. Voting attitudes will gradually change as election day draws closer. In Malaysia, the desire to shift phenomenon spread quickly to the point where people could be observed switching their allegiance from one party to another over time. Table 1 and Table 2 above, shows the trajectory of support fluidity.

The above discussion suggests that voters' behavior in Malaysia is characterized by fragility and a propensity for change over time. Scholarly sources, including Rothschild and Wolfers (2012), Marcus (2000), Fabrigar and Petty (1999), Blais (2004), and Willocq (2016), indicate the challenges in drawing conclusive predictions about voters' attitudes, with the possibility of significant shifts even close to polling day.

The Malaysian context vividly illustrates this phenomenon through a series of shifts in voter allegiance. Notably, in the 12th general election, the ruling party, Barisan Nasional (BN), lost its two-thirds majority in parliament for the first time (Mohamed@Bakar et al., 2010; Fernando et al., 2011). Subsequently, in the 13th election, the majority further decreased as Pakatan Rakyat (later succeeded by PH) secured 54% of the votes (Weiss, 2013). The 14th general election marked the end of BN's 64-year hegemony, making it the longest-serving Malaysian government (Noh, 2016; Welsh, 2018; Moniruzzaman & Farzana, 2018; Kassim, 2018; Hutchinson & Aun, 2019). The 15th general elections saw the emergence of a new political coalition, Perikatan Nasional, Perikatan Nasional, adding complexity to the electoral landscape and highlighting the dynamic nature of political support, overshadowing both BN and Pakatan Harapan (Moten, 2023; Marzuki Mohammad & Ibrahim Suffian, 2023).

Numerous scholarships attribute the evolving voting attitudes to various socio-psychological factors, with communalism playing a pivotal role. Issues about the National Economic Plan (NEP) and its lopsided affirmative action, which have granted special privileges to Bumiputra equity share as "sons of the soil" under the banner of 'Ketuanan Melayu' (Crouch, 1996; Milner, 2003; Ostwald et al., 2018), as well as the unresolved Chinese community request for the accreditation of the Unified Education Certificate (UEC) by the Malaysian government (Chin, 2018), religious freedom, and welfare concerns within various Indian communities (Moorthy Ponnusamy, 2011), all contribute to the fluctuating nature of voter support.

Ethnic identity appears to be a critical factor, impacting the relationships between Malays, Chinese, and Indians (Mohamad, 2008; Mohd Azmir et al., 2018). The text suggests that political elections in Malaysia often witness tensions and prejudices among these communities, leading to shifts in support for political parties. The socio-political issues are deeply embedded, and the ethnic identification problem persists, affecting inter-race relationships (Welsh, 2020; Marzuki Mohammad & Ibrahim Suffian, 2023).

Moreover, the Malaysian political landscape underscores the frequent reliance of politicians on racial narratives and sentiments to resonate with voters. The continual surfacing of racial issues during elections signifies that these themes have been enduring elements of Malaysian politics for decades. Political campaigns in Malaysia frequently capitalize on ethnic identity issues to outbids, as evidenced by slogans such as "Anything but UMNO (Malays)," "No DAP (Chinese)," and appeals to safeguard Islam, all reflecting the instrumental use of ethnicity in politics (Welsh, 2020; Ronnie Ooi, 2019; Khoo, & Nakamura, 2013; Crouch, 1996). Furthermore, the recurring theme of the New Economic Policy (NEP) affirmative action features prominently in political propaganda.

In summary, in Malaysia, voters' attitudes seem strongly influenced by ethnic identity, communalism, and socio-economic issues. The changing patterns of allegiance make it hard to draw clear conclusions about their preferences, reflecting a complex mix of ethnic dynamics and political strategies shaping voters' attitudes in Malaysian elections.

2.1. Operational Definitions

The researcher put forth two compelling factors, namely attitudinal and social normative determinants, likely to contribute to voting intention volatility among Malaysians. The

researcher meticulously defines each variable, encompassing voting intention, voting attitude, and subjective norms, thus operationalizing the research effectively.

2.1.1. Voting Intention

Scholars defined intention as a conscious plan of a person to exert effort to conduct a future behaviour (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Cheng, Lam & Hsu, 2006). According to Ajzen and Fishbein (2010), an individual's intention (voting intention) is to accomplish an assumed behaviour (change vote) that incorporates components of willingness, behavioural expectation and trying. In this study, voting intentions are the clues of how people are eager to try, by what means an effort they are planning to exert and to assume the behaviour (i.e., self-regard attitude or egocentric individualism).

2.1.2. Voting Attitude (egocentrism)

Wan Asna et al. (2013) postulated that attitude considerably influences the formation of electoral behaviour. The formation of the attitude towards an election differs from time to time, place, and context. Voters' obligation and direction are subject to change. Mohd Azidin, and Ahmad (2011) argued that Malaysian voters' volunteer compliance, obedience or loyalty attitude has receded, suggesting uncertainty regarding their conviction to perform a similar act.

In this study, "voting attitude" pertains to an individual's predisposition towards an object, event, or situation shaped by subjective evaluation or judgment. For example, during an election, voters are susceptible to various stimuli and social pressures that can influence the formation of their mental state (Boninger et al., 1995).

Nevertheless, there are instances when personal prejudices or egocentric biases come into play, prioritizing emotional support, self-validation, and fulfilment. According to Kovun (2012), egocentrism is a personality trait that strongly focuses on one's feelings, experiences, and interests. This trait can often result in an inability to understand or consider information from others that contradicts one's personal experiences. This attitude inclination can lead individuals to defend the ramifications of their choices (De Groot & Steg, 2009). In sum, a deeply ingrained beliefs in them will significantly impact individual inflexibility of intention to perform an action. It seems that they strongly believe in their worth, abilities, or qualities. They generally view themselves positively and have confidence in their abilities. They have a sense of superiority or an inflated ego with sense of self-reliance and detachment from other's view.

2.1.3. Subjective Norms

According to Cialdini (2007) and Rimal and Lapinski (2015), subjective norms, are values other people negotiate as references that either encourage or control one's behaviour. It could be descriptive norms, like what most people will do, or injunctive norms, which refer to what most people will agree or disagree with the values. In other words, injunctive norms refer to the urge to engage in each behaviour, and descriptive norms perceive the behaviour typically exhibited in a social group (Cialdini et al., 1991; Rimal & Real, 2003). Failure to fulfil the expectation leads to the pressure of social sanctions (Interis, 2011). The present study conceptualizes descriptive and injunctive norms as perceived norms, that perceived descriptive norms are an individual's perceptions about the commonness of a given behaviour, while perceived injunctive norms refer to the perceived social

approval of the behaviour. In this regard, the perceived norms refer to the social power associated with ethnicity.

3. Research Method

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to investigate the factors contributing to the volatility of voters' intentions on party realignment in Malaysia. Drawing upon [Fishbein and Ajzen's \(1975\)](#) Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which posits that attitudes and subjective norms significantly shape behavioural intentions, the research developed a model to explore the impact of attitudinal and social normative factors on Malaysia's political behaviour and electoral choices. Hypothesizing two significant relationships, the study aims to uncover the link between voting attitude and subjective norms associated with ethnic identity and the connection between voting attitude and ethnic identity on voters' voting intention. To ensure comprehensive representation, the study involved 450 respondents from the diverse Malay/Bumiputra, Chinese, and Indian communities in the Batang Kali State Constituency, Selangor, Malaysia, using a proportion-stratified random data-collection sampling method, maintaining a ratio of 5:1:1 among the ethnic groups. Meticulous data collection was conducted through self-administered survey questionnaires and comprehensive analysis using SmartPLS-SEM. Additionally, the IBM-SPSS application was utilized in conjunction with SmartPLS-SEM to ensure a thorough review of the gathered data.

4. Findings

The survey data was analyzed using SmartPLS-SEM and IBM-SPSS to improve the study's ability to understand and forecast voter behaviour. SmartPLS-SEM helps to assess the connections between variables, while IBM-SPSS provides essential insights into respondents' demographics and critical traits, reinforcing the findings and subsequent arguments.

The study conducted data screening for data aptness prior data analysis. There is no missing value, and the distribution of all items was normal and adequate with estimate skew < 1.03 and kurtosis < 1.42.

4.1. Descriptive Data Analysis

The 5-Likert scale survey reflects the following characters concerning respondents' (1) attitudes towards party preferences and affiliations, (2) emotional inclinations towards their groups, and (3) dedication to participating in elections.

4.1.1. Attitudes towards party preferences and affiliations

The findings reflect the various respondents' responses on voting attitude. There are four items in the questionnaire. First, the respondents were convinced (58%) they would vote for the same party as they did in the last election. However, about 37% of them were still undecided, and 5% of the respondents were not convinced (disagreed). Second, most respondents agreed (61%) that if they had to decide, they would vote for the same party as they did in the last election. The rest of the respondents were undecided (30%) and disagreed (9%) with the statement. Third, more than half of the respondents would recommend (agreed, 54%) others to vote for the same party as they did in the last election. However, some were undecided (32%) and disagreed (14%). Fourth, the respondents had

positive things (agreed, 59%) to say about the same party as they did in the last election. About 34% were undecided, and 7% disagreed with the statement.

The findings indicate a generally positive inclination among respondents towards voting for the same party as they did in the previous election. While the majority expressed agreement across the different items, there was a notable level of indecision, particularly regarding being convinced to vote for the same party. In short, these findings suggest a degree of openness and uncertainty among the respondents despite their overall positive attitudes towards their previous voting choices.

4.1.2. Emotional inclinations towards their groups

The demographic analysis of respondents' responses on ethnic identity reflects the sense of belonging among voters and their power of pressure as a group. There are twelve items of the questionnaire to investigate their commitment. Generally, the respondents had a majority agreement on ethnic identity. The top three agreed items chosen by the respondents are "I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background" (91%), "I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group" (90%), and "I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group" (89%). On the other hand, a small number of respondents were undecided and disagreed with the items under ethnic identity. Among the top three undecided items are "I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership" (27%), "In order to learn more about my ethnic group background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group" (21%), and "I am active in organizations or social groups that include most members of my own ethnic group" (15%). While the top three disagreed items include "I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership" (7%), "I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me" (4%), and "I am active in organizations or social groups that include most members of my own ethnic group" (5%).

The demographic analysis of respondents' views on ethnic identity provides insights into voters' commitment and sense of belonging, reflecting their potential influence as a pressure group. Most respondents strongly agreed with statements related to ethnic identity, indicating a deep connection and commitment to their own ethnic group. The top three agreed items highlight a positive sense of belonging and attachment to their ethnic background. However, some respondents remained undecided or disagreed with certain aspects of ethnic identity. These findings suggest a degree of ambivalence and differing levels of involvement within their ethnic community. Despite this, the overall pattern suggests a significant level of commitment and association with their ethnic identity, potentially signifying a potent force for societal influence and pressure as a cohesive group.

4.1.3. Dedication to participating in elections

The survey gave various feedback on respondents' commitment on voting during elections. From the questionnaire assessment which contains four items, indicate that most respondents agreed they were convinced to vote in the coming elections (90%). More importantly, they have positive things to say about voting in elections (88%). Consequently, they might have to decide whether they will vote in the next election (86%). On the other hand, some respondents showed undecided (17%) action and disagreed (3%) when recommending others to vote in the coming elections.

The survey findings strongly indicate a high level of commitment from the society as a pressure group to participate in elections. The overwhelming agreement among respondents regarding their conviction to vote and their positive outlook on participating in elections demonstrates a significant level of commitment. While some respondents showed uncertainty and disagreement in recommending others to vote, the overall pattern underscores the societal group's substantial dedication to engaging in electoral processes, highlighting their potential influence in shaping election outcomes.

In summary, the society generally holds a positive attitude towards elections, leaning towards voting for the same party as before, showing a commitment to their ethnic identity, and displaying a strong dedication to participating in elections. While there is some uncertainty and ambivalence, the overall picture reflects a society with a positive inclination towards electoral engagement, marked by a mix of openness, commitment, and a sense of belonging.

4.2. Data Analysis

Assessing the measurement model to evaluate the validity and reliability of the measures is crucial before testing the hypothesized relationships through structural model assessment.

The measurement model assessment results indicate that Cronbach's alpha for voting intention is 0, with outer loadings ranging from 0.879 to 0.914. The average variance extracted (AVE) is 0.800, and the construct reliability (CR) is 0.941. For voting attitude, Cronbach's alpha is 0, with outer loadings spanning from 0.884 to 0.940. The AVE is 0.937, and the CR is 0.950. Finally, Cronbach's alpha for ethnic identity is 0.593, with outer loadings ranging from 0.561 to 0.833. The AVE is 0.593, and the CR is 0.945.

Concurrently, the study provides a correlation matrix (refer to [Table 3](#)) derived from the structural model assessment, outlining the complex interplay among the variables. This analysis clarifies the factors influencing voters' decisions to realign their party preferences during elections.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

Constructs	1	2	3
Voting Attitude		0.394	0.182
Ethnic Identity	0.394		0.059
Voting Intention	0.182	0.059	

The result indicates that Voting Attitudes constantly related to Voting Intentions with $\beta=0.182$ and consistent with the several findings by [Mohanachandran and Govindarajo \(2019\)](#) and [Singh et al., \(1995\)](#) who proved that this is the root of the Theory of Reasoned Action. It shows that voting attitude remains the influential factor as [Ajzen and Fishbein \(1980\)](#) said, by a set of beliefs including the consequences of certain characteristics of attributes and qualities.

Meanwhile, there is a distinct relationship between voting attitude and subjective norms indicated by ethnic identity. Although there is a strong correlation between them, ethnic identity was not explaining voting intention ($\beta=0.059$), meaning, though, there is a strong correlation between voting attitude and ethnic identity, but they did not complement each

other to explain voting intention. This is suggestive evidence that personal behavioural beliefs and assessments, as opposed to societal normative ideas and motivations, best explain voters' voting intentions. In short, the insignificance of ethnic identity in explaining voting intention suggests that voters lean towards a more self-conceptual or individualized approach, disregarding peer pressure, which typically embodies subjective norms. [Park \(2000\)](#) and [Titah and Barki \(2009\)](#) argue that individuals' attitudes tend to be more self-centric as their perceived values of an object increasingly overshadow social demands and expectations.

5. Insight of the Findings

The findings reveal several crucial insights regarding the relationship between voting attitudes, subjective norms, and their impact on voting intention. Voting attitudes consistently relate to voting intentions, aligning with previous research by [Mohanachandran and Govindarajo \(2019\)](#) and [Singh et al., \(1995\)](#), affirming the fundamental principles of the Theory of Reasoned Action.

Furthermore, examining the relationship between voting attitude and subjective norms, particularly indicated by ethnic identity, underscores a distinct correlation. Despite this strong correlation, ethnic identity alone does not significantly explain voting intention. This leads to the inference that voters tend to adopt a more self-conceptual or individualized approach, emphasizing personal convictions over societal pressures and expectations as has been highlighted by [Ajzen and Fishbein \(1980\)](#), [Park \(2000\)](#), and [Titah and Barki's \(2009\)](#) support this argument, suggesting that individuals' attitudes tend to be more self-centric as personal values increasingly overshadow social demands and expectations.

Simultaneously, the 5-Likert scale assessment data shows that subjective norms related to supporting the same party, recommending others to vote for the same party, or influencing ethnic identity do not consistently and significantly impact respondents' intentions. Although respondents generally showed positive attitudes towards supporting the same party and voting, a considerable number were undecided or disagreed about recommendations and the influence of their ethnic identity. This suggests that subjective norms, especially those linked to ethnic identity, do not significantly shape voting intentions.

In summary, the study emphasizes how voting attitudes strongly influence voting intentions, showing that subjective norms, particularly related to ethnic identity, have limited impact. The evidence suggests a more individualized decision-making process, where personal beliefs carry more weight than societal norms in determining voting intentions. These findings highlight the influence of a self-centred approach, where personal beliefs hold more sway than societal norms, indicating that individuals prioritize their convictions and assessments over external influences.

6. Conclusion

The theoretical implications of these findings suggest a re-evaluation of the significance of personal behavioural beliefs and assessments in shaping voting intentions, surpassing the influence of societal normative ideas and motivations. This reiterates the fundamental principles of the Theory of Reasoned Action, shedding light on the pivotal role of voting attitudes in predicting voting intentions. Additionally, the limited impact of subjective

norms, particularly those linked to ethnic identity, prompts a reconsideration of the extent to which societal pressures and expectations shape voting behaviour.

From a practical standpoint, these findings signal a shift in political campaigns and strategies towards a more individualized decision-making process observed in voters. The potential of personal beliefs and values in political messaging could be more impactful than solely relying on societal norms. Moreover, recognizing the sway of an egocentric attitude can steer the creation of more personalized and effective political campaigns, considering the priority individuals assign to their convictions and assessments over external influences. This could pave the way for more precise and resonant communication strategies to engage voters based on their unique perspectives and values.

The prevailing egocentric attitude in shaping voting intentions raises concerns for the community, politicians, and the government, emphasizing personal beliefs over societal norms. This shift towards individualized decision-making risks fostering a fragmented society where individual convictions overshadow collective interests, hindering efforts to address broader societal issues and potentially complicating policy formulation and implementation. Emphasizing personalized political campaigns based solely on individual perspectives and values might contribute to polarization, necessitating more consensus on critical societal matters, potentially impeding effective governance and policy implementation.

In summary, the study's findings emphasize the significance of personal beliefs and assessments in shaping voting intentions, surpassing the influence of societal norms. This highlights the pivotal role of voting attitudes in predicting voting intentions and calls for re-evaluating the extent to which societal pressures and expectations shape voting behaviour. From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest a shift towards more individualized decision-making in voters, signalling the potential impact of personal beliefs and values in political messaging. However, this prevailing egocentric attitude raises concerns for the community, politicians, and the government, potentially hindering efforts to address broader societal issues and complicating policy formulation and implementation. It also risks fostering a fragmented society and contributing to polarization, necessitating more consensus on critical societal matters.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

The researchers used the research ethics provided by the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants according to the Declaration of Helsinki.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors reported no conflicts of interest for this work and declared that there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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