

Election Outcomes and The Digestion of Grievance

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Abstract

I study whether and when electoral outcomes generate anti-democratic grievances on the part of candidates. I evaluate this question with a three-wave panel survey of candidates for local legislative office conducted during the 2024 Indonesian election. I find modest declines in both trust in electoral institutions and support for democracy among candidates following the election. The decline in trust is larger for losers and is concentrated among older and male candidates, as well as those with high expectations of victory. The findings improve our understanding of the extent to which elections effectively metabolize grievances while also unearthing the limited conditions under which politicians develop beliefs antagonistic to democratic norms after defeat.

Keywords: Grievances, Elections, Denialism, Elites, Indonesia

Short Title: Elections and Grievances

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More than forty years ago, William Riker (1983) observed that “the dynamics of politics is in the hands of the losers... [it] is they who decide when and how and whether to fight on.” Recent high-profile episodes suggest that election losers are deciding to fight on with concerning frequency: in 2019, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan leaned on the Turkish Electoral Commission to annul the results of Istanbul’s mayoral election when his party’s preferred candidate was narrowly defeated (Svolik 2023); in 2021, in the United States, Donald Trump called on his supporters to march on the Capitol to prevent the certification of his loss (Arceneaux and Truex 2023); and, in 2023, in Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro urged his voters to occupy the Supreme Federal Court in Brasília after coming up short at the ballot box (Nicas and Spigariol 2023). These episodes were likely surreptitious maneuvers on the part of the losers; it seems probable that the losing candidates knew they lost and fought on anyways. But sincere or not, these actions reflect serious grievances about which champions of democratic elections ought to be concerned.

These and other events prompt an investigation into the extent to and conditions under which candidates, especially losing ones, develop anti-democratic grievances in the wake of defeat. But systematically measuring the extent to and conditions under which losing candidates develop anti-democratic grievances is challenging. For one, while the episodes outlined above have attracted considerable attention, they reflect the incentives of losers in a small sample of high-profile electoral contests. Far more common are candidates running in legislative contests, including those at local levels of government. While the stakes of such elections are lower than those for national executive office, legislative and local contests offer a well-powered laboratory for studying the incentives and behaviors of would-be politicians after defeat. The second challenge relates to the possibility that losing candidates may be *a priori* more likely to harbor anti-democratic grievances—which may affect their likelihood of defeat—but which would also confound any straightforward attempt to infer an uptick in such attitudes after the election.

To work around these challenges, I focus on the context of Indonesia—the world’s third most populous democracy—tracking the attitudes of candidates who contested the general election held on February 14, 2024. Specifically, I conducted a nationally-representative three-wave panel survey of 800 candidates for local legislative office. Candidates were surveyed both three months and one month before the election, in November 2023 and January 2024, as well as two months after the election, in April 2024. Candidates were surveyed about a range of attitudes, including those capturing anti-democratic grievances: (1) trust in elections and (2) support for democracy. Importantly, the panel structure of the data collection enables me to estimate both the prevalence of anti-democratic grievances as a function of observed electoral outcomes, as

well as the individual-level characteristics observed at baseline that predict any uptick. On this latter count, in addition to standard demographic variables, enumerators probed candidates on measures of neuroticism and right-wing authoritarianism, as well as on factors relating to their campaigns, such as expenditures, time use, and self-assessed chances of success.

In this paper, I present evidence that both winning and losing candidates report modest declines in trust in electoral institutions after the election—approximately -6.1% compared to baseline. Importantly, however, candidates who lost their contests report a drop in trust over twice as large when compared to candidates who won (-7.0% vs. -2.9%). On average, support for democracy writ large declined for candidates over the course of the campaign, albeit by an even smaller margin (-2.5%); absolute levels of support for democracy remained high, however. Interestingly, I observe no differential decline in support for democracy across winners and losers. In light of the magnitude of these declines, at least in the context of local legislative contests in Indonesia, my preferred interpretation is that elections appear generally effective at metabolizing losers' grievances.

Why did some losing candidates come to distrust Indonesia's electoral institutions? While the magnitude of the effect of electoral defeat on this outcome was small, probing its drivers may hold clues for identifying the sorts of candidates most predisposed to developing anti-democratic grievances after defeat, including potentially in other contexts. I focus my analysis on demographic, psychological, and political "risk factors." Examining heterogeneity in the observed results, I show that the negative effect of losing on trust in elections is driven principally by three key subgroups. First, leveraging candidates' own pre-election self-evaluations of their chances of success, I show that the main effect is partially driven by those who held a high expectation of victory at baseline. Second, older candidates who lose are more likely than their similarly defeated but younger peers to report declines in electoral trust. I interpret these findings as suggestive evidence of the role that both frustrated expectations and constrained time horizons play in identifying the sorts of candidates most at risk to deny the legitimacy of otherwise credible elections. Finally, third, I show that men who lose are much more likely than women who lose to develop anti-democratic grievances.

I also report a suite of mostly pre-registered null results, which, although not dispositive, provide evidence against widely-held suppositions regarding the drivers of anti-democratic grievances. I find little evidence that candidates' pre-election ideological profile predisposes them to such attitudes. Neither candidates who score high on the right-wing authoritarianism index, nor those affiliated with hardline Islamist political parties, are more likely than their peers to report upticks in anti-democratic grievances in the aftermath of defeat,

for instance. I detect some evidence that material sunk costs are influential: losing candidates who spend a lot of money are more likely to adopt heightened animosity towards ethnic outgroups than their less-resourced peers. But I detect no other evidence of serious grievances on the part of big spenders. And, despite strong theoretical priors to the contrary, I find no evidence that incumbent losers are more likely than non-incumbent losers to develop anti-democratic grievances in the aftermath of defeat, consistent with recent work by Little and Meng (2025).

The results presented in this paper suggest at least two broader takeaways for scholars interested in elections, democracy, and the political attitudes of elites. For one, I provide a concrete estimate of the incidence of a critical antecedent to backsliding, finding that losing an election causes candidates to report declines in electoral trust. But losing candidates do not meaningfully turn against the value of democracy as a system of governance. And, looking at a behavioral measure in which candidates were asked if they lodged an official dispute, less than 1% of losing candidates indicated having done so. The results thus speak to a recent literature that has sought to estimate the extent of democratic backsliding (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2019; Little and Meng 2023; Treisman 2023; Waldner and Lust 2018). To be sure, the results presented in this paper focus on single context and do not capture democratic reversals at scale. But, for scholars concerned with drivers of democratic backsliding, the findings represent a rare spot of optimism by highlighting a young democracy's ability to manage the inevitable grievance of losers.

On the second count, this paper offers a theoretical contribution by resurfacing mechanisms with long histories in political science concerning the role of frustrated expectations and constrained time horizons, suggesting new avenues for exploring the psychological underpinnings of election denialism. On the first count, candidates who expect to win, but do not, may find denialism alluring, perhaps as a means of protecting their self-image. People like to believe themselves to be winners, after all, and the psychological payoffs to remaining secure in that belief by distrusting the results may be large and increasing as a function of one's initial expectations (Little 2019). On the second count, democracy draws much of its strength from the belief on the part of losers that they may stand to win tomorrow (Przeworski 1991). While true for lifeless institutions such as parties for which time horizons are unbounded, this observation does not hold for individual candidates constrained by death—an inevitability which may generate incentives for older candidates to develop beliefs necessary to mount “last-ditch” efforts to overturn unfavorable results. The point here is simply to take seriously the role of *individual* contingencies in studying democratic backsliding. Politicians are human and democratic norms may depend on their variable but predictable psychology.

1 Elections, Sore Losers, and Anti-Democratic Grievances

One of the main virtues of regular elections, and democracy more broadly, is the manner in which it enables a peaceful transfer of power. This is thought to occur through at least two mechanisms. The first concerns what Przeworski (1991, 5-7) calls the inherent “uncertainty” of elections. If the rules of the election are clear and agreed upon *ex ante*, and if the process is followed in a transparent manner, candidates who contest elections ought to have little recourse to make allegations of foul play *ex post* that tend to spark violence. Second, if elections are held at regular intervals, as they are in virtually every consolidated democracy, candidates who lose elections may be dissuaded from stirring up trouble on the recognition that they stand a chance to share in power later down the road (Przeworski 1991). In other words, the costs associated with electoral defeat may appear lower when losing candidates believe their time will come. Taken together, these mechanisms suggest that elections may be effective in metabolizing the grievances of losers.

However, some losing candidates nonetheless develop anti-democratic grievances after credible elections—an observation that motivates an investigation into the extent and conditions under which such attitudes emerge. This question has long animated political scientists who have sought to document how electoral defeat influences candidates’ attitudes and preferences. In one of the first treatments of this question, Kingdon (1968) conducted a small-sample survey of political candidates in Wisconsin in the 1960s, finding evidence of what he labeled a “rationalization-congratulation effect,” whereby election losers “rationalize” the result by blaming voters, while election winners “congratulate” themselves by championing the electoral system (Kingdon 1968). In a more recent addition, Senninger, Bækgaard and Seeberg (2024) conducted a survey of Danish municipal candidates after an election, revealing a gap in perceptions of electoral fairness between winners and losers, consistent with earlier work. But, other than these two studies, the practical challenges associated with systematically interviewing political elites has limited the scope of knowledge on candidates’ reactions to electoral outcomes.

Building on the intuitions of this earlier work, the overarching expectation of this paper is that the experience of electoral defeat generates anti-democratic grievances. Plainly, all candidates want to win, creating a gulf between expectations and reality when they do not. Some candidates may turn against the system that denied them victory, interpreting failure as a personal or institutional failure rather than an impartial outcome (Kuipers 2023). Psychological mechanisms such as cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1957) and motivated reasoning (Taber and Lodge 2006) suggest that losing candidates might distort their beliefs about the fairness

of elections to protect their self-image. These psychological mechanisms may be especially pronounced for political elites, for whom the stakes are higher, and for whom “motivated skepticism” has been shown to be especially pronounced (Taber and Lodge 2006).

Before continuing, it may be useful to define “anti-democratic grievances,” which constitute the central outcome of interest in this paper, and which departs slightly from outcomes studied in prior work. Anti-democratic grievances refer to a set of attitudes and behaviors that are opposed to democratic norms, institutions, and processes. These grievances may manifest in both concrete and abstract dimensions. First, on the concrete, such grievances encompass distrust in the electoral process at hand, whereby losing candidates perceive elections as rigged, manipulated, or fundamentally unfair (Senninger, Bækgaard and Seeberg 2024). This distrust may be especially influential in driving the eventual rejection of official results and the endorsement of conspiracy theories regarding electoral fraud (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2019). Second, on the abstract, anti-democratic grievances include a diminished belief in democracy as a legitimate system of governance. Losing candidates may question whether democratic elections are an effective mechanism for political selection and may become more inclined to support authoritarian alternatives or undemocratic practices to secure power (Anderson 2005).

Importantly for the purposes of this paper, it matters little whether candidates’ anti-democratic grievances are genuine or surreptitious. Genuine grievances stem from deeply held beliefs that the electoral process was unfair or illegitimate, often influenced by cognitive biases such as motivated reasoning (Taber and Lodge 2006) and loss aversion (Kahneman and Tversky 1979). These grievances can be challenging to mitigate, as they are rooted in an individual’s perception of reality. In contrast, surreptitious grievances are often strategically manufactured by political elites who knowingly cast doubt on election outcomes to mobilize supporters or maintain political relevance (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2019). The consequences of these two types of grievances may differ; while genuine grievances can erode trust in democratic institutions in the long run, surreptitious grievances can be particularly destabilizing in the short term by inciting immediate unrest or undermining the peaceful transfer of power (Tucker et al. 2017). This paper treats these two varieties of anti-democratic grievances as observationally equivalent; it matters little from the perspective of, say, democratic backsliding if candidates’ grievances are sincere or not. The goal of elections, instead, is to manage all varieties of losers’ grievances.

2 The Risk Factors Associated With Anti-Democratic Grievances

The theory I develop in this paper also posits that certain conditions—“risk factors”—amplify the extent to which electoral outcomes activate candidates’ anti-democratic grievances. A useful starting point for investigating this question is the scholarly literature on the reaction of voters to the electoral defeat of their preferred candidate or party. Here, scholars have focused on the extent to which democratic legitimacy depends on the “losers’ consent” (Anderson 2005; Nadeau and Blais 1993). At the core is the concern that, if their preferred party loses an election, voters may face incentives to subvert democratic institutions by alleging fraud (Ansolabehere and Persily 2007). Among other insights, scholars have shown that the perceived ideological stakes of the election matter. Curini and Jou (2016) show that the scale of dissatisfaction harbored by voters is a function of the perceived distance in policy space between their preferred party and the victor. Emotional attachment to an underlying issue, in the case of, say, the Brexit Referendum, may also be important (Tilley and Hobolt 2024). For issues to which voters attach a moral valence, finding oneself on the losing side will be especially painful, as Riker (1988, 207) suggests these are “zero-sum” issues, meaning “losers lose badly.” For these issues, the costs of defeat appear exceptionally high. Building on this literature, and drawing on intuitions developed in political psychology, I enumerate several genres of potential conditions that may be influential in structuring losers’ responses to electoral defeat.

Demographic factors: The age of losing candidates may significantly influence their inclination to express anti-democratic grievances. Younger candidates, who anticipate long political careers, may perceive a strategic disadvantage in voicing grievances, as doing so could undermine their credibility with voters in future contests. Reputational concerns may act as a constraint, discouraging them from embracing certain attitudes for fear of being labeled a sore loser. Older candidates, particularly those too elderly to realistically pursue future political opportunities, may lack such constraints. With less at stake in terms of long-term political viability, they may feel emboldened to challenge the legitimacy of the electoral process. Empirical evidence from the United States supports this reasoning. Leguizamon and Crowley (2016) find that term-limited governors, especially older ones, exhibit lower levels of accountability to the public, reflecting a diminished incentive to maintain political decorum. This suggests that older losing candidates may be more likely to express grievances about the electoral process, as they face fewer repercussions for doing so.

Beyond age, other demographic factors may shape candidates’ reactions to electoral defeat. Gender differences, for instance, could play a role in how candidates articulate post-election grievances. Research

indicates that male politicians are more likely than their female counterparts to exhibit combative and adversarial postures following political losses (Schneider and Bos 2019). This may be attributed to entrenched norms of masculinity that associate electoral defeat with personal weakness, thereby incentivizing men to reject unfavorable results to preserve their public image, and leading women to attribute failure to internal causes (Holman and Schneider 2018).

Political factors: The political economy of campaigning is likely to shape losing candidates' anti-democratic grievances. Candidates in many democracies invest substantial financial resources in their campaigns, often with the expectation of recouping these costs through political office and its associated benefits. In Indonesia, the context of this study, these financial investments can be particularly substantial (Aspinall and Berenschot 2019). For instance, candidates for local legislative office frequently spend over \$50,000 USD on their campaigns. Beyond financial expenditures, candidates devote significant time and effort to campaigning, engaging with voters, organizing events, and building coalitions. These commitments impose high opportunity costs, which may be perceived as sunk costs following electoral defeat. When these material investments fail to translate into electoral success, the resulting cognitive dissonance may lead losing candidates to develop anti-democratic grievances as a means of reconciling their financial and emotional investments with their failure to secure victory.

In addition, structural political conditions may influence losing candidates' grievances after the election. The religious or ideological affiliation of a given political party, in particular, may play a crucial role in shaping responses to electoral defeat. Candidates aligned with religious parties or who hold strong religious convictions may be especially predisposed to distrust unfavorable election outcomes, as they may perceive electoral stakes as fundamentally indivisible (Hassner 2003). In such cases, the victory of a secular or ideologically opposed opponent may appear unacceptable, reinforcing the perception that the electoral process is inherently flawed or illegitimate. Consistent with this argument, Piazza (2022) finds that religious terrorism is more prevalent in democracies where electoral losers reject election results. This suggests that religiously motivated candidates may be more likely to channel electoral grievances into broader anti-democratic attitudes, further destabilizing democratic norms.

Psychological factors: Finally, psychological mechanisms play a significant role in shaping how candidates process electoral defeat. Recent advances in political science emphasize the role of personality traits in shaping political behavior (Dietrich et al. 2012). Studies indicate that leaders with high scores on the Dark

Triad personality traits are more prone to authoritarian behavior and rejection of democratic norms (Nai and Toros 2020). A key factor in this discussion is neuroticism, which refers to a predisposition toward negative emotional responses in the face of frustration or loss. Research suggests that individuals high in neuroticism exhibit greater loss aversion, which could exacerbate the psychological distress of electoral defeat, increasing the likelihood of developing anti-democratic grievances (Oehler and Wedlich 2018).

Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA), which correlates with dogmatism and a preference for hierarchical social structures, may also be an important driver of post election grievance. Candidates with high RWA scores may externalize blame for their defeat, attributing failure to institutional corruption or opposition groups. This hypothesis aligns with findings by Araya (2023), who shows that inexperienced political leaders with dominant personalities in Latin America are more likely to challenge term limits, thereby eroding democratic norms. Such personality-driven responses to political loss may similarly manifest in electoral grievances, with defeated candidates refusing to accept results and instead promoting narratives of electoral fraud or institutional bias.

A final theoretical lens through which to analyze psychological responses to defeat is the concept of frustrated expectations (Gurr 2015; Nielsen 2017). Candidates who are overly confident in their electoral victory may experience significant cognitive dissonance when confronted with an unexpected loss. To alleviate this discomfort, they may engage in election denialism as a psychological defense mechanism, reframing their defeat as illegitimate rather than a reflection of voter preference. This phenomenon aligns with recent theoretical work by Little (2019) on belief distortion, whereby individuals alter their perceptions to maintain self-consistency (Little 2019). In this context, anti-democratic grievances may serve as a means of preserving an underlying and foundational belief in one's strength as a candidate.

3 Why Study Anti-Democratic Grievances in Indonesia?

3.1 Indonesia's Democratic Headwinds

Indonesia held its sixth general election on February 14, 2024 since the return of democracy in 1999. A growing chorus of scholars and watchdogs allege that the strength of Indonesia's democracy has been eroding, especially in the last ten years under the administration of President Joko Widodo (widely known as Jokowi) (Power 2018; Slater 2024). Jokowi has squelched activists and curbed civil liberties, leading Freedom House to label Indonesia as only "partly free." The presidential election featured the arrival of Jokowi's political

dynasty with his son, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, as the vice presidential candidate on Prabowo Subianto's ticket (Mietzner 2024; Wadipalapa and Tyson 2024). It has been widely documented and reported that Jokowi marshaled state resources to corral voters for Prabowo's campaign, targeting social assistance to specific communities in exchange for their wholesale support, leading some to allege that Indonesia sits on the precipice of competitive authoritarianism (Jaffrey and Warburton 2024). The Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) project gave Indonesia a polyarchy score of 0.48 (out of 1) in 2024—a .12 decline from its rating in 2019, when it had its last general election.

Jokowi's strategy focused on the presidential election; but campaigning for local political office in Indonesia also relies on clientelistic exchange, fueling allegations of foul play. Candidates deliver small sums of money, typically 50,000 IDR (approximately 3 USD), to large numbers of voters on the eve of the election in what is referred to as the pre-dawn raid (*serangan fajar*). This is typically carried out by a candidate's campaign team (*tim sukses*), which is comprised of brokers that draw upon family members, friends, and the leaders of civil society organizations (Hicken et al. 2022). Most voters report accepting money from multiple candidates, however, and vote for their true preference anyways. But recent evidence suggests that the practice of vote-buying is moderately effective among certain subpopulations (Muhtadi 2019). In addition to vote buying, candidates for local office will often collude with bureaucrats by promising to secure promotions and desirable transfers on their behalf once in office. Bureaucrats possess discretionary authority over the location of public goods projects in Indonesia, allowing them, if captured by this exchange, to steer resources towards communities that promise to support their preferred candidate at the ballot box (Aspinall and Berenschot 2019). These exchanges are designed to win the support of local leaders, such as village chiefs and neighborhood leaders, who are in turn expected to corral voters.

The key distinction on which this paper depends is that the process of vote-counting in Indonesia is free and fair, even in the presence of widespread pre-election foul play. According to Freedom House's assessment of the 2019 elections, "[l]imited voting irregularities were reported... [and] the contest was largely considered free and fair by international election monitors."¹ Another piece of evidence in support of this claim is that there are comparatively few allegations of vote tampering and misconduct by the KPU or other relevant institutions. Transparency is the central virtue of Indonesia's balloting process. At the village level, Indonesia uses a labor-intensive hand count, which is done in public and overseen by official witnesses and, often, dozens of onlookers. At the subdistrict- and district-level, vote tallies are posted electronically, allowing

1 Freedom House, Freedom in The World, Indonesia Report, 2024. Link [here](#).

for virtual verification on the part of witnesses at lower levels. In advance of the 2024 general election, the KPU has overhauled its voter registry, allaying concerns over ballot-stuffing that might have otherwise stemmed from concerns with outdated voter rolls containing the names of deceased individuals (Soderborg 2023). One recent analysis concludes “the most important indicator of the KPU’s overall success has been that Indonesia’s elections have, with some exceptions, been remarkably peaceful” (Butt and Siregar 2021, 128). In other words, Indonesia’s tiered system of election oversight has produced genuinely fair vote tallies.

Nonetheless, given the precarity of Indonesia’s young democracy, it is especially important to document the effects of electoral defeat on anti-democratic grievances. Although the balloting process has few irregularities, against a backdrop of pre-election malfeasance in which incumbents place can draw on state resources to engage in distributive politics, losing candidates may develop serious and genuine grievances that further delegitimize Indonesia’s fledgling democracy. To date, the most systematic evidence deriving from elite surveys on support for democracy and trust in elections derives from consolidated democracies in which clientelistic exchange is comparatively muted (Nyhan and Reifler 2015).² But there is good reason to expect these effects to be conditioned by the nature of electoral contestation in a patronage democracy such as Indonesia.

3.2 Elections in Indonesia

The 2024 general election combined both legislative and presidential contests. The presidential election was a three-way contest in which Prabowo Subianto, a former military commander and Minister of Defense, secured a decisive victory with over 58% of the vote. The legislative election included races for seats in district-, provincial-, and national-level parliaments and councils. In the end, 18 political parties contested the election, although there was variation in where parties decided to run. At the national level, parties were required to secure at least 4% of the total national vote in order to secure a seat in parliament. In the end, eight political parties passed this threshold and won seats in the national legislature. There was no threshold for representation in district- and provincial-level councils.

In this paper, I focus on candidates contesting seats in the district-level legislature (known as the DPRD-II). There are 514 districts in Indonesia. The median population size of a district is approximately 250,000. Each district is governed by either a mayor (*wali-kota*) or a chief (*bupati*) depending on whether the district is urban (*kota*) or rural (*kabupaten*), respectively. The district legislature is tasked with drafting local laws

² One exception, in the Indonesian context, is the elite survey of DPRD-I members conducted by Fossati et al. (2020).

and monitoring the executive. The size of district legislatures varies between 25-50 seats depending on the population. Positions in the DPRD-II are lucrative. One recent estimate suggests that, including standard allowances, DPRD-II members' monthly salaries range IDR 36m to 45m (US\$2,200 to 2,750), approximately ten-times the size of the median household income in Indonesia (ANTARA News 2024). Moreover, many DPRD-II members, like other politicians in Indonesia, are widely believed to engage in self-dealing and forms of corruption from which they derive even greater income.³

Local legislators are elected to five year terms from multi-member constituencies that vary in magnitude from 3-10 seats. Since 2009, local legislative elections in Indonesia have used a method of open-list proportional representation. The structure of the ballot under open list proportional representation necessitates that candidates differentiate themselves from their co-partisans to jockey for list position (Aspinall 2014). The consequence is to discourage the development of programmatic distinctions between parties, with candidates relying mostly on personalistic appeals. Reflecting the absence of entrenched ideological cleavages is the tendency for political parties to form large coalitions once in power (Slater and Simmons 2013). The nature of local legislative contests in Indonesia thus likely has a muting effect on the grievances that stem from defeat. For one, the open-list ballot means that many candidates lose to their co-partisans, with whom they may have *camaraderie* that alleviates the sting of defeat.

Elections in Indonesia are administered by the General Election Commission (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum*, KPU). The KPU is in charge of the preparations and execution of the balloting process. The vote counting process is carried out by volunteers who were vetted through a recruitment process also carried out by the KPU. Ballots are first counted at the voting booth level (*Tempat Pemungutan Suara*, TPS), of which there are approximately 800,000 in Indonesia. All vote tallies are monitored at the local level by representatives of political parties. Each party representative must affix a signature to a form affirming the legitimacy of the vote tally. The ballots and the vote tallies are then re-calculated at the sub-district level, before being re-calculated again at the district level. The oversight of elections is conducted by the General Election Supervisory Agency (*Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum*, known as *Bawaslu*). *Bawaslu* is also the body to which candidates may submit allegations of misconduct. In the 2024 election, for DPRD-II elections, there were only 469 formal allegations of fraud submitted to *Bawaslu*. Allegations of fraud are adjudicated by the

³ Davidson (2007) reports on a case of a local legislature in West Sumatera voting itself a 400% pay raise, for instance. An indicator of the scale of graft, in the same article, Davidson (2007, 76) estimates that, in 2004, 1,300 local legislators (out of approx. 20,000) were under investigation for corruption.

4 Research Design

4.1 Data

To measure the incidence of anti-democratic grievances, I conducted an original three-wave panel survey of 800 candidates for local legislative office in Indonesia (DPRD-II). Respondents were selected for inclusion in the study through a procedure of stratified random sampling. Specifically, with a local survey firm based in Jakarta, in October 2023, we collected the names and information of all 213,367 candidates running for local legislative office. We imposed three key restrictions on our sampling strategy. First, because we wanted to obtain a sample with a sufficient population of election winners, we excluded individuals who were running with parties polling under an average of 1% of the national vote on October 1, 2023. This yielded ten parties out of the broader list of eighteen.⁴ Second, we restricted our sampling to candidates who were in the top 3 list positions, similarly motivated by the concern that candidates in lower list positions were not viable. Reflecting this, 79.4% of the 14,929 local councilor seats for which there exist election returns were won by candidates in the top 3 list positions. Third, we excluded candidates who were contesting elections on the island of Papua or in the province of Maluku.

Our target for each survey wave was 800 respondents.⁵ We sampled respondents in two stages. First, the primary sampling unit was a district (*kabupaten* or *kota*). We randomly randomly sampled 80 districts. Second, we stratified by party, randomly sampling one respondent from each party across all constituencies. We obtained an initial contact rate of 73.8%. We followed a resampling procedure in which a replacement was randomly selected from within the same party of the candidate who declined.

The surveys were carried out face-to-face in three waves. Wave 1 took place between November 1 - 30, 2023; Wave 2 took place between January 1 - 30, 2023; and Wave 3 took place between March 15 - April 20, 2024.⁶ Respondents were interviewed by the same enumerator each time. Respondents were

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- 4 The parties were: PDI-P, Golkar, NasDem, Gerindra, PPP, PKB, PAN, Perindo, PKS, and Demokrat. One concern is that the exclusion of lesser parties may systematically exclude the candidates most likely to develop grievances following defeat. To examine this possibility, in Table A12, I examine the main effects of electoral defeat across candidates who hail from strong and weak performing parties, detecting no differences in the observed effects.
- 5 This sample size was decided as a function of budget constraints. But in Figure A2, I conduct a formal power analysis.
- 6 This is, to my knowledge, the only panel survey of Indonesian political elites. Fossati et al. (2020) conducted a single wave of an elite survey of DPRD-I members.

not compensated for their participation, although we provided respondents with a briefing on the aggregate results of the previous waves.⁷ Recontact rates were high for an elite panel survey. Enumerators in Wave 2 were able to successfully interview 92% of the respondents contacted in Wave 1; by Wave 3, enumerators were able to re-interview 80.9% of respondents originally contacted in Wave 1. The final sample size of the survey waves were 800, 800, and 799 respondents, comprising 953 unique individuals. In Table A3, I present the demographic composition of the sample, by wave.

4.2 Variables and Outcomes

Enumerators fielded a “core” questionnaire containing the same questions in all three waves. This core questionnaire gauged the “primary outcomes” considered below. These outcomes are summarized in Table A2. First, we measured support for democracy; second, we measured trust in the election (e.g., the extent to which candidates believed the votes were counted fairly). These questions were inspired by Senninger, Bækgaard and Seeberg (2024). For all “families” of primary outcomes, I created an index, which is an average of the numerical values of the outcome measures. The distributions of these indexed outcomes, by wave, can be seen in Figure A1.

Additionally, we measured a series of secondary outcomes that are chiefly used to probe heterogeneity. Here, we focus on three categories, measuring demographic traits, political variables, and psychological factors. On the first count, we cataloged candidates on a standard suite of demographic characteristics, including gender, age, religion, ethnicity, educational background, and income. On political variables, we asked candidates about their campaign expenditures and their perceived chances of success prior to the election. Finally, for the psychological questions, we include questions measuring respondents’ inclination towards Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA), as well as questions capturing respondents’ degree of neuroticism, which were drawn from the standard Big-5 inventory. For the RWA authoritarianism index, the questions were adapted to the Indonesian context to make them culturally relevant (see SA Section A.5; see also Muhtadi (2025) for use of the RWA instrument in the Indonesian context).

The core independent variable on which the ensuing analysis rests is whether a candidate was elected—

⁷ These reports included the (1) demographic composition of the sample, (2) respondents’ views on the most important issues in the constituency, and (3) voters’ views on the most important issue in Indonesia. In the second wave, these reports were randomized to be delivered either at (a) the beginning or (b) the end of the survey as part of the intervention reported in Hsiao and Kuipers (2024). Importantly, because the report was delivered to all candidates, and this intervention took place before the election, it probably had no differential impact on the attitudes of winners and losers, examined here.

or not. On the third wave of the survey, we asked respondents whether or not they had been elected. Out of the 799 respondents who completed the survey in the final wave, 21.5% indicated having been elected. Because candidates may not be truthful, I validate their responses using the publicly released electoral data. This exercise validated 98.1% of respondents' reported electoral outcome. Seven candidates reported having not been elected when they in fact were elected, while eight candidates reported winning the election when they in fact lost. For the purposes of the ensuing main analysis, I use the validated election outcome as the main independent variable.

4.3 Analysis

The key estimand of interest is the effect of either failure or success in the election on candidates' attitudes.⁸ To capture this estimand, under the panel data structure, I use a simple difference-in-differences framework. I estimate the following model:

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 \cdot (T_t D_i) + \beta_2 \cdot T_t + \beta_3 \cdot D_i + \epsilon_i$$

where Y captures the outcome of interest for respondent i in wave t . The key independence variables are T and D where T takes a "1" when $t = 3$ and a "0" when $t \in \{1, 2\}$, while D takes a "1" when i won the election and a "0" when i lost the election. I calculate robust standard errors, clustered at the individual level. The parameter of interest is β_1 and captures the effect of the election outcome on the outcomes of interest. The core identifying assumption of a difference-in-differences design is the so-called parallel trends assumption, which reflects the idea that absent the intervention (D), trends across groups $D = 1$ and $D = 0$ would hold constant. This assumption is unverifiable, although the present research design, with its two pre-intervention observations, offers the opportunity to evaluate its credibility visually by inspecting the trends in the pre-election outcomes.

5 Main Results

5.1 Differential Trends

To start, how do candidates' support for democracy change over time? I begin by presenting a graphical depiction of the findings in Figure 1, plotting the average levels of candidates' support for democracy (left) and trust in the elections (right) over the three waves of the survey, broken down by whether or not the

⁸ Key elements of the research design were pre-registered. I detail deviations from this plan in the SA Section A.2.

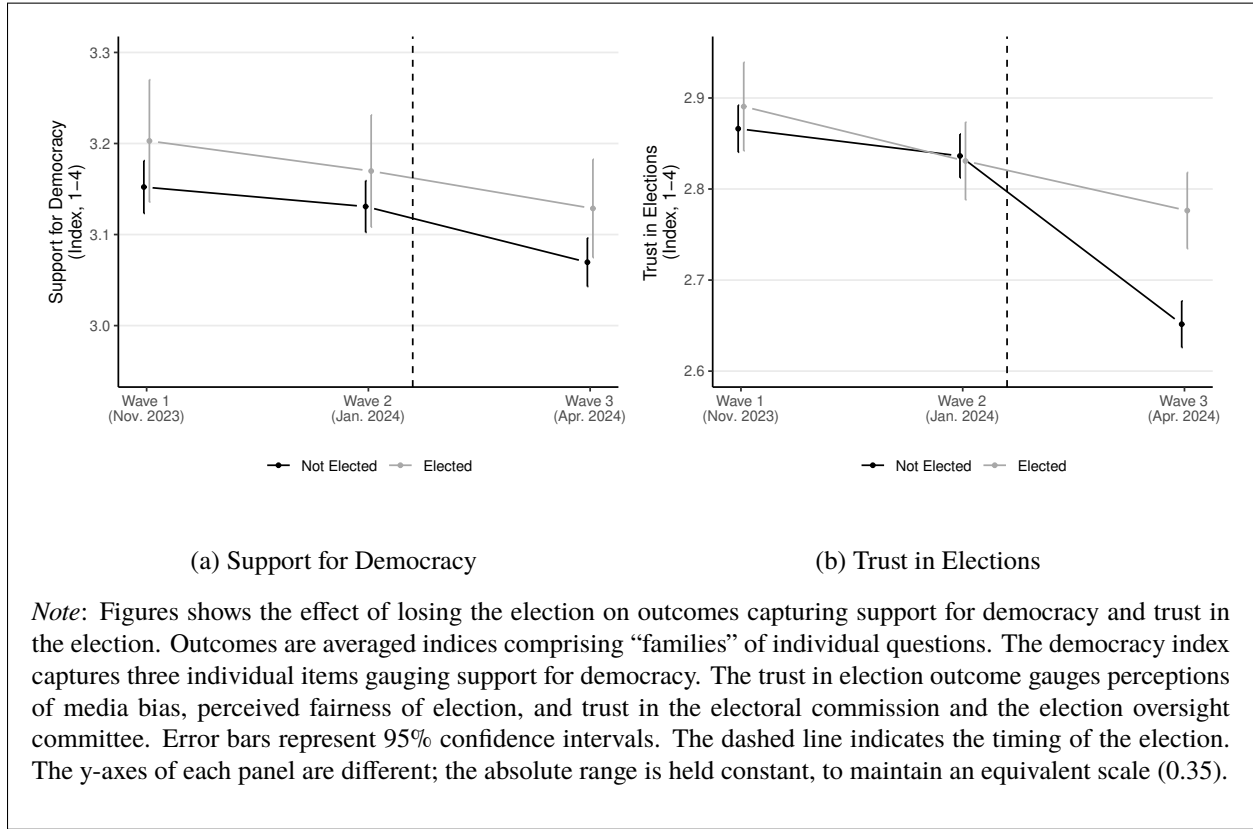
candidate won the election (gray) or lost (black). I include 95% confidence intervals to capture the uncertainty of the estimates. Recall that the election took place after the second wave of the survey.

Three features of these figures are worth highlighting. First, the so-called “pre-trends,” which refer to differences in attitudes across winners and losers before the election, indicate that there are no differences in terms of trust in elections across the two groups before the election. The left-hand panel suggests that election losers are less supportive of democracy when compared to election winners, even before the election, but the trend between wave 1 and 2 suggest that the “parallel trends” assumption is satisfied. Second, the level of support for democracy is high. Concretely, 95.9% of respondents in Wave 3 either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the statement that “compared to other forms of government, democracy is the best form for Indonesia.” The same is true for trust in elections, on the right-hand panel. Before the election, in wave 1 of the survey, 93.6% of candidates reported “somewhat” or “strongly” trusting the Indonesian electoral commission (KPU). Third, for both outcomes, for both winners and losers, there appears to be a secular decline over the course of the election. Running for office is tiresome and democracy’s virtues may appear distant to winners and losers alike as the campaign wears on.

For a formal analysis of the effects of electoral defeat on the main outcomes of interest, I present my results in tabular format in Table 1. In columns (2) and (4) I include individual-level fixed effects. Consistent with the visual inspection of the data in Figure 1, the first row of Table 1 indicates that there was a post-election drop in trust in elections for all candidates, and this finding is robust to the inclusion of individual-level fixed effects ($p < 0.01$). The third row captures the key parameter of interest: the effect of losing (versus winning) the election. Here, I estimate the effect of losing an election to lead to a -0.11 point drop in trust, corresponding to 3.8% decline over the levels observed at baseline ($p < 0.01$). The magnitude of this effect is attenuated with the inclusion of individual-level fixed effects, but remains statistically significant, as shown in column (2). The results presented in the right-hand panel of Figure 1 offer evidence in support of the “sore loser” hypothesis: candidates who fail to win elections turn against the legitimacy of the institution itself, above and beyond the declines in trust observed among election winners.

Columns (3) and (4) examine support for democracy. The first row presents some evidence that, post-election, there is a drop in faith in democracy across all candidates, but this result is not robust to the inclusion of individual-level fixed effects. Again, however, the main parameter of interest is in the third row, which captures the effect of electoral defeat on support for democracy. Here, Table 1 shows that there is no evidence of a differential decline in support for democracy across candidates who were elected versus not elected ($p =$

Figure 1—Candidate Support for Democracy and Trust in Elections



0.73), suggesting that defeat does not shake candidates’ faith in the broader value of democratic elections. It is worth underscoring that this stands against my pre-registered expectations.

Table 1: Effect of Electoral Defeat on Main Outcomes

	Trust in Elec.		Supp. for Dem.	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post Election	-0.085*** (0.024)	-0.097*** (0.026)	-0.058* (0.030)	-0.040 (0.032)
Outcome: Lost	-0.010 (0.022)		-0.045 (0.030)	
Post x Lost	-0.115*** (0.028)	-0.091*** (0.030)	-0.014 (0.033)	-0.026 (0.035)
Num.Obs.	2391	2391	2394	2394
R2	0.071	0.610	0.011	0.625
Individual FEs	✗	✓	✗	✓

Notes: This table presents the results of the main analysis that looks at trust in elections (columns (1)-(2)) and support for democracy (columns (3)-(4)). Columns (1) and (3) are without any individual fixed effects and report the benchmark specification. Columns (2) and (4) include unit fixed effects. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

5.2 Secular Trends

While the principal aim of this paper is to estimate the effect of electoral defeat on candidates' political attitudes, the panel design also permits an exploration of secular trends in the main outcomes across all candidates over time. In principle, these trends can be observed visually in Figure 1. But for a more formal analysis, in Table 2, I conduct within-subject panel regressions using individual fixed effects. These models have the advantage of controlling for individual-level time invariant traits, while examining candidates' attitudes over the course of the election. The first four columns include all candidates, irrespective of the electoral outcome; whereas columns (5)-(8) focus on just winners, on the view that this group were the "reference" category in the difference-in-differences models presented above.

Table 2: Within-Subject Panel Analysis

	All Candidates				Winning Candidates			
	Supp. for Dem.		Trust in Elec.		Supp. for Dem.		Trust in Elec.	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post Election	-0.061*** (0.013)		-0.169*** (0.014)		-0.040 (0.032)		-0.097*** (0.026)	
Wave 2 (ref. Wave 1)		-0.020 (0.015)		-0.036*** (0.012)		-0.033 (0.036)		-0.065** (0.026)
Wave 3 (ref. Wave 1)		-0.071*** (0.016)		-0.188*** (0.016)		-0.057 (0.038)		-0.131*** (0.031)
Num.Obs.	2394	2394	2391	2391	500	500	500	500
R2	0.625	0.625	0.607	0.609	0.647	0.648	0.608	0.616
Individual FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes: This table presents the results of a within-unit panel analysis. Columns (1)-(2) and (5)-(6) look at support for democracy; Columns (3)-(4) and (7)-(8) look at trust in elections. The first four columns examine within-unit trends among all candidates, while the last four columns look just among losing candidates. The trends among losing candidates, meanwhile, can be inferred from Table 1. There are two different explanatory variables: the first *PostElection* is a binary indicator variable capturing if the respondent was interviewed before (0) or after (1) the election. The other two variables *Wave2* and *Wave3* are indicators that take a "1" if the respondent was interviewed in that wave and a "0" otherwise. All models include individual-level fixed effects. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

The results reveal that both trust in electoral institutions and support for democracy declined modestly over the course of the campaign and post-election period. Columns (4) and (8) reveal that, by wave 2, trust in elections fell by approximately 0.036 and 0.065 points for all candidates and the subset of winners, respectively, compared to wave one. These trends begin even before the election took place (after wave 2), suggesting that electoral contestation itself—rather than the outcome of the election—generates distrust of the election institutions. This result may simply represent fatigue. Another conjecture is that there exist distinct

mechanisms underpinning the decline in trust for both losers and winners. Losers are understandably bitter in a way winners are not, as I discuss in the next section. But the number of interactions with the electoral authorities for both winners and losers increases over the course of the campaign—perhaps more sharply for winners—which may generate less (rather than more) confidence in their capacity.

The second conclusion to draw from Table 2 concerns the trends in respondents’ faith in democracy, observed in Columns (1)-(2) and (5)-(6). Two things stand out. First, I detect no statistically significant decline in faith in democracy among election winners, either over the course of the campaign, or in the aftermath of the election, although the point estimates suggest a negative trend. It is thus worth underscoring that the pool of winning candidates in the sample is small ($N = 205$). Second, looking at the broader pool of all candidates, I observe a post-election decline in the faith of democracy of -0.061 (on the 4 point index) (see column (1)). But, importantly, the results presented in column (2) highlight that candidates did not report a drop in faith in democracy over the course of the campaign; instead, only after the election, in wave 3, do I observe a -0.071 decline in the index.

6 Mechanisms, Robustness, and Extensions

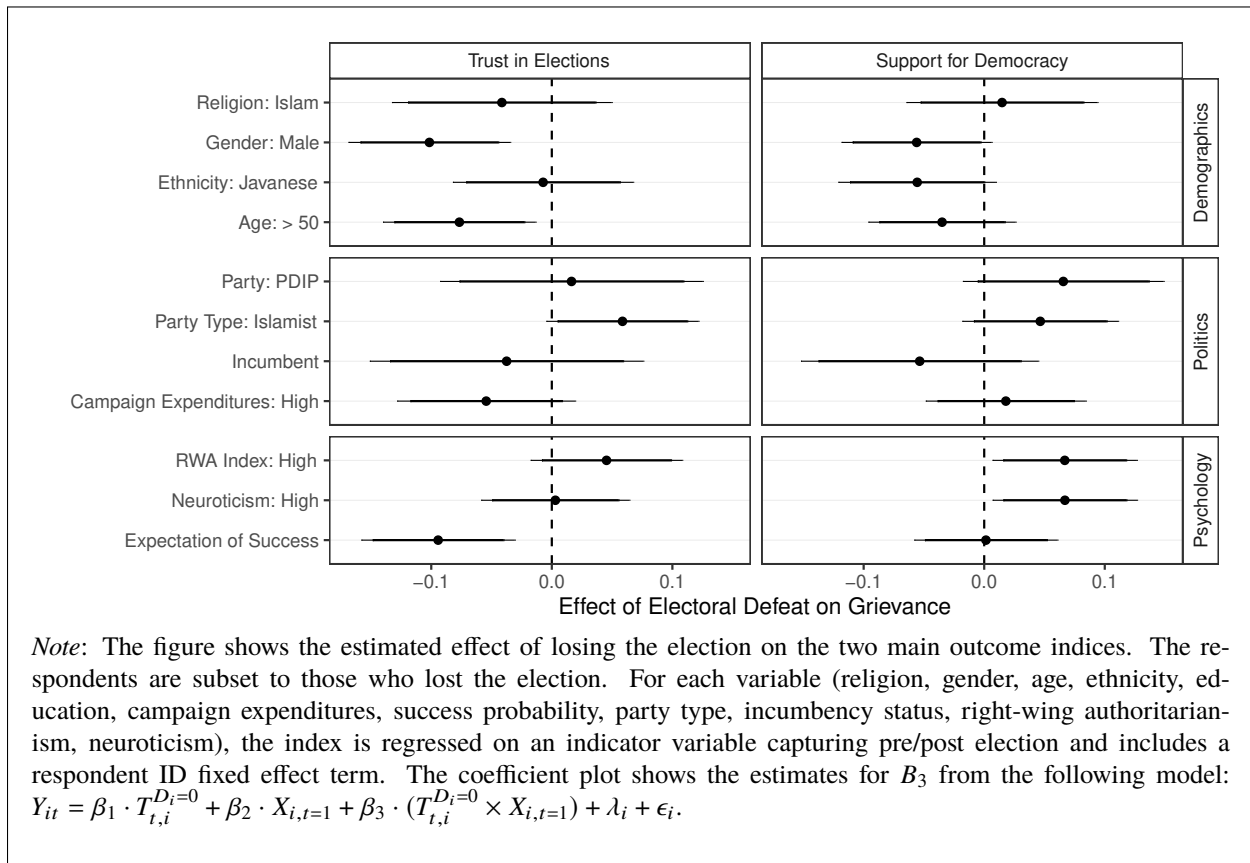
6.1 Mechanisms

What explains the results? Figure 2 presents the results of the statistical tests probing heterogeneity in the main results by focusing on candidates’ pre-election demographic traits, political characteristics, of psychological measurements. Here, I conduct a series of interacted panel regressions in which I run interrupted time-series regressions separately for losers. The coding scheme for the variable splits can be found in SA Section A.5. Specifically, these are bivariate regressions that compare respondents’ scores on the indices of interest before ($T = 0$) and after ($T = 1$) the election. On the vertical axis of Figure 2 are the variables along which I split the sample of losers. The top panel focuses on demographic variables, the middle panel examines so-called political variables, and the bottom panel examines psychological explanations through which electoral outcomes might affect candidates’ trust in elections.

Three variables merit attention. First, looking at demographic variables, I find that older candidates who lose elections report much larger declines in trust in elections compared to younger candidates who lose. The youngest candidates (<50 y.o.) are half as likely as the oldest candidates (>50 y.o.) to trust elections. To put things even more concretely: using a pre/post indicator variable, and individual fixed effects, I find

that losing candidates who are under thirty years old only reported a 4.9 percentage point drop in trust in the Indonesian electoral commission. Meanwhile, losing candidates who are over the age of 50 reported a 13 percentage point drop—nearly two and half times as large. For reference, the average life expectancy in Indonesia is 68 years old. One conjecture is to view the decline in trust in elections as a strategic gambit on the part of older candidates who face constrained time horizons to secure elected office. They may not harbor genuine grievances, but nonetheless seek to performatively impugn the credibility of the electoral institutions that delivered them defeat in a last ditch attempt to secure office.

Figure 2—Heterogeneity in Candidate Candidate Trust in Elections among Losers



Second, losing candidates who are men have larger drops in trust in elections than losing candidates who are women. This finding builds on a rich literature in gender and politics, as well as in education, in which scholars have found that men are less resilient than women in the face of adversity. It is worth underscoring that the magnitude of this particular effect, while statistically significant, is not as pronounced as the other heterogeneous treatment effects. Again, using the binary outcome looking at trust in the Indonesian electoral

commission, and individual-level fixed effects among election losers, men reported a 12.4pp drop, compared to women who reported a 10.8pp drop. My preferred interpretation of this finding is that men are more likely to externalize blame for their defeat, above and beyond women, and seek to slough responsibility for their loss onto institutional shortcomings or undesirable outgroups. This finding builds on a growing body of research in political science showing that men respond to challenging circumstances by adopting adversarial political attitudes (Cassino and Besen-Cassino 2021).

Third, in the baseline survey, we asked respondents to estimate their probability of winning the election. Splitting respondents according to whether they estimated a high or low chance of success, the estimates presented in Figure 2 show that candidates who lost but who believed to have a high chance of success at baseline report a drop in trust in elections that is approximately twice as large as candidates who lost but who believed they had a low chance of victory at baseline. In concrete terms, this is the most impactful variable in the heterogeneity analysis: candidates with high expectations of victory, who lost, reported an 18.3pp drop in trust in the electoral commission, compared to those who had low expectations of victory and also lost, who reported a 6.9pp drop. This finding points to the role of candidates’ *a priori* expectations in conditioning the effect of electoral defeat on trust in elections.

6.2 Robustness

Readers may wonder about the robustness of the results. Two econometric concerns merit attention. First, in Figure A8, I examine the effect of electoral defeat on the main outcomes, using an alternative difference-in-differences estimator, proposed by Callaway and Sant’Anna (2021), finding the results to be robust to this alternative specification. In Figure A9, I also detect no “anticipation” effects or pre-election differences in the trends across winners and losers. Second, Table A5 shows that there were important differences between attriters and non-attriters. To examine the possibility that these differences may be biasing the main results, I construct a measure that captures respondents’ inverse propensity to attrit as a function of demographic characteristics, using these as weights in the benchmark regression models. I present these results in Table A6, showing the results to be substantively unchanged. The results are substantively identical to those contained in the main analysis, suggesting that the observed differential attrition may not have influenced the main results.

Another concern relates to measurement validity.⁹ First, and especially for the individual items contained

9 The outcomes are indexed items, collapsed into “families” of questions. But readers may wish to examine the effects of electoral

in the “Support for Democracy” family of outcomes, readers may wonder if the meaning of the individual items carry a different valence for supporters of the incumbent government. To examine this, I break out respondents by which coalition their party is associated with, where the KIM (*Koalisi Indonesia Maju*) reflects supporters of the (at the time) incumbent Jokowi administration. I present the results of the individual-item analysis, broken down by coalition, in Table A8, finding no differences in the effect of electoral defeat across the groups. Second, social desirability bias may lead respondents to understate the extent to which they detest democracy, or distrust the election results. To gauge this possibility, I use the method proposed by Malik and Siddiqui (2024), leveraging the presence of an additional person over the course of the interview. I present a split-sample analysis in Table A13, finding that the decline in trust in elections is concentrated among respondents who were alone for the interview, suggesting that social desirability bias may be attenuating the results. However, the magnitude of the effect is small and the difference between those who had a bystander present for the interview is itself not statistically significant.

Readers may wonder about the extent to which the results are conditioned by the widespread clientelistic exchange that characterizes Indonesia’s patronage democracy. I examine this question from two sources of heterogeneity. First, I examine heterogeneity in the main results according to provincial-level averages in the reported extent of vote buying.¹⁰ I present the results in Table A15, which reveals that, although the difference is not statistically significant, the magnitude of the effect of electoral defeat on trust in elections is *larger* in places where vote buying is believed to be low. Second, one of the main pathways of clientelistic exchange during the 2024 election was Jokowi’s use of state resources—social assistance, especially—to reward potential voters. The distribution of these resources flowed at least partially through local officials, about half of whom were appointed by Jokowi himself, with the other half having been democratically elected.¹¹ In Table A16, I leverage this variation to examine if the experience of electoral defeat on anti-democratic grievances was more pronounced in the locations where centrally directed clientelistic exchange was likely higher. While the magnitude of the effect is indeed larger in locations with appointed mayors, it is not statistically distinguishable from the effect observed in places with democratically elected mayors.

defeat on the individual items in Figure A10.

10 To do so, I leverage over 100,000 responses from Indonesian voters collected in the SIKAP project over the course of the 2024 election campaign (November 2023 to September 2024) in which respondents were quizzed about their experience having been offered cash in exchange for their vote.

11 In 2022, importantly, all mayors whose terms did not end in 2024 (approximately half) were removed from office so that the local election calendar could be harmonized starting in 2024. This meant that half of all mayors owed their positions to Jokowi.

6.3 Extensions

I also explore several extensions that explore additional avenues for interpreting the main findings. One outstanding question concerns the finding that candidates' perceived probability of success is an influential determinant of the observed decline in trust in elections among losers. This variable is likely correlated with others: it seems likely, for instance, that candidates who spent considerable sums of money on their campaign also anticipated winning. Similarly, men are likely to be more confident in their chances of victory than women. To disentangle the relative significance of these covarying mechanisms, I conduct additional analyses in which I split respondents according to whether they believed they had a high or low chance of victory, along the different dimensions of the covariates. I present the results of these analyses in Tables A9 and A10. Two findings stand out when focusing on the trust in elections outcome. First, Table A9 reveals that men—regardless of their stated probability of success—are more likely to report declines in trust after losing the election. Second, Table A10 suggests that expenditures matter little; candidates who spent very little but had high perceived chances of success were nonetheless likely to report declines in trust in elections after losing their contests.

A second extension investigates an alternative counterfactual groups. Up until now, the analyses have compared the trends in attitudes of winning and losing candidates. But to benchmark the effect of losing an election, above and beyond the broader decline in trust in electoral institutions that may have been reported by the broader population, it may be profitable to evaluate trends against a population of counterfactual non-candidates. To identify these “synthetic” candidates, I draw on SIKAP data, which is a weekly survey of 1,650 Indonesian voters conducted over the course of 58 weeks between 2023 and 2025, comprising a total of nearly 100,000 respondents. Using a suite of demographic variables consistent across the candidate survey and the SIKAP data, I construct a predicted probability of running for DPRD-II for each individual in the SIKAP data. Subsetting to those with high predicted probabilities (typically wealthy, older, well-educated men), I track their attitudes on reported trust in the Indonesian electoral commission—which is the single outcome variable consistent across the data sources. The results of this analysis are presented in Figure A6. Two findings stand out. First, at baseline, prior to the election, trust in the electoral commission across all three groups of respondents was statistically indistinguishable. Second, while I observe declines in the outcome among candidates, especially losing ones, I do not observe a statistically significant drop in trust in the electoral commission among “synthetic” candidates. I interpret this as evidence that the experience of

losing an election was especially consequential—above and beyond trends observed in the broader population over the course of the campaign cycle.

A final line of inquiry concerns the possibility of regional variation in the observed results. Indonesia is a diverse country with wide variation in local political culture across its major island groups. To probe whether candidates responded differently to electoral outcomes, I examine changes in candidate outcomes across four major island groups: Sumatera, Java, Kalimantan, and Eastern Indonesia. I present the results in Table A14. The results indicate that the decline in trust in elections is driven by electoral defeat on Java, Sumatera, and in Eastern Indonesia; there was no decline in trust in Kalimantan.

7 Discussion and Conclusion

This paper investigates how the attitudes of candidates for elected office in Indonesia changed over the course of the 2024 election. The main finding of this paper is to demonstrate that candidates report modest declines in trust in electoral institutions and support for democracy over the course of a campaign, with the effects concentrated among losers. The interpretation I have developed revolves around, first, a theory of frustrated expectations: I show that candidates who had high expectations of victory *ex ante* are those that report the sharpest declines in trust following defeat. Second, showing that older candidates who lose report larger declines in trust than younger candidates who lose, I argue that constrained time horizons may generate incentives to mount “last ditch” efforts to distrust election results. In other words, candidates for elected office are human and evidently susceptible to quotidian forms of hubris that, at scale, may be present challenges for the durability of democratic norms. Institutional design is crucial in stemming the tide of democratic backsliding; but, losing is an inescapable consequence of all forms of selection, democratic or otherwise, meaning scholars should take seriously the inevitable grievances that arise.

These findings contribute to political scientists’ understanding of the determinants of trust in fair elections—a topic that has taken on a heightened salience in recent years. This work thus also relates to the growing scholarly literature on the role of support for democratic norms and its relationship to democratic backsliding. Much of this work focuses on understanding the correlates of the mass public’s attitudes regarding trust in the electoral process (e.g., Holliday et al. 2025). Recent work in this vein suggests that members of the mass public may develop anti-democratic grievances when their preferred candidate loses an election even in the absence of elite rhetoric activating them to adopt such beliefs (Reller, Anderson and Kousser 2022). But, on balance, the thrust of nearly two generations’ worth of research points to the pivotal role played by elites in

forging the attitudes of the mass public on any range of issues—including trust in elections. In experimental manipulations in the United States, political scientists have uncovered robust evidence that citizens can be either positively or negatively swayed by public officials’ rhetoric on electoral integrity (Clayton et al. 2021).

The advantage of the present research is to offer a glimpse into the determinants of processes that occur earlier in the chain of events that culminate with elites deploying rhetoric to sway the attitudes of the mass public on election integrity. Albeit in a single and limited context, the evidence presented in this paper has provided a credible and nationally representative estimate of candidates’ distrust of electoral institutions that experimental manipulations take for granted. Largely a function of its heavy emphasis on the mass public as its target population, much of the policy-oriented research on the erosion of democratic norms is geared towards identifying interventions that can effectively “inoculate” citizens from manipulative elite rhetoric (Carey et al. 2024). It is my hope that, by identifying several key drivers of elite distrust of electoral institutions—elevated expectations, age, gender—this research may spark greater investigation into strategies for “inoculating” *candidates* rather than *citizens* from developing a predisposition towards such rhetoric in the first place. A growing literature on the topic of political ambition and selection may hold important clues in this regard (Carnes and Lupu 2025; Fox and Lawless 2014). The key to stemming the tide of such rhetoric in the first place may involve encouraging the sorts of individuals who are otherwise generally unlikely to run for office, but are evidently the least likely to dispute credible election results when they lose: younger and female candidates, as well as those without *a priori* inflated expectations of victory.

There are several limitations of the present research which represent grounds for future research. For one, the electoral context is unique. Indonesia’s system of multi-member open-list proportional representation generates unusual axes of competition. Because candidates may lose but simultaneously witness their copartisans win in the same constituency, the nature of grievances associated with electoral defeat may be more muted in this context than elsewhere. Similarly, I have focused on the outcomes of electoral contests over comparatively minor political offices, which perhaps explains the relative magnitude of observed declines in electoral trust. It seems plausible that the grievances that naturally flow from electoral defeat scale as a positive function of the stakes of the election itself. Future research may profit from undertaking the more ambitious and costly effort to track attitudes of, say, candidates for national legislative office.

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9 Biographical Statement

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A Descriptive Statistics and Preliminaries

A.1 Ethics

As with all studies involving human subjects, readers may wonder about the ethical concerns of this study. Importantly, all protocols involved in this study were approved the National University of Singapore Institutional Review Board. Enumerators were trained in ethical research practices and obtained written consent from all participants in advance of each wave of the survey. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research. To be clear: candidates for elected office in Indonesia are public officials and are accustomed to scrutiny by journalists and voters, suggesting that the questionnaire constituted no more harm than what they encounter in daily life. However, as the study was carried out during an election, and contained information about candidates' strategies and attitudes that may have affected voters' decisions, we were cautious to design the study in a manner that would mitigate any potential influence on the election outcome by, first, ensuring the anonymity of candidates' responses. Second, importantly, along with the local survey partner, we also ensured that no aggregate information about the candidates collected from waves one or two was revealed to voters in advance of the election, thus managing concerns that this study may have impacted the outcome of elections. To the best of our knowledge, there were no adverse consequences reporting from participating in the research.

A.2 Pre-Registration and Deviations

I pre-registered key aspects of the main analysis on the Open Science Framework registry. I deviate from the pre-registered analysis in my econometric approach. Specifically, I mis-specified the model in the pre-registration plan. There, I registered an intention to estimate a two-way fixed effect model, including time-period and unit fixed effects. However, instead, I present my results in a canonical difference-in-differences framework. In Figure A8 I show my results are robust to alternative methods.

On the guidance of feedback received in the course of presenting this paper, I have also deviated from the pre-analysis plan by focusing on the two above-listed “primary outcomes,” which are comprised of what was initially pre-registered as a single outcome under the label of “electoral integrity.” The decision to focus on these outcomes, relegates several other outcomes to the appendix that I had pre-registered an intention to analyze. I outline these deviations in Table A1. Specifically, I had pre-registered an intention to look at changes in (1) the extent to which respondents trusted political leaders, such as the office of the president and the local district executive, as well as the extent to which they trusted (2) individual peers, such as local business leaders, neighbors, and their family. I also measured candidates’ beliefs about the factors that are important for success in a legislative election, focusing on both (3) factors internal to the candidate and (4) factors external to the candidate, (5) ethnic outgroup animosity, and (6) partisan outgroup animosity. Comments received from peers in the course of soliciting feedback suggested instead focusing on the two “primary” outcomes which collectively point more coherently towards “anti-democratic grievances.” In the interest of transparency, I include an analysis of these additional outcomes in Table A4.

Table A1: Pre-Registered vs New Variables Analysis

Pre-Registered Variables	New Variables	Justification for Deviation	Location of Analysis
Primary Outcomes			
Election Integrity	Support for Democracy	Conceptual distinction	Table 1
	Trust in Elections	—	Table 1
Secondary Outcomes			
Intolerance	Partisan Animosity	Conceptual distinction	Table A4
	Ethnic Animosity	—	Table A4
Reasons for Victory/Loss	—	—	Table A4
Institutional Trust	—	—	Table A4
Heterogeneity Analyses			
Campaign expenditures	—	—	Figure 2
RWA Index	—	—	Figure 2
Neuroticism	—	—	Figure 2
Expectations of victory	—	—	Figure 2
Internal motivation	—	—	Figure 2
Time spent campaigning	—	—	Figure 2
—	Age	Peer-feedback	Figure 2
—	Gender	Peer-feedback	Figure 2
—	Party-type	Peer-feedback	Figure 2
—	Incumbency	Peer-feedback	Figure 2
—	Ethnicity/Religion	Peer-feedback	Figure 2

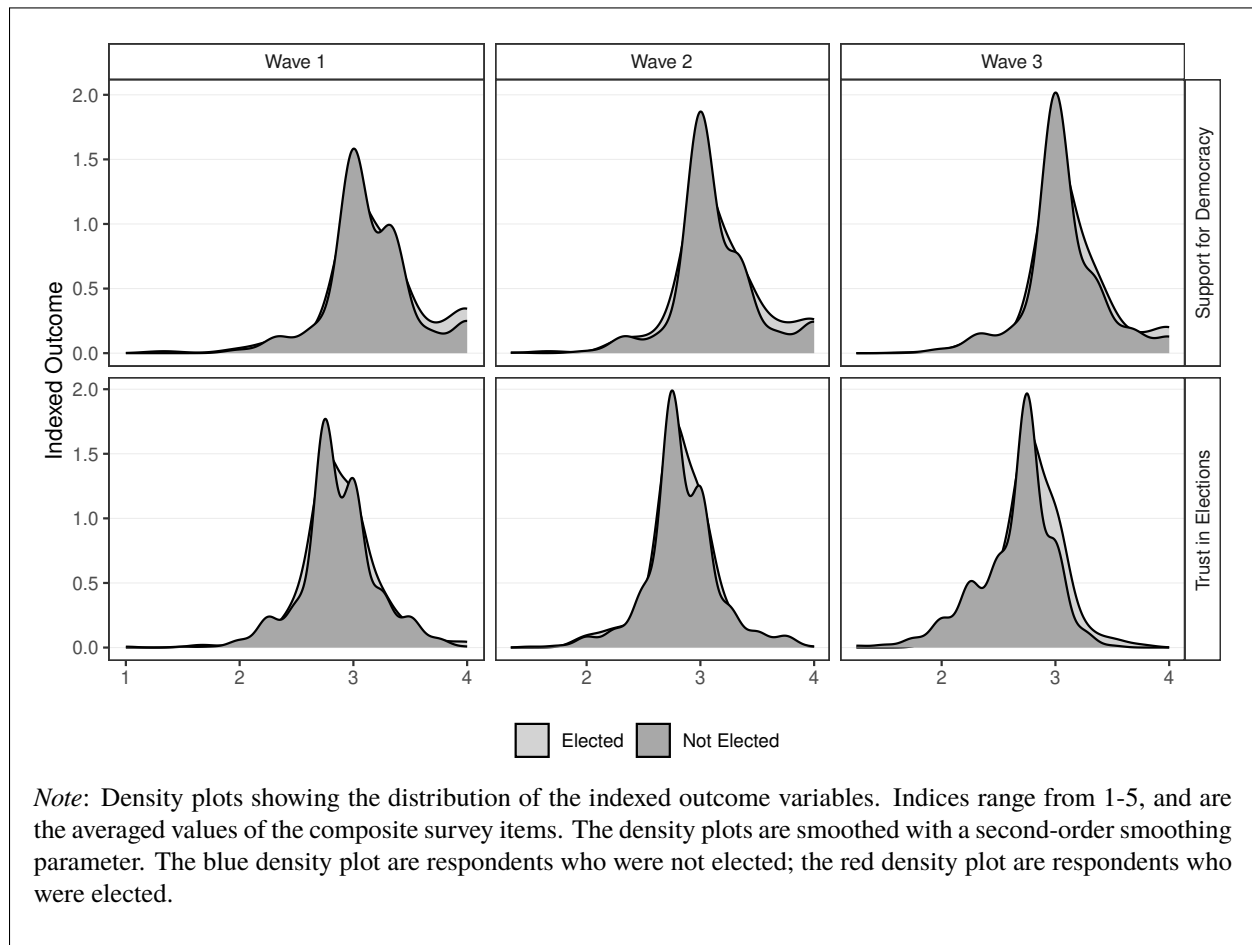
A.3 Descriptive Statistics

Table A2: Summary statistics.

Measure	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min.	Median	Max.
<i>Individual Items (Outcomes)</i>						
Regional media bias	2326	2.23	0.62	1	2	4
Vote total reflects the will of voters	2358	3.02	0.54	1	3	4
Trust: Electoral commission (KPU)	2371	2.98	0.44	1	3	4
Trust: Election supervisory committee (Bawaslu)	2372	2.94	0.46	1	3	4
Agree: Democracy is the best form for Indonesia	2392	3.31	0.52	1	3	4
Agree: Democracy is the cause of the chaos in our government	2383	3.03	0.47	1	3	4
Agree: Democracy is the reason for our bad economy	2383	3.05	0.43	1	3	4
<i>Indexed Items (Outcomes)</i>						
Trust in Elections	2391	2.80	0.33	1	2.75	4
Support for Democracy	2394	3.13	0.37	1.33	3	4
<i>Sources of Heterogeneity</i>						
Campaign Expenditures: High	2071	0.40	0.49	0	0	1
Expectations of Success: High	2195	0.53	0.50	0	1	1
Javanese	2399	0.27	0.44	0	0	1
Muslim	2399	0.87	0.33	0	1	1
Age: > 50	2399	0.34	0.47	0	0	1
Party: Islamist	2399	0.30	0.46	0	0	1
Party: PDIP	2399	0.10	0.30	0	0	1
Gender: Man	2399	0.74	0.44	0	1	1
RWA: High	2399	0.36	0.48	0	0	1
Neuroticism: High	2399	0.32	0.47	0	0	1
Incumbent	2399	0.16	0.37	0	0	1
<i>Other Covariates</i>						
Location: Java	2399	0.30	0.46	0	0	1
Location: Sumatera	2399	0.32	0.47	0	0	1
Location: Kalimantan	2399	0.13	0.33	0	0	1
District: Urban	2399	0.19	0.39	0	0	1
Election Outcome: Won	2399	0.21	0.41	0	0	1
College Educated	2399	0.65	0.48	0	1	1
Income > 10m IDR	2399	0.45	0.50	0	0	1
List Position	2399	1.89	0.80	1	2	4
Outsider Present for Interview	2399	0.25	0.44	0	0	1

A.4 Outcome Distributions

Figure A1—Outcome Distributions



A.5 Heterogeneous Treatment Effect Variables, Recoding

In Figure 2, I rely on split sample analyses. For the demographic variables, these categories are straightforward (e.g., man and woman, Muslim or other religion, etc.). But for two of the political variables, I adopt an alternative approach that used median values to collapse and categorize outcomes in binary measures of “high” or “low.” For instance, for the expectation of success, 53.5% of respondents indicated that they believed they had at least a 80-100% chance of victory. Hence, I split the sample at this value. I describe these coding schemes below.

1. “How much have you spent to date to finance your campaign?”

$$\text{Campaign Expenditures} = \begin{cases} \text{High} & \text{if } > 50\text{m IDR} \\ \text{Low} & \text{if } < 50\text{m IDR} \\ \text{NA} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

2. “How would you rate your chances of success in the upcoming election?”

$$\text{Success Probability} = \begin{cases} \text{High} & \text{if “Very high, or about 80-100\%”} \\ \text{Low} & \text{if “Somewhat high, or about 60-80\%”} \\ \text{Low} & \text{if “Reasonable, or about 40-60\%”} \\ \text{Low} & \text{if “Low chance, or about 20-40\%”} \\ \text{Low} & \text{if “Very low chance, or about 0-20\%”} \\ \text{NA} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

For other psychological variables (RWA Index, Neuroticism), I constructed the variable splits by obtaining the median value of the index and assigning “high” to respondents above the median value for each respective index and “low” for those below. The question text comprising these indices are provided below.

Right-Wing Authoritarianism (4-point Likert scale):

- Please rate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements? Looking at the situation in this country, more firm/tough action is needed to deal with troublemakers and criminals
- Please rate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements? It is better to trust the views of government leaders than to listen to provocateurs in our society who try to create public doubt
- Please rate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements? It is important to protect the rights of radical and deviant groups in society (such as Communists, Hizbut Tahrir, Darul Islam, etc.)
- Please rate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements? When the government condemns dangerous groups in society, every citizen is obliged to help eliminate threats that endanger the country from within
- Please rate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements? Among the worst people in our country today are those who do not respect our flag, our leaders and the things that should be respected

Neuroticism (4-point Likert scale):

- The following is a list of a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree that the following statement matches your personality traits?
I tend to be relaxed and can handle stress well
- The following is a list of a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree that the following statement matches your personality traits?
I can become irritable
- The following is a list of a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree that the following statement matches your personality traits?
I tend to be calm in tense situations
- The following is a list of a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree that the following statement matches your personality traits?
I usually worry or worry a lot

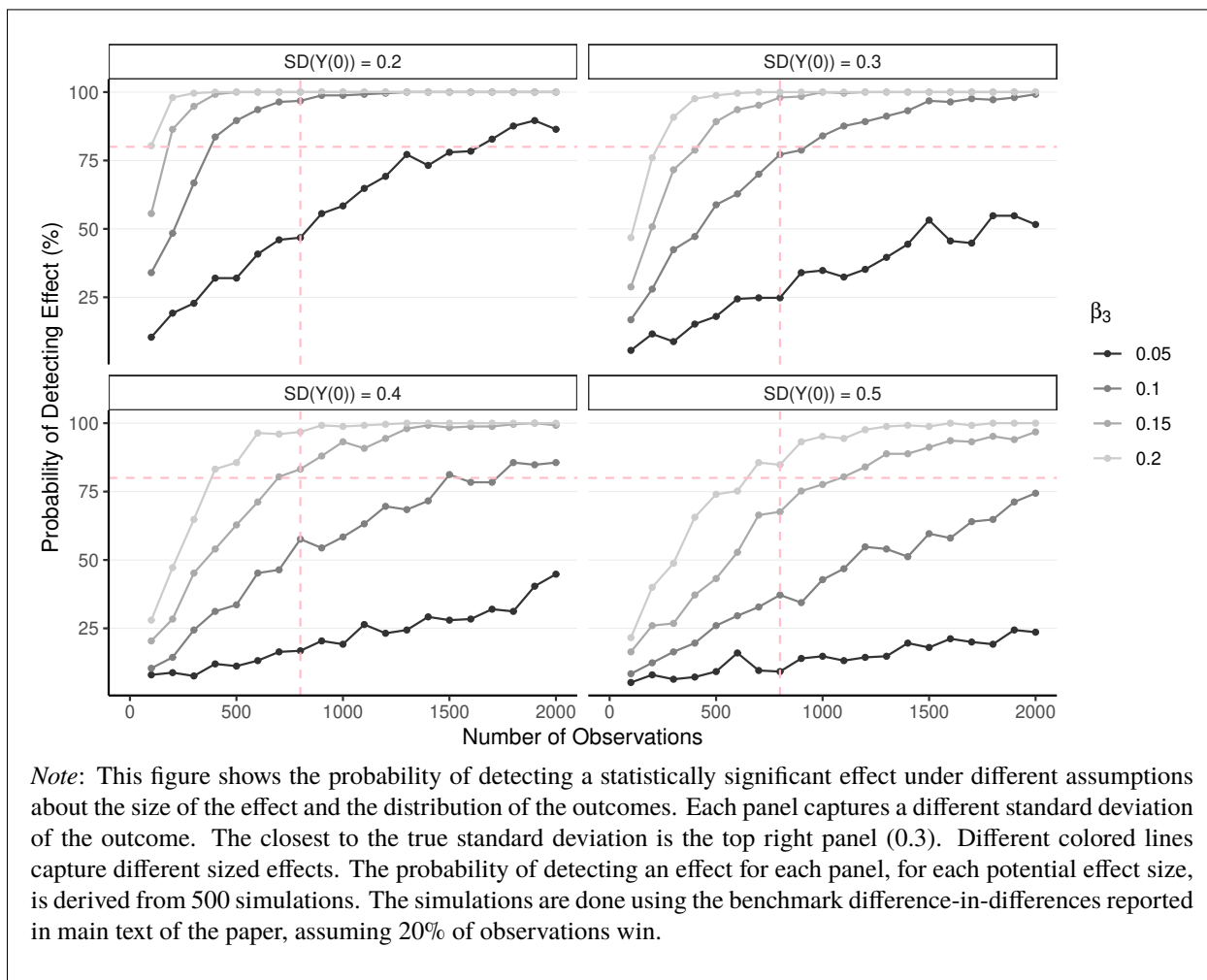
A.6 Demographic Composition of Survey, by Wave

Table A3: Demographic Composition, by Survey Wave

Measure	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3
<i>Basic Demographics</i>			
Male	0.731	0.740	0.741
Age	44.917	45.059	45.120
List Position	1.871	1.888	1.897
<i>Education</i>			
Secondary	0.349	0.348	0.353
University	0.524	0.529	0.523
Postgraduate	0.128	0.121	0.123
<i>Religion</i>			
Muslim	0.870	0.873	0.874
Christian	0.115	0.114	0.114
Other Religion	0.015	0.014	0.013
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
Javanese	0.264	0.272	0.272
Sundanese	0.070	0.070	0.074
Malay	0.124	0.125	0.121
Bugis	0.066	0.059	0.064
Other Ethnicity	0.476	0.478	0.472

A.7 Power Analyses

Figure A2—Power Analyses



B Additional Analyses

B.1 Other Pre-Registered Outcomes

B.1.1 Tabular Presentation

Table A4: Effect of Electoral Defeat on Secondary Outcomes

	Animosity		Trust		Reasons for Outcome	
	Ethnic	Partisan	Inst.	Indiv.	External	Internal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Post Election	0.075* (0.045)	-0.154** (0.063)	-0.035 (0.097)	-0.357*** (0.089)	-0.026 (0.030)	-0.003 (0.029)
Outcome: Lost	0.135*** (0.046)	-0.021 (0.060)	-0.155 (0.109)	-0.179** (0.083)	0.001 (0.027)	0.052* (0.030)
Post x Lost	-0.053 (0.049)	0.055 (0.069)	-0.263** (0.109)	-0.210** (0.102)	-0.018 (0.033)	-0.043 (0.033)
Num.Obs.	2395	2042	2398	2398	2394	2396
R2	0.008	0.007	0.013	0.050	0.003	0.004

Notes: This table presents the estimates of electoral defeat on the other pre-registered outcomes not presented in the main text of the paper. Each outcome is an indexed outcome averaging across the individual survey items. Columns (1) and (2) look at outgroup ethnic and partisan animosity, respectively. Columns (3) and (4) look at individuals trust in institutions and individuals, respectively. And columns (5) and (6) look at respondents beliefs about the reasons for the election outcome, either external or internal, also respectively. Robust standard errors, clustered at the individual level, are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

B.1.2 Graphical Presentation

Figure A3—Candidate Outgroup Animosity

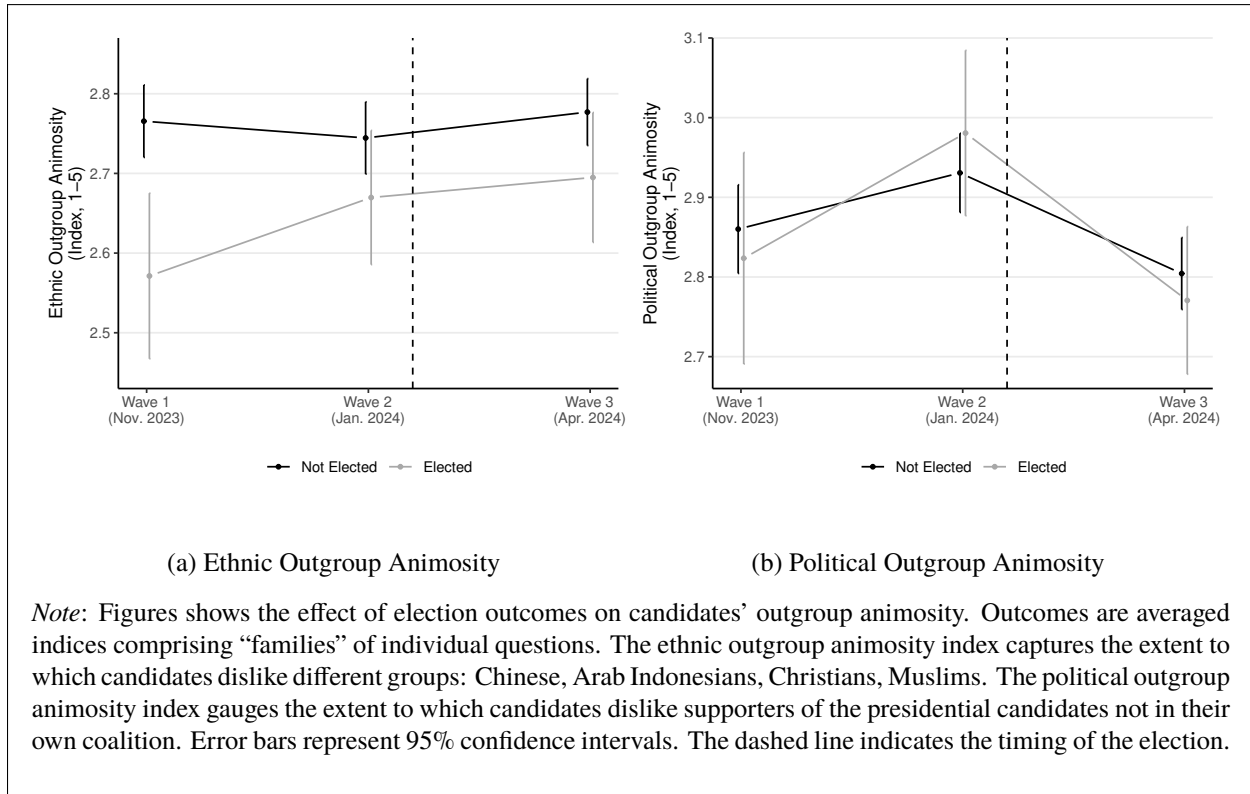


Figure A4—Candidate Trust in Institutions and Politicians

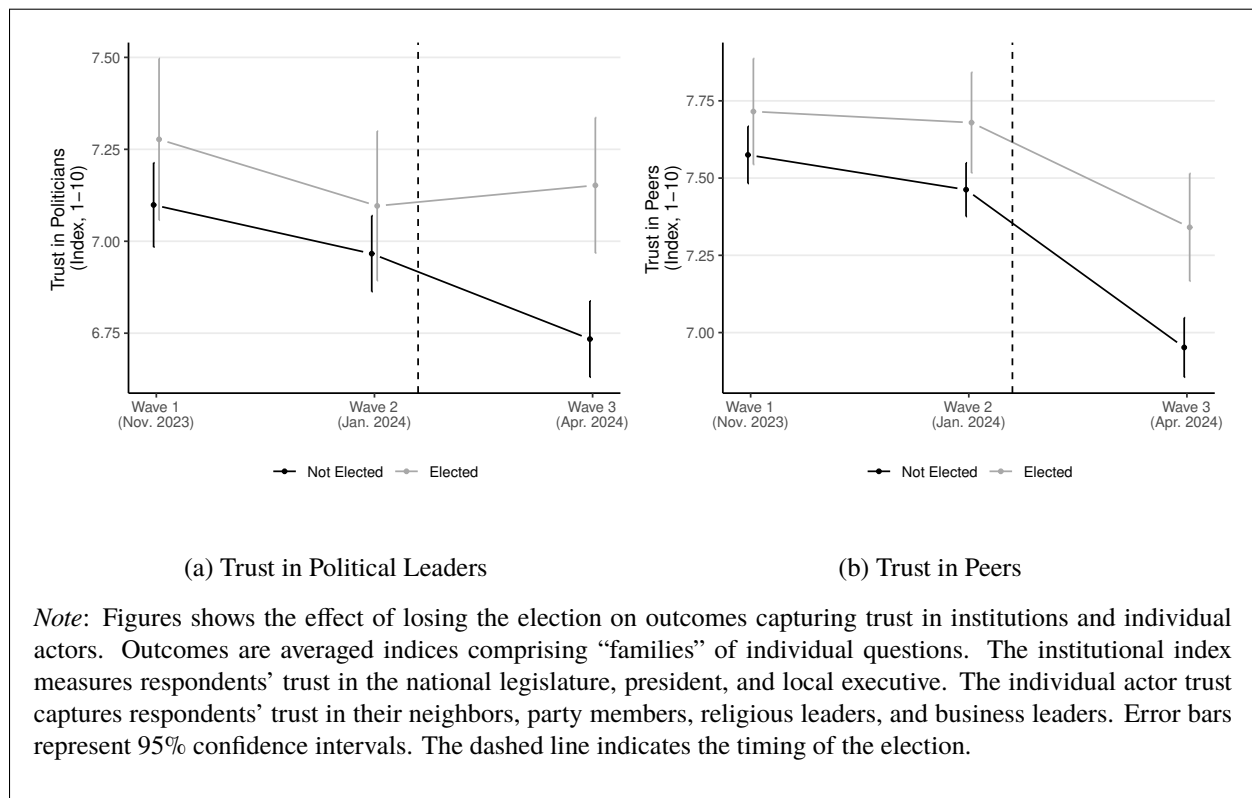
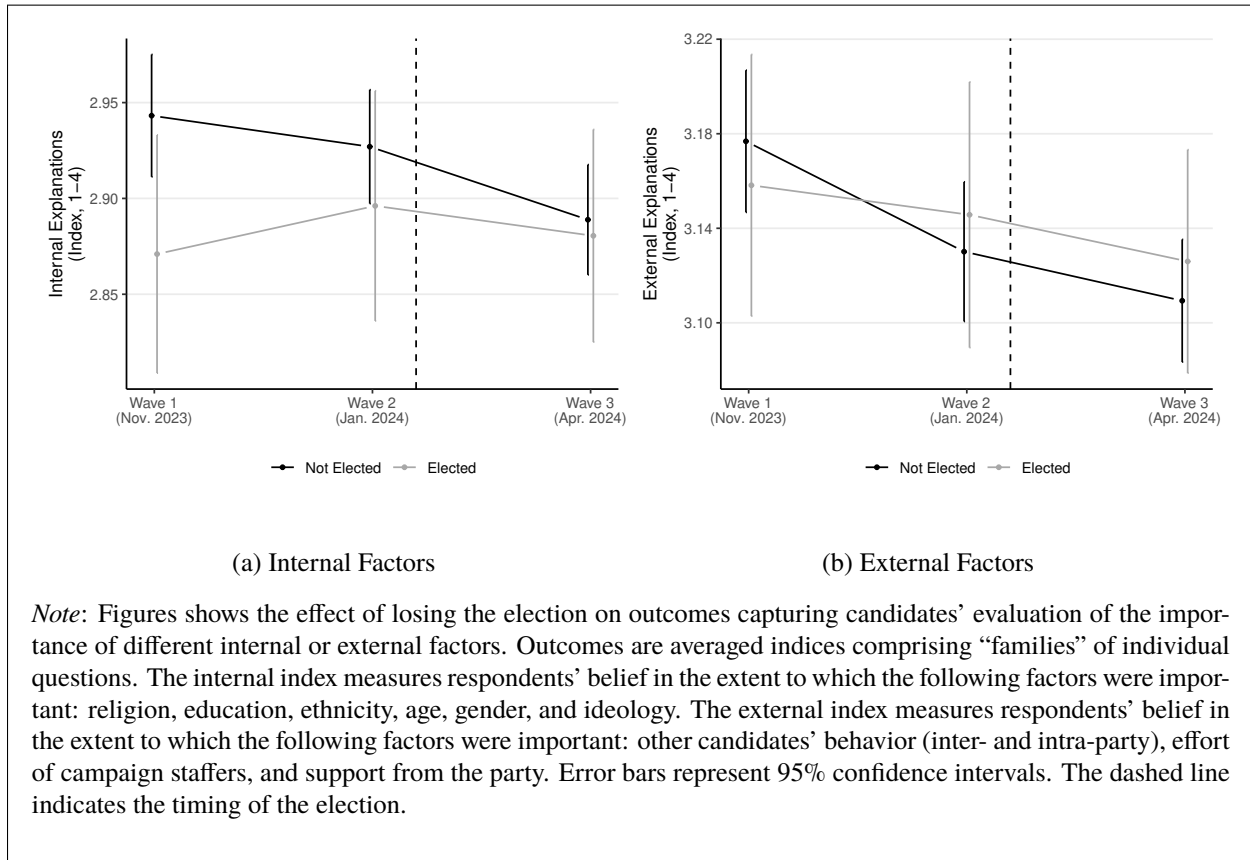
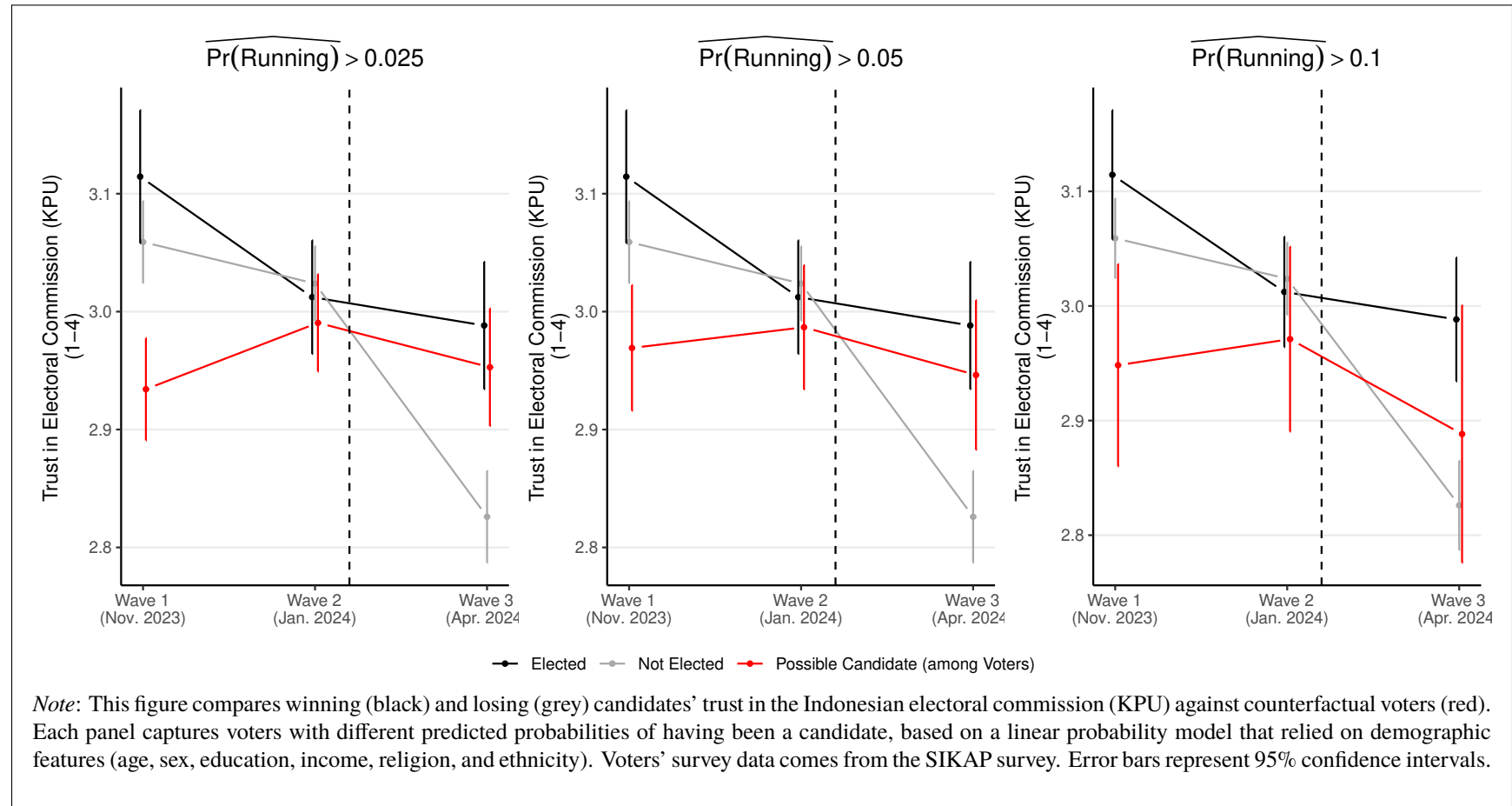


Figure A5—Candidate Beliefs About Success Factors



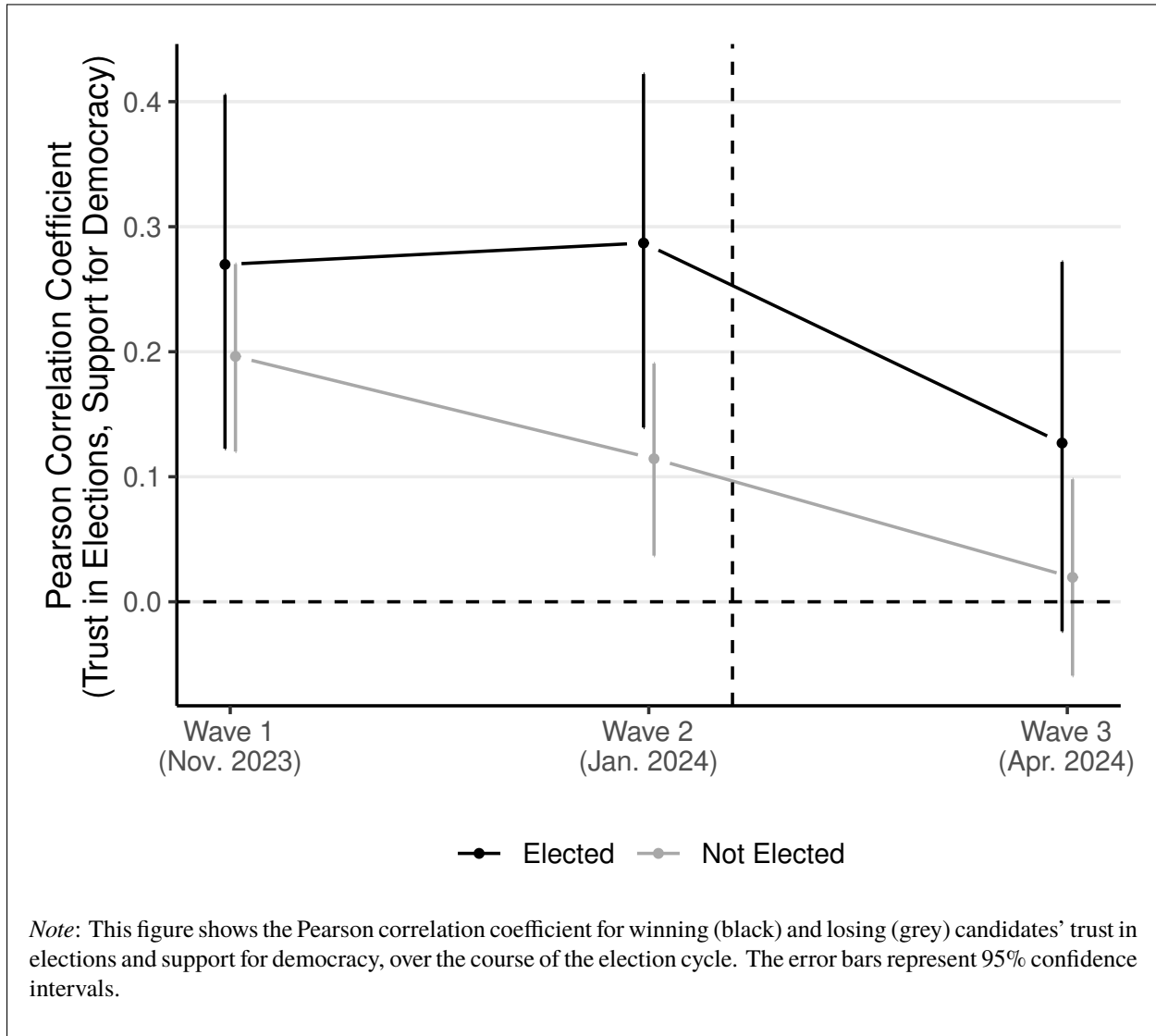
B.2 Voter Attitude Comparison

Figure A6—Comparison of Trust in Electoral Commission, Candidates and Voters



B.3 Item Correlation Over Time

Figure A7—Correlation of Trust in Elections and Support for Democracy



B.4 Callaway Sant'Anna Estimates

Figure A8—Comparison of Callaway Sant'Anna and Canonical DiD Estimates

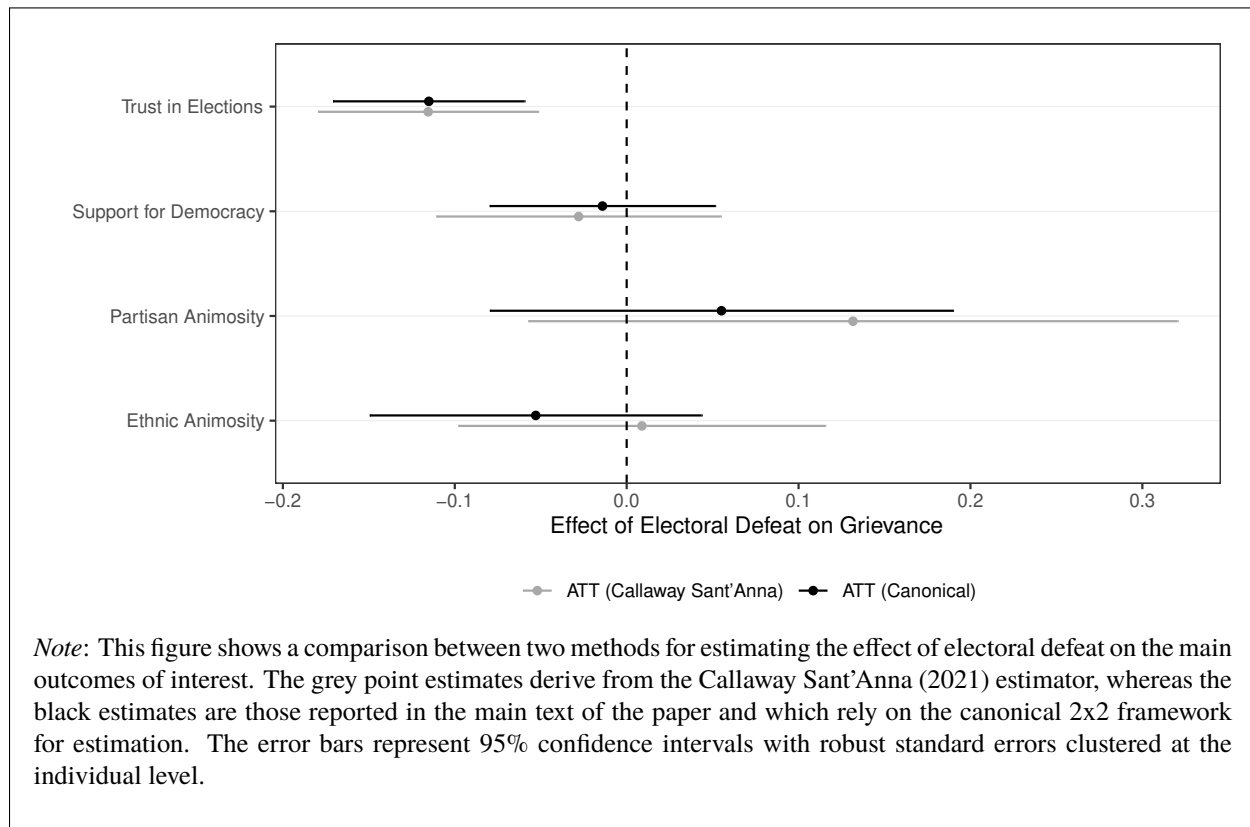
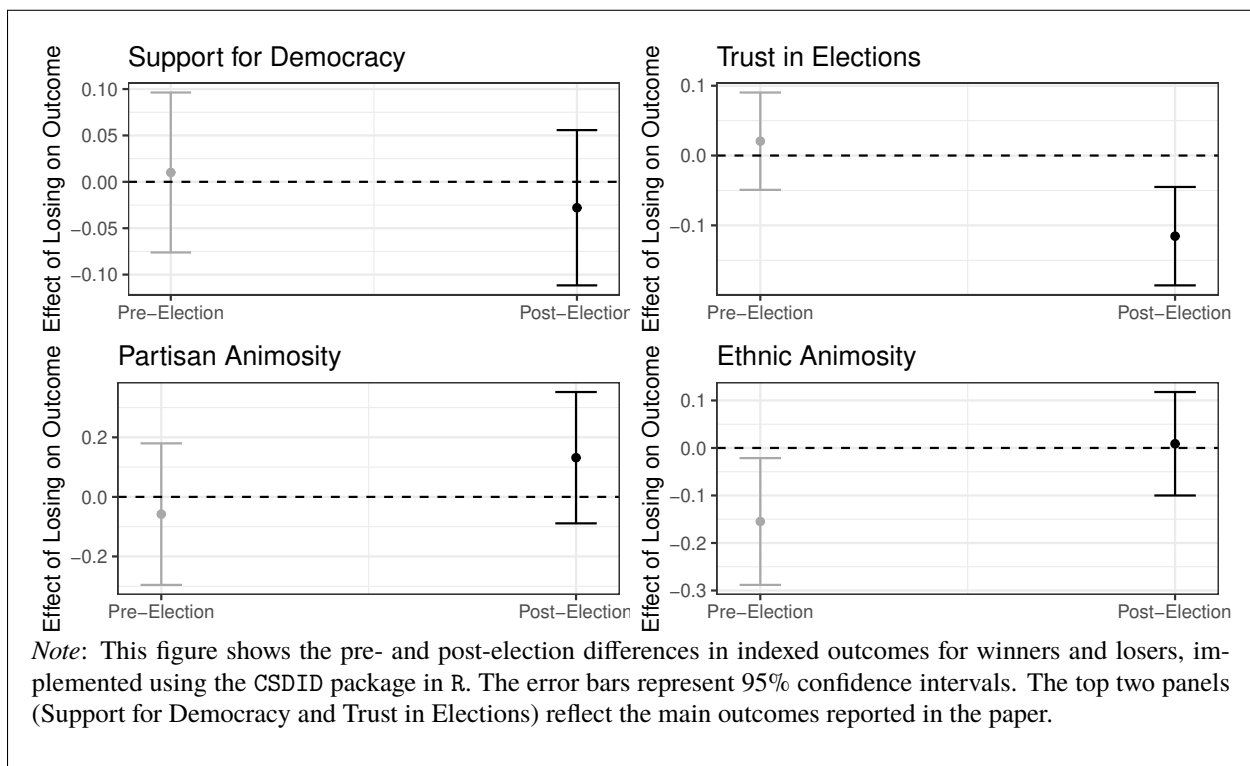
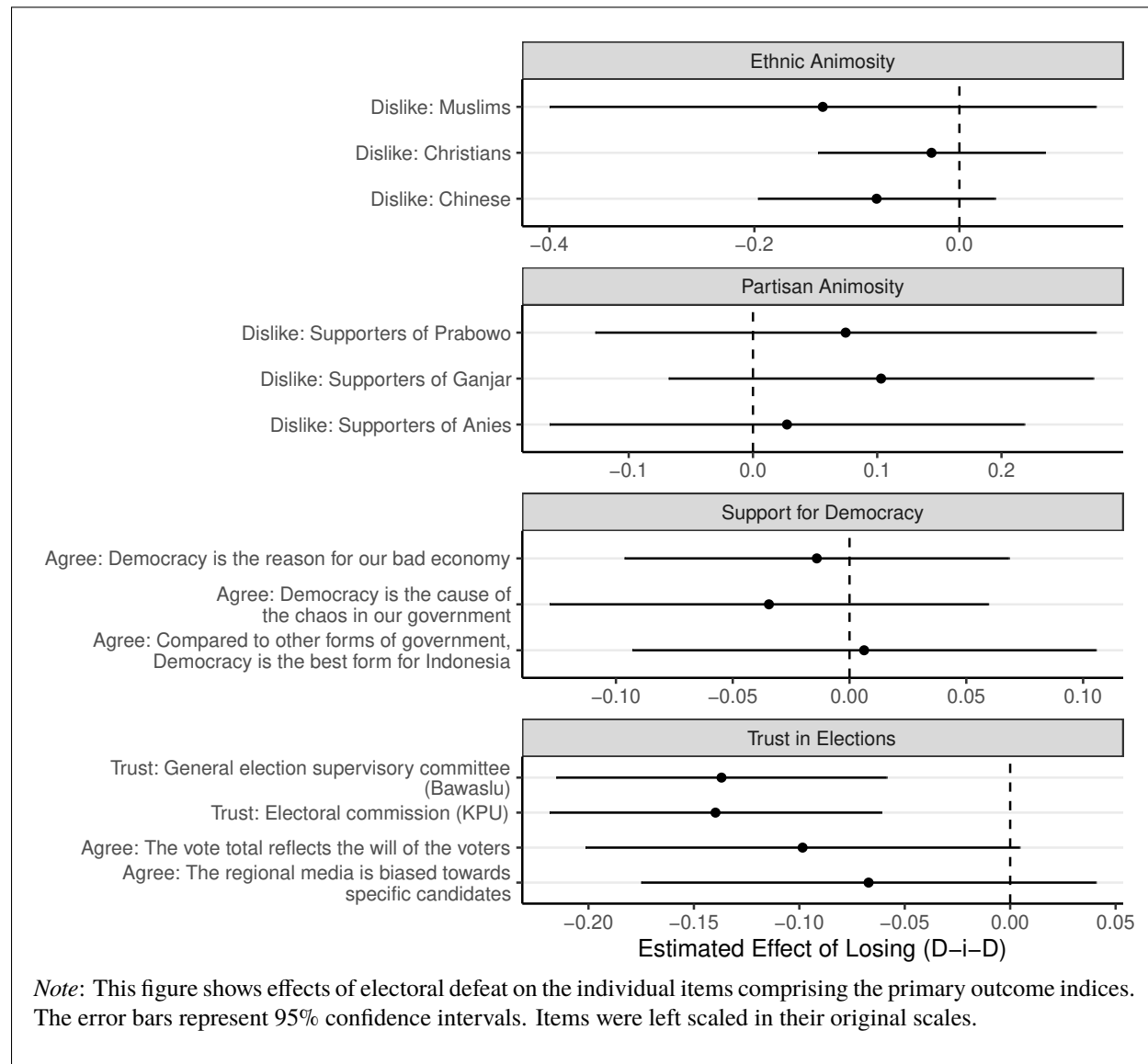


Figure A9—Callaway Sant’Anna Estimates, Pre- and Post



B.5 Individual Item Analysis

Figure A10—Individual Items, Primary Outcomes



B.6 Attrition

B.6.1 Demographic Characteristics of (Non-)Attriters

Table A5: Demographic Traits of Attriters vs. non-Attriters

Variable	Non-Attriter	Post-Election Attriter	<i>p</i>
Gender: Man	0.737	0.740	0.957
Age	45.099	44.173	0.408
Education: (4-pt)	0.643	0.746	0.037
Religion: Islam	0.871	0.890	0.582
Ethnicity: Javanese	0.274	0.185	0.041
List Position	1.897	1.734	0.065
Party: Islamist	0.300	0.289	0.828
Outcome: Winner	0.211	0.185	0.558

Notes: This table presents the demographic traits of candidates in the sample who either attrited in wave 3 of the survey (i.e., were unable to be surveyed) or completed all three waves of the survey. The sample does not include respondents who attrited in wave 2 of the survey. The p-value is a simple difference-in-means test.

B.6.2 Main Analysis, Inverse Propensity to Attrit Weights

Table A6: Main Analysis, Inverse Propensity Weights

	Trust in Elec.		Supp. for Dem.	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post Election	-0.085*** (0.024)	-0.090* (0.049)	-0.058* (0.030)	-0.079 (0.052)
Outcome: Lost	-0.010 (0.022)	0.013 (0.050)	-0.045 (0.030)	-0.050 (0.053)
Post x Lost	-0.115*** (0.028)	-0.137** (0.055)	-0.014 (0.033)	-0.010 (0.058)
Num.Obs.	2391	2387	2394	2390
R2	0.071	0.058	0.011	0.011
IPW	✗	✓	✗	✓

Notes: This table presents main analysis of electoral defeat on trust in elections (columns (1)-(2)) and support for democracy (3)-(4). Columns (1) and (3) are the same benchmark specifications presented in the main text. Columns (2) and (4) have the same econometric approach, but observations are weighted according to their inverse probability to attrit, based on a suite of demographic variables. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

B.6.3 Restricted Sample, Three Wave Respondents

Table A7: Effect of Electoral Defeat on Outcomes, Restricted Completions

	Democracy		Animosity		Trust		Reasons for Outcome	
	Trust	Support	Ethnic	Partisan	Inst.	Indiv.	External	Internal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post Election	-0.089*** (0.027)	-0.041 (0.034)	0.080* (0.047)	-0.209*** (0.069)	-0.004 (0.099)	-0.253*** (0.090)	-0.029 (0.032)	0.033 (0.029)
Outcome: Lost	-0.008 (0.025)	-0.054 (0.035)	0.129** (0.050)	-0.043 (0.067)	-0.143 (0.120)	-0.064 (0.093)	0.001 (0.030)	0.049 (0.034)
Post x Lost	-0.106*** (0.032)	-0.023 (0.037)	-0.070 (0.051)	0.095 (0.075)	-0.300*** (0.112)	-0.336*** (0.103)	-0.017 (0.036)	-0.076** (0.033)
Num.Obs.	1962	1965	1965	1679	1968	1968	1965	1966
R2	0.068	0.010	0.006	0.011	0.014	0.049	0.003	0.003

Notes: Table shows the effect of losing the election on outcomes capturing (1) support for democracy, (2) trust in elections, (3) ethnic animosity, and (4) partisan animosity, (5) trust in institutions, (6) trust in individuals, (7) externalization of blame, (8) internalization of blame. Outcomes are indexes of outcomes in family. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level. Analysis restricted to those who completed all three waves of survey. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

B.7 Heterogeneous Treatment Effects

B.7.1 Partisan Coalition Affiliation

Table A8: Main and Individual Item Analysis, by Coalition Group

	KIM				non-KIM			
	(A)	(B)	(C)	Index	(A)	(B)	(C)	Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post Election	-0.251*** (0.065)	0.057 (0.067)	-0.043 (0.057)	-0.081* (0.044)	-0.086 (0.064)	-0.054 (0.055)	0.034 (0.049)	-0.037 (0.041)
Outcome: Lost	-0.075 (0.051)	-0.032 (0.056)	-0.072 (0.049)	-0.060 (0.043)	-0.014 (0.058)	-0.045 (0.051)	-0.016 (0.046)	-0.027 (0.043)
Post x Lost	0.052 (0.074)	-0.118 (0.075)	0.003 (0.063)	-0.022 (0.050)	-0.052 (0.069)	0.036 (0.061)	-0.037 (0.055)	-0.016 (0.045)
Num.Obs.	964	958	958	964	1428	1425	1425	1430
R2	0.038	0.008	0.007	0.021	0.015	0.002	0.001	0.005

Notes: This table presents an analysis of electoral defeat on the individual items comprising the indexed support for democracy outcome, as well as the index. Item (A) asks respondents, on a 4-pt scale, the extent to which they agree “Compared to other forms of government, Democracy is the best form for Indonesia;” Item (B) asks respondents, on a 4-pt scale, the extent to which they agree “Democracy is the cause of the chaos in our government;” Item (C) asks respondents, on a 4-pt scale, the extent to which they agree “Democracy is the reason for our bad economy.” The Index is an average of the three items. Columns (1)-(4) estimate the effects of electoral defeat among parties aligned with the *Koalisi Indonesia Maju* coalition; Columns (5)-(8) are for those parties not associated with KIM. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

B.7.2 Probability of Success, by Gender and Expenditures

Table A9: Main Analysis, by Gender and Expectations of Success

	Trust in Elec.				Faith in Dem.			
	High Chance		Low Chance		High Chance		Low Chance	
	Man	Woman	Man	Woman	Man	Woman	Man	Woman
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post Election	-0.096*** (0.031)	-0.107 (0.081)	-0.045 (0.069)	-0.250*** (0.094)	-0.053 (0.039)	-0.024 (0.098)	-0.088 (0.084)	0.444*** (0.081)
Outcome: Lost	0.061** (0.030)	0.024 (0.046)	-0.070 (0.066)	-0.071* (0.038)	-0.050 (0.041)	0.074 (0.067)	-0.006 (0.079)	0.048 (0.051)
Post x Lost	-0.183*** (0.042)	-0.063 (0.096)	-0.143* (0.073)	0.136 (0.100)	-0.019 (0.047)	0.003 (0.107)	-0.006 (0.088)	-0.503*** (0.089)
Num.Obs.	923	234	681	349	924	234	683	349
R2	0.102	0.049	0.071	0.031	0.011	0.008	0.014	0.016

Notes: This table presents an analysis of electoral defeat on the main outcomes, splitting respondents into four groups: (a) men who predicted a high chance of victory; (b) women who predicted a high chance of victory; (c) men who predicted a low chance of victory; and (d) women who predicted a low chance of victory. Columns (1)-(4) examine the indexed trust in elections outcome, while Columns (5)-(8) examine the indexed support for democracy outcome. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A10: Main Analysis, by Expenditures and Expectations of Success

	Trust in Elec.				Faith in Dem.			
	High Chance		Low Chance		High Chance		Low Chance	
	High \$	Low \$	High \$	Low \$	High \$	Low \$	High \$	Low \$
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post Election	-0.105*** (0.034)	-0.076 (0.064)	-0.078 (0.103)	-0.031 (0.062)	-0.049 (0.042)	-0.016 (0.079)	0.108 (0.097)	-0.250** (0.111)
Outcome: Lost	0.067* (0.037)	0.039 (0.045)	-0.138 (0.088)	0.038 (0.064)	-0.067 (0.048)	-0.014 (0.061)	-0.074 (0.099)	0.091 (0.099)
Post x Lost	-0.195*** (0.053)	-0.126* (0.071)	-0.089 (0.115)	-0.132** (0.066)	-0.034 (0.054)	-0.027 (0.085)	-0.178 (0.109)	0.168 (0.113)
Num.Obs.	597	514	235	718	598	514	235	720
R2	0.097	0.075	0.086	0.051	0.017	0.003	0.029	0.021

Notes: This table presents an analysis of electoral defeat on the main outcomes, splitting respondents into four groups: (a) high spenders who predicted a high chance of victory; (b) low spenders who predicted a high chance of victory; (c) high spenders who predicted a low chance of victory; and (d) low spenders who predicted a low chance of victory. Columns (1)-(4) examine the indexed trust in elections outcome, while Columns (5)-(8) examine the indexed support for democracy outcome. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

B.7.3 Party Performance Split Samples

Table A11: Panel Analysis, Party Within-Constituency Performance

	Trust in Elec.			Supp. for Dem.		
	Not Elected		Elected	Not Elected		Elected
	>1 Seat	<1 Seat	>1 Seat	>1 Seat	<1 Seat	>1 Seat
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Post Election	-0.202*** (0.023)	-0.195*** (0.022)	-0.089*** (0.024)	-0.098*** (0.021)	-0.058*** (0.022)	-0.071** (0.032)
Num.Obs.	889	834	463	890	836	463
R2	0.085	0.068	0.021	0.016	0.006	0.007
Individual FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes: This is a within-unit panel analysis examining post-election declines in trust in elections (columns (1)-(3)) and support for democracy (columns (4)-(6)). The respondents are broken down into those who lost and won. Among losers, the respondents are further broken down into those who lost in a constituency in which co-partisans won or no co-partisans won. The within-unit panel analysis is necessitated by the breakdown of the difference-in-differences model given that the source of heterogeneity (whether the party won a seat or not in the constituency) perfectly covaries with whether a candidate won or not. All models include individual-level fixed effects. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

Table A12: Main Analysis, by National Party Performance

	Trust in Elec.		Supp. for Dem.	
	Low Vote %	High Vote %	Low Vote %	High Vote %
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post Election	-0.064*	-0.097***	-0.132***	-0.012
	(0.038)	(0.031)	(0.050)	(0.037)
Outcome: Lost	-0.021	0.005	-0.055	-0.038
	(0.040)	(0.026)	(0.050)	(0.038)
Post x Lost	-0.145***	-0.093**	0.077	-0.077*
	(0.044)	(0.037)	(0.054)	(0.043)
Num.Obs.	1173	1218	1175	1219
R2	0.071	0.072	0.010	0.015

Notes: This table presents the results of an analysis that looks at trust in elections (columns (1)-(2)) and support for democracy (columns (3)-(4)) according to whether candidates were running with a party that did well nationally (vote share > 5%) or did poorly nationally (vote share < 5%). Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

B.7.4 Presence of Outsider for Interview

Table A13: Main Analysis, by Outsider Presence

	Trust in Elec.		Supp. for Dem.	
	Not Alone	Alone	Not Alone	Alone
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post Election	-0.026	-0.100***	0.002	-0.086***
	(0.052)	(0.031)	(0.075)	(0.032)
Outcome: Lost	-0.022	-0.005	0.037	-0.078**
	(0.033)	(0.028)	(0.052)	(0.033)
Post x Lost	-0.100	-0.122***	-0.040	0.004
	(0.061)	(0.036)	(0.081)	(0.037)
Num.Obs.	607	1784	607	1787
R2	0.031	0.086	0.003	0.018

Notes: This table presents the results of an analysis that looks at trust in elections (columns (1)-(2)) and support for democracy (columns (3)-(4)) according to whether or not there was another individual present during the course of the interview. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

B.7.5 Island Group

Table A14: Main Analysis, by Island Group

	Trust in Elec.				Faith in Dem.			
	Sumatera	Java	Kalimantan	East	Sumatera	Java	Kalimantan	East
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post Election	-0.038 (0.055)	-0.111*** (0.040)	-0.098** (0.048)	-0.072* (0.043)	-0.077 (0.063)	-0.024 (0.048)	-0.084 (0.075)	-0.090 (0.063)
Outcome: Lost	0.000 (0.039)	-0.010 (0.041)	-0.062 (0.044)	-0.034 (0.049)	-0.041 (0.068)	-0.049 (0.051)	-0.086 (0.067)	-0.050 (0.052)
Post x Lost	-0.139** (0.059)	-0.128** (0.053)	0.000 (0.058)	-0.168*** (0.053)	-0.028 (0.068)	-0.087 (0.055)	0.103 (0.086)	0.060 (0.070)
Num.Obs.	777	719	295	600	779	719	296	600
R2	0.066	0.079	0.045	0.097	0.019	0.024	0.006	0.005

Notes: This table presents the results of an analysis that looks at trust in elections (columns (1)-(4)) and support for democracy (columns (5)-(8)) according to which island group a respondent was in. Eastern Indonesia includes Sulawesi, NTT, NTB but excludes Papua and Maluku. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

B.7.6 Provincial Vote Buying Prevalence

Table A15: Main Analysis, by Voter Perceptions of Vote Buying

	Vote Buying: High		Vote Buying: Low	
	Supp. for Dem.	Trust in Elec.	Supp. for Dem.	Trust in Elec.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post Election	-0.024 (0.040)	-0.114*** (0.030)	-0.115*** (0.043)	-0.033 (0.039)
Outcome: Lost	-0.038 (0.039)	-0.007 (0.027)	-0.063 (0.048)	-0.014 (0.038)
Post x Lost	-0.047 (0.044)	-0.077** (0.036)	0.041 (0.049)	-0.178*** (0.046)
Num.Obs.	1405	1403	989	988
R2	0.010	0.070	0.014	0.076

Notes: This table presents the results of an analysis that looks at trust in elections (columns (1),(3)) and support for democracy (columns (2)-(4)) according to the reported level of vote-buying in a given province. High-levels are those in which the share of respondents reporting having received money for their vote was above the national median, according to SIKAP data. Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

B.7.7 Bupati Appointment Status

Table A16: Main Analysis, by Bupati Appointment Status

	Bupati: Elected		Bupati: Appointed	
	Supp. for Dem.	Trust in Elec.	Supp. for Dem.	Trust in Elec.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post Election	-0.106*** (0.040)	-0.083*** (0.032)	-0.003 (0.045)	-0.091** (0.037)
Outcome: Lost	-0.042 (0.040)	-0.023 (0.029)	-0.036 (0.046)	-0.010 (0.036)
Post x Lost	0.012 (0.044)	-0.095*** (0.036)	-0.014 (0.051)	-0.142*** (0.047)
Num.Obs.	1437	1436	927	926
R2	0.018	0.067	0.003	0.080

Notes: This table presents the results of an analysis that looks at trust in elections (columns (1),(3)) and support for democracy (columns (2)-(4)) according to whether or not the local chief executive (Wali-kota or Bupati) was appointed by Joko Widodo in 2022, or still serving out a democratically elected term (not appointed). Robust standard errors clustered at the individual level are reported in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.