

# **The Negative Role of Religion on Social Trust in Southeast Asian Countries: Data from World Values Survey 7**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Recent studies show that religious beliefs are associated with feelings of social trust within the given society. People with strong religious beliefs and members of religious communities and/or denominations might help them to develop sort of social security and safety as members of the society as a whole. However, the current rise of religious conservatism combined with the rampant social inequality and political polarization have tendentiously promoted the new forms of suspicion and intolerant views to others with different religions, social class and other attributes. Hence, the study addresses the relationship between religious beliefs and social trust in ASEAN Countries in which the societies have been overwhelmingly embraced religions of Islam, Christianity and Buddhism/Hinduism. It considers whether the current political dynamic and the different socio-demographic configuration of each country might influence the level of the social trust in the society. The study is designed to use data from World Values Survey 7, released in 2020; particularly in 7 (seven) ASEAN Countries of Indonesia (3200 respondents), Malaysia (1313 respondents), Thailand (1500 respondents), Vietnam (1200 respondents), Myanmar (1200 respondents), Singapore (2012) and the Philippines (1200 respondents); with variables of social trust, religious beliefs, political interest/participation and socio-demographic status. The results showed that several variables that had a positive correlation with social trust were political interest (0.166), age (0.029), highest educational level (0.019), social class (0.089). While other factors have a negative correlation, namely religiosity (-0.146) and political participation (-0.054). Countries with low levels of social trust are Indonesia, (-0.04), Philippines (-0.081) and Myanmar (-0.29).

**Kata Kunci:** *Religious Beliefs, Social Trust, ASEAN, Democratic Society*