Birds of a Feather Are Punished Together, or Not? Examining Heterogeneity in Career Advancements of Minority Groups

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ABSTRACT

In this study we examine the heterogeneous effects of being affiliated with different minority groups on employees' career advancements in organizations. We draw on the categories literature and its concept of category distance to hypothesize why some minority groups may be more (dis)advantaged than others in their career advancements. To do so, we define category distance in terms of shared identity markers between groups, where identity markers are salient attributes that audiences commonly associate a group with. We test our hypotheses among religious minority groups using employment data from a large Indonesian government organization. Our results indicate that minority groups closer in distance to the organizational majority group are more penalized in their career advancements than minority groups further in distance. These results hold both at the group and at the individual level. Through our study we make contributions to the literatures on careers, categories, and the burgeoning study of religion in organizations. We conclude with implications for practice.

Keywords: Careers; Categories; Inequality; Minority Groups; Religion

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Birds of a Feather Are Punished Together, or Not?
Examining Heterogeneity in Career Advancements of Minority Groups

Social inequality, defined as unequal opportunities and outcomes based on social group membership (Cobb, 2016), is one of the great challenges of our time (George, Howard-Grenville, Joshi, and Tihanyi, 2016). Organizations play a central role in perpetuating social inequality as many economic resources in society are distributed through employment and across careers within organizations (Amis, Mair, and Munir, 2020; Bapuji, Ertug, and Shaw, 2020). Scholarship attending to the topic of inequality in the context of careers (Amis et al., 2020; Arifeen and Gatrell, 2020; Castilla, 2008) has developed substantial insights into why some groups may be generally advantaged and others generally disadvantaged in their career advancements (Briscoe and Joshi, 2017; McDonald, 2011; Wyatt and Silvester, 2015).

Social inequality can frequently manifest through the notion of ingroup favoritism (Hewstone and Cairns, 2001) – an idea informed by a variety of theoretical traditions (Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis, 2002) but often closely associated with foundational debates in social identity theory. This theory suggests that individuals have a psychological drive to see themselves and the group they belong to in a positive and distinct light, and others in a negative and stereotypical one (Tajfel, 1974; Turner, Brown, and Tajfel, 1979). In the context of careers, ingroup favoritism posits that organizational decision makers will often prefer to advance employees who are perceived to be part of their own ingroup – i.e., individuals with the *same* socio-demographic characteristics (Bode, Rogan, and Singh, 2022; Ibarra, 1993) from which can emerge "trust, positive regard, cooperation, and empathy" (Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis, 2002: 578). At the same time, such decision makers will often choose not to advance those who are perceived to be part of an outgroup – i.e., individuals with *different* socio-demographic characteristics (Brewer, 2001) –, frequently based on negative stereotypes and biases related to their socio-demographic characteristics. As such, ingroup favoritism-based reasoning is

often invoked by researchers to grasp why some groups in organizations may experience more (dis)advantage than others.

Yet, while research has established that socio-demographic 'sameness' between groups is generally advantageous and socio-demographic 'difference' disadvantageous (Briscoe and Joshi, 2017; Castilla, 2011; Wangrow, Kolev, and Hughes-Morgan, 2023), studies considering inequality in research on careers that provide insights into the heterogeneity of career advancements between multiple minority groups are sparse. While some extant work has implicitly assumed variation in how minorities are treated (Glauber, 2008; Pager, Western, and Bonikowski, 2009) or has focused on individual drivers of variation such as status (Leslie, 2017) or structural position (DiTomaso, Post, Smith, Farris, and Cordero, 2007), more theorizing on the variation of disadvantage that minority groups experience is needed and called for (DiTomaso, Post, and Parks-Yancy, 2007). This is because a limited exploration into the variance of minority groups' experience in career advancements may cause us to under-examine more general mechanisms of why some groups are more prone to (dis)advantageous outcomes than others, and as such, why some persistently experience social inequality.

In this study we thus venture to extend the literature on careers by specifically theorizing outcome variety in the career advancements of different minority groups in organizations. To do so, we investigate the question of how the type of minority group one belongs to can affect one's likelihood of career advancement, by taking stock of the literature on categories. We draw on the concept of 'category distance' (Durand and Paolella, 2013; Hannan, Pólos, and Carroll, 2007; Kovacs and Hannan, 2015), which we characterize as the perceived sharing of identity markers between categories, to hypothesize how membership in different minority groups may shape evaluation by the majority group and thereby influence

the minority's career advancements in varying ways.[1] We propose that a lower (higher) category distance exists when typical members of a group are perceived to share more (less) identity markers with another group, in which identity markers are attributes that audiences commonly associate a category with (Hannan et al., 2007).

We first draw on the social inequality literature to institute a baseline hypothesis stating that minority groups are generally more likely to be disadvantaged in their career advancements. We then hypothesize that a low category distance (i.e., closeness) between a majority and a minority group can *negatively* influence the minority group's career advancements. We argue that this occurs when a majority group perceives a minority group to interpret the same shared identity markers in differing ways to themselves. As a result of this perception, the majority group may more likely view low category distance as threatening, rather than it fostering acceptance. This is because a perceived diverging interpretation of the same identity markers can create contention as to which the 'right' interpretation is, resulting in a threat to the majority group's current dominant position within the organization. In such a situation, the majority group may evaluate the closer minority group more negatively and play up the differing interpretations to reinforce their dominant position. We then further theorize on identity markers at the individual level as a moderator of distance between groups. In particular, we posit that individuals in minority groups who are closer to the majority would be more penalized than others in their group. We test our hypotheses using a dataset of 2,586 employees within a federal-level government organizations ('GovMinistry') in Indonesia to investigate the effects of minority religion affiliations on the likelihood of holding a managerial position.

[1] Following previous studies, we assume that in most cases the decision makers who evaluate employees in their career progression belong to the majority group within organizations. This reasoning is closely aligned with research showing how, for example, organizations that primarily consist of white employees will often have white managers decide on promotions (Greenhaus et al., 1990; Kraiger and Ford, 1985) or how organizations in the US, a heavily Christian context, overwhelmingly have Christian managers make hiring and promotion decisions (Roulet, 2020).

Our study makes contributions to the literatures on careers, categories, and religion in organizations. Centrally, we extend literature on careers by showing a new way of conceptualizing what drives heterogenous career advancements for different minority groups, i.e., why some minority groups in organizations may experience more disadvantage in their career advancements than others. We do so through applying the concept of category distance to studies on careers. Further, we address recent calls by scholars of careers to move beyond examining purely employee-side factors towards a combination of employee- and evaluator-side factors to develop more holistic insights into the drivers and inhibitors of career advancements. Our study informs this conversation by showing how the relationships between an evaluating (majority) group and minority group employees can shape the career advancements of various minority groups in organizations.

In terms of scholarship on categories, we contribute to the literature by extending the concept of category distance and its application, moving it from a concept that has traditionally focused on co-occurrences of category labels among groups, to one by which distance can now be understood through the perceived sharing of identity markers. This enables the concept to be more broadly applied and used to understand a new set of questions around how and why certain group membership may result in heterogeneous implications for individuals, and ultimately how and why inequality may persist in organizations.

Finally, we contribute to the nascent conversation on how religion shapes organizations and their central processes. In particular, we show how and under what conditions belonging to a specific religious (minority) group can create less advantageous outcomes for individuals and provide insights into the broader influences that religion can have on organizational life. We conclude with an overview of future research opportunities and insights for practice.

LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESES

Social inequality and career advancement

Management and organizational scholars have long understood that organizations play a central role in perpetuating social inequality, defined as unequal opportunities and outcomes based on social group membership (Cobb, 2016). In particular, organizations are centrally implicated in these developments as they "link the 'macro' and 'micro' dimensions of work organization and inequality" (Baron and Bielby, 1980: 738), creating disparity in economic outcomes through employment practices, such as hiring and promotions (Amis et al., 2020; Bidwell, Briscoe, Fernandez-Mateo, and Sterling, 2013). As a result, certain individuals are less likely to advance their careers in organizations because of their social group membership.

One of the most prevalent explanations of such inequality relates back to Tajfel (1974) and Turner et al.'s (1979) seminal works in social identity theory. In it, the authors explain how minority groups are often considered an outgroup, perceived as different in terms of their socio-demographic characteristics vis-à-vis a majority ingroup. Given the opportunity, this research suggests that organizational members belonging to the majority group are more likely to favor those within the same group and discriminate against those outside of it (Tajfel, 1974). The preference for those within the same group paves the way for cooperative relationships and ultimately drives career advantages for those who are part of the majority (McGinn and Milkman, 2012).

On the flip side, those individuals who are not considered part of the majority group may be subject to discrimination in their career advancements. This is because judgements and evaluations, well-recognized for being highly subjective (Bode et al., 2022; Hitt and Barr, 1989) and thus for containing substantial biases (Briscoe and Joshi, 2017), play a central role in such decisions. For example, research has amply shown how women are often perceived as less deserving of leadership jobs (Cohen and Broschak, 2013; Lyness and Heilman, 2006) or how individuals from minority racial groups receive worse career outcomes because they are subject to deeply held racial biases (Elvira and Town, 2001). That is to say that people are

subject to stereotypical thinking and the beliefs one holds often influences how one judges others (Fiske, 1998). This negative stereotyping can shape how a majority group perceives minority groups, consequentially stunting minority group members' advancement of their careers (Castilla, 2008; Spence, 1974). As a baseline hypothesis we thus contend that membership in a minority group would generally be associated with negative outcomes in one's career advancement. Formally:

> ***Hypothesis 0****: Minority group membership is negatively associated with an employee's career advancement within an organization.*

Category Distance

Notwithstanding the insights we gain from existing literature, research on the potential negative implications of minority group membership has disproportionately examined settings in which one minority group is clearly identifiable (King and Ahmad, 2010; Savelkoul, Scheepers, Tolsma, and Hagendoorn, 2011). For example, studies on religious discrimination have often shown how Muslims are disadvantaged from gaining employment in overwhelmingly Christian contexts such as the United States (Forstenlechner and Al-Waqfi, 2010; Ghumman and Ryan, 2013; King and Ahmad, 2010). Similarly, studies have found that women find it more challenging to be hired for or promoted to elite positions in organizations (Brands and Fernandez-Mateo, 2017; Lyness and Heilman, 2006) or that Black employees are frequently disadvantaged compared to white counterparts in progression to leadership roles (McDonald, 2011; Wyatt and Silvester, 2015).

Interestingly, alluding to our earlier argumentation, scholarship has only relatively recently started to include the idea in their theorizing that workforces contain multiple minority groups (Ghumman, Ryan, Barclay, and Markel, 2013) and examine the drivers of heterogenous outcomes in the career advancements of members of different minority groups that share a specific socio-demographic characteristic (e.g., Leslie (2017); DiTomaso et al. (2007b)). In

responding to this and in order to dig deeper, we leverage the categories literature (Durand and Paolella, 2013; Hannan et al., 2007; Monk, 2022) to hypothesize how membership in different minority groups may shape career advancements within organizations.

We take stock of the concept of 'category distance' as a driver of how members of the majority group may perceive minority groups and their members in varying ways (see Durand and Paolella, 2013; Kovacs and Hannan, 2015). Since categories are mental representations that audiences have of various types of individuals, they provide an abstract image of what members of a certain category should look like and how they can be expected to act (Glynn and Navis, 2013; Kovacs and Hannan, 2015).

The attributes that audiences commonly associate a category with are called 'identity markers' (Hannan et al., 2007), which become part of a sense-making process through which audiences seek to answer fundamental questions about the category members they are evaluating – such as who they are and how they should be judged (Durand and Paolella, 2013; Hsu, Hannan, and Kocak, 2009). For example, Cattani, Ferriani, and Allison (2014) find that audiences perceive Hollywood motion picture producers as 'insiders' or 'outsiders' of the film industry depending on identity markers such as the producers' network centrality, the projects they are working on, or the awards they have received. Previous work has also documented identity markers that can be used to determine social class stratification, such as education, race/ethnicity, and national origin (Posselt and Grodsky, 2017). For instance, identity markers often suggesting higher social class in the United Kingdom are an individual's attendance of an 'elite' private school (Ingram and Allen, 2019; Laurison and Friedman, 2016) or the pursuit of a "quintessentially aristocratic" sport such as polo (Ivushkina, 2017: 99; Jennings, 1997). Essentially, identity markers enable audiences to engage in a socio-cognitive process of differentiating members of one category from another (Hannan et al., 2007).

We propose that a closer (further) category distance exists between groups when typical group members are perceived to share more (less) identity markers. Which identity markers are most salient between groups will be dependent on a range of socio-cultural factors which are not uniform across contexts and therefore difficult to universally conceptualize (see also Aadland, Cattani, and Ferriani, 2019; Karakayali, 2009). For example, Hindus may be perceived to share more identity markers with Muslims in India where the two religions espouse many of the same cultural beliefs compared to how they relate to and see one another in Europe where their cultural beliefs are more distant (Desai and Temsah, 2014).

Category distance and career advancements of minority groups in organizations

Extant literature on social inequality has traditionally argued that similarity between groups can be a powerful driver of labor market advantages (Castilla, 2011; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook, 2001). Indeed, scholars going as far back as Byrne et al. (1971) have shown that similarity can be one of the most influential drivers of social attraction and positive evaluation. Rivera (2012), for example, posits that incumbent employees of elite consulting firms are more likely to hire applicants who share cultural similarities with themselves and the organization. Kang, DeCelles, Tilcsik, and Jun's (2016) study also provides credence to this idea in that they find that Asian and black job applicants feel the need to downplay their racial identity markers to appear more similar to white employees in the workplace and thereby increase their chances of being employed. Applying this observation to the idea of category distance in our context, one may expect that the sharing of identity markers among categories, and thereby of lower category distance, can foster more acceptance of minority group members by a majority group in organizations.

A central assumption in the above argumentation is that shared identity markers will be perceived among groups in *similar* ways. For example, in Rivera's (2012) study of hiring in elite consulting firms mentioned above, shared identity markers, such as "experiences, leisure

pursuits, and self-presentation styles" (1017), were all seen as valuable and desirable by both the incumbent and prospective employee groups. That is, the identity markers were perceived positively by both groups who, in turn, saw these identity markers as central to forming interpersonal relationships. Subsequently, this made members of both groups feel more closely connected and similar.

Yet, an often-overlooked perspective is that shared identity markers can also be interpreted in *differing* and sometimes even completely opposing ways by groups. For example, in Rao and colleagues' (2005) study of nouvelle and classical cuisine, the same type of cooking technique was interpreted differently by chefs of the two groups. Classical chefs interpreted traditional 'Escoffier' cooking techniques in a more negative way as rigid rules, whereas nouvelle chefs saw them more generatively and used them as a starting point to innovate. Similarly, some religious groups have the same identity markers but interpret them in very different manners. Both Muslims and Christians believe that Jesus is a central part of their faith but understand Jesus to be of completely different significance and to play a different role within it (Jaoudi, 1993; Paret, 1964): Christians view Jesus as a deity whereas Muslims only see him as one of God's messengers, often even perceiving an active worship of Jesus as blasphemous (White, 2013; see also *The Holy Qur'an* 4:171). The categories literature suggests that this variation in interpretation of the same identity markers results from different meanings that groups attach to them (Balsiger, 2016; Pontikes, 2012), as different groups find themselves being subjected to diverse contextual conditions that shape how identity markers are perceived (Negro, Hannan, and Rao, 2011; Ruef and Patterson, 2009).

In the context of majority and minority groups in organizations, we suggest that when a majority group perceives a minority group to interpret the same shared identity markers in differing ways, a low category distance can come to be perceived as threatening by the majority group, rather than it fostering acceptance. This is because a diverging interpretation of the same

shared identity markers can create contention within the organization as to which the 'right' interpretation is (Basedau, Gobien, and Hoffmann, 2022; Boone and Özcan, 2020).[2] This can result in perceived threats to the status quo of the majority group's current dominant position and "way of life" in the organization (Hjerm and Nagayoshi, 2011: 820) and a fear that their position may be replaced by the closer minority group (and their interpretations) over time (Rao, Monin, and Durand, 2005; Syakhroza, Paolella, and Munir, 2019). In other words, differing interpretations may lead to perceived psychological (i.e., identity) and economic (i.e., resource) threats (Livengood and Reger, 2010) for the majority group and an increased likelihood of future conflict. These threats can often be heightened in organizational settings where groups compete for scarce resources, as in the context of career advancements (Barnett and Woywode, 2004; Davis, 2000; Karakayali, 2009). In such a situation, the majority group may evaluate the closer minority group more negatively and play up the differing interpretations to reinforce their status quo and to "preserve positions of power and influence" (Elliott and Smith, 2001: 258).

This reasoning for the negative consequences of closeness is further supported by broader arguments in the categories literature stating that groups that are perceived to share similarities with one another are likely to be more competitive. Barnett and Woywode's (2004) study on the Austrian ideologies of Red Vienna and the Anschluss between 1918 and 1938 is illustrative of this, in which competition between the two ideological groups were more intense because there were only minor ideological differences between them. Other examples have testified to these dynamics (Davis, 2000; Hodges, 1958; Srivastava and Sherman, 2015),

[2] Which specific identity markers a majority group focuses on when determining their relationship with and interpretation of minority groups will often depend on contextual, socio-cultural factors (Llamas, Watt, and Johnson, 2009). Often, they will be those markers that are perceived as central to the majority group's collective identity (Hsu and Grodal, 2015; Paolella and Syakhroza, 2021), readily discernible by audiences, and sufficiently taken-for-granted by implicated group members in a given context. We expand on this point in our discussion section.

captured in the words of Bourdieu that "the closest genealogical relationship, that between brothers, is also the point of greatest tension" (1977: 39).[3]

Overall, we thus suggest that when majority and minority groups share more identity markers, i.e., have a closer category distance, but diverge in how identity markers are interpreted, a closer distance can result in an increased sense of threat among the majority group. In the context of our study, this specifically means that closeness between a majority group and a minority group may lead the majority group to evaluate the minority group more negatively. As a consequence, minority groups that are closer in distance may be disadvantaged more in their career advancements compared to those that are more distant. Formally, we note:

> ***Hypothesis 1****: A lower category distance between a majority and a minority group is negatively associated with career advancements for minority group members within organizations.*

Individual-level identity marker as moderator. In the above hypothesis, we theorized how lower distance through the sharing of identity markers between groups can negatively affect the career advancement of minority groups. However, individual minority group members are diverse (Jones and King, 2014; Lyons, Pek, and Wessel, 2017) and within a minority group we thus expect to see variation in the identity markers that individual minority group members hold (Toubiana and Ruebottom, 2022). For example, previous work has amply shown how women in organizations vary in identity markers such as their displayed level of femininity (Lipińska-Grobelny and Wasiak, 2010), how migrant employees vary in how well they speak the host country language (Dustmann and Fabbri, 2003), or how some gay

[3] In our case, we go beyond the argument that similarity can simply lead to more competition because this argument has largely emerged from studies focusing on very comparable groups (e.g., two similar political parties; two brothers) that are directly competing for resources. From this, it remains less clear how similarity between a majority group and minority groups in organizations would play out as power and access to resources are inherently skewed towards the majority group. In turn, this renders the notion of direct competition less central to their relationships and behaviors.

employees share more identity markers with straight employees at work in how they dress and communicate in contrast to other gay group members, some of whom are even perceived as "too gay" (Speice, 2020: 1864). Thus, different members of a minority group can vary substantially in how many identity markers they share with a majority group: those that share more with a majority group will be closer, whereas those within the same minority group that share fewer will be more distant.

As such, we argue that beyond the group level, an individual minority group member who shares more identity markers with the majority group would be disadvantaged in their career advancement compared to their fellow group members who share less identity markers with the majority group. We suggest that the underlying mechanism aligns with our previous hypothesis in which we argued that a closer distance can lead to a greater perceived threat by the majority group when they perceive minority group members to interpret the same shared identity markers in differing ways to themselves. This, we suggest, would make it more likely for the majority group to negatively evaluate and sanction the closer minority group member, attempting to reduce threats that may emanate from them compared to other members in the same minority group who are more distant. With regards to our study, hypothesizing identity markers at the individual level as a moderator of distance between groups further serves as a soundness check to the mechanism we propose in the previous hypothesis. We formally note:

> ***Hypothesis 2:*** *A minority group member who holds identity markers typical of the majority group will be more negatively associated with career advancement than others within their minority group.*

METHODS

To test the effects of minority group affiliation on career advancement, we investigated the effects of religious affiliation. We used employment data from an Indonesian government organization ('GovMinistry'), regulating one of the most important technical industries in the

country. Our data is ideally suited to test our hypotheses as it consists of each employee's religious affiliation and employment history dating back to 2014 (date of each promotion, job title, department, and rank) and relevant personal information, such as place and date of birth and education. In Indonesia, it is not illegal for employers to collect information on an employee's religion and to mandate its reporting. We further elaborate on the significance of religion in our context below.

Our full dataset consists of 2,586 employees at GovMinistry in the year 2019 who are based in the Jakarta headquarters.[4] Table 1 gives a summary of Jakarta headquarter employee characteristics in the year 2019.

Insert Table 1 about here

Our data is in a panel format in which employee *i* is paired with year *y*. Descriptive statistics and correlation tables are shown in Table 2. To protect employee anonymity, all identifying information was replaced with irreversible employee numbers.

Insert Table 2 about here

Employment at GovMinistry. Government employers typically adopt pay and promotion policies that differ from those in the private sector (Filer, 1990). Nonetheless, employment policies and career structures at GovMinistry parallel many other government institutions worldwide, some of which we detail below. In Indonesia, government workers are endowed with benefits those in the private sector do not typically obtain, such as a scholarship for higher education, pension, and lifelong health insurance (Pratama, 2018). Government workers also enjoy high levels of job security and have historically never been under threat of

[4] In 2019, GovMinistry's total employee count was over 6,000. Since GovMinistry is a federal regulator of a major technical industry, many employees are based in smaller offices dispersed all across Indonesia. We were only given data access to employees based in the Jakarta headquarters.

termination unless in exceptional circumstances. Due to these various factors, employment as government workers continues to be a widely sought-after position and considered a high-status role in modern Indonesian society (Rengganis, 2014).

Furthermore, Indonesian government workers must go through extremely competitive centralized hiring processes. In the year 2019 alone, the Government of Indonesia announced opening a total of 152,286 new government roles across the country, attracting a total of more than five million applicants, rendering about a 3% acceptance rate (Wedhaswary, 2019). Most employees begin their tenure upon finishing their studies (typically an undergraduate degree) and stay in the same institution until retirement. Moving into the private sector means losing government worker status and its respective benefits. Employees' salaries at GovMinistry are primarily determined by rank and tenure and is federally regulated. This leaves little room for wage discrepancies we typically see in private organizations. The rank at GovMinistry ranges from rank 'II A' being the lowest and 'IV E' being the highest with a total of 13 ranks overall. General upward career mobility is typically characterized as going from one rank to the next, for example from II A to II B or III D to IV A and is almost a given for employees, provided they complete the tasks they are assigned to do in their current rank. We use this nuance as a robustness check to test supply-side explanations (i.e., that minority group members are systematically less able to perform vis-à-vis the majority group members) for our results below.

The way GovMinistry is organized in terms of its employees and their progression compares to that of other federal government organizations across the world. For example, the General Schedule (GS) pay and promotion system used by U.S.-based federal government organizations (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2021) provides a highly structured career ladder of progression that outlines the time in each position and the necessary experiences needed for advancement. UK government organizations, such as the U.K. Home Office (U. K. Home Office, 2021), also have similar policies.

Religion in the research context. To develop a deep understanding of religion in Indonesia and at GovMinistry, we conducted extensive archival research through academic articles, general media outlets such as *Kompas* and *Media Indonesia*, social media posts of religious groups (including YouTube videos), and blog posts of famous *imams* in Indonesia. One of the authors was also born and raised in Indonesia and spent time working for an Indonesian government organization, thus being able to share their personal insights and experiences of religion at work with the research team. Indonesia is the largest Muslim country by population, in which 87% of its citizens are followers of Islam, making Muslims the majority religious group in the country. The second largest religion in Indonesia is Christianity, which is practiced by approximately 10% of the population, followed by Hinduism at 1.7% and Buddhism at <1% (Statista Research Department, 2021). As we explain below, these proportions are almost identical to the proportions of religious groups at GovMinistry.

Although it is not an Islamic country by its constitution, Indonesia is one of the most religious countries in the world (Kuru, 2021; Statista Research Department, 2021). This religiosity translates to many aspects of social life, including employment (Rengganis, 2014). In Indonesia, an individual's religious affiliation is often known by others as religious affiliations are listed on official government-issued identification documents and are often required to be disclosed for employment, health (i.e., registering as a patient in a hospital), and education (i.e., school or college applications) purposes (Kuru, 2021). Religion is also a strong part of an individual's social identity. For example, it is common for Indonesians to ask what another person's religion is (Hastanto, 2020) and politicians and celebrities are often interrogated about their religious beliefs and practices (Rizka, 2021).

Dependent variable. Our dependent variable to capture career advancement is *Manager*, a dummy variable indicating whether an employee is a leader of a team or unit in year *y*. Like in most organizations, promotions to managerial positions are a crucial career

advancement that many strive for but only few can obtain. The selection process for managers at GovMinistry is as follows: When a managerial position opens, a panel named *Badan Pertimbangan Jabatan dan Kepangkatan* (literally translated to Position and Rank Assessment Board), typically consisting of representatives from the HR department, the department of the specific managerial position, and leaders of other GovMinistry departments, will hold closed meetings and make the final decision on whom to appoint (or re-appoint) as manager. Managers at GovMinistry are not usually long-term positions, they need to be 're-appointed' in subsequent years.

Independent variables. Our independent variable to indicate minority group affiliation and its corresponding category distance is an employee's religious affiliation. The distribution of religious groups at GovMinistry, in which 88% of employees are Muslim, 11% Christian, 0.7% Hindu, and 0.3% Buddhist, is noticeably similar to that of Indonesia's overall demographics. For the purpose at hand, the religious majority group at GovMinistry is the Muslim group and the minority groups are theorized in relation to the Muslims. We first created the variable *Non-Muslim* if an employee was listed as affiliated with any other religion besides Islam, to proxy for minority affiliation generally and to test our baseline hypothesis.

We then created the variable *Christian* if employee *i* was listed as being Christian. We argue that Christians are the minority group closer in distance to Muslims than the other religious groups, for the following reasons: First, Islam and Christianity have similar roots and teachings given that both are monotheistic Abrahamic religions. For example, both religions share protagonists or activities, such as the figure of Jesus, the practice of fasting as part of their worship, or the calling to proselytize. They also share important commonalities regarding their view of God and his impact on nature and the course of history (Jaoudi, 1993). In consequence, over the years academic research has repeatedly argued that "among the great world-religions (…) Christianity and Islam form a group of their own" and that "how closely

[they] are related to each other becomes fully clear when we compare them, e.g., with Hinduism and Buddhism" (Paret, 1964: 83), in that the latter foundationally depart in their practices, personalities, and events (White, Muthukrishna, and Norenzayan, 2021).

Second, more directly related to our context, Muslims and Christians in Indonesia are perceived to have multiple common identity markers, as they are likely to have been born and raised in the same areas and are thus exposed to similar values and practices. Christians are spread across the country widely and in many areas often make up at least 15% of the population (Kementerian Dalam Negeri, 2022). Ample studies on religion in Indonesia have, further, pointed to how Christians have often held and shared prominent roles in politics, culture, and business together with Muslims, which is far less the case for Hindus and Buddhists (Damayanti, 2018; Hefner, 2017).

We then created the variable *Buddhist/Hindu* if employee *i* was listed as Buddhist or Hindu and argue this to be the minority group further in distance vis-à-vis the Muslims. We grouped the two religions together for the following reasons: First, as the two smaller religions in Indonesia, Buddhists and Hindus are often automatically grouped together in public discourse and analysis as they have similar characteristics, 'positions', and histories in Indonesian society (Lararenjana, 2021; Ningsih, 2021). Hinduism is the oldest religion in Indonesia, having been introduced in the 1st century and later leading to the development of two of the most important historical empires, Srivijaya and Majapahit. Buddhism is the second oldest religion, entering the country in the 2nd century, largely as a consequence of increasing trade relationships. However, unlike Christians who are spread widely across Indonesia, both Buddhists and Hindus are more concentrated in a few areas. Hinduism is concentrated in Bali, where 87% of people are Hindu, whereas Buddhism is concentrated in the island of Sumatera. Buddhist believers in Indonesia are also predominantly of Chinese ancestry (Ningsih, 2021; Rizzo, 2020). Due to these factors, Buddhists and Hindus are perceived as sharing less identity

markers with Muslims than Christians do. We show a comparison of the religious groups in Indonesia in Table 3. Second, there were low counts of Buddhists and Hindus at GovMinistry, which individually would result in omission of these variables or their interactions in the models. We also ran tests to refine the mechanism of distance for religious groups below.

Insert Table 3 about here

Moderator variable. To test Hypothesis 2, we created the variable *Percentage of Muslims in birthplace* for each employee *i*. In Indonesia, a common identity marker of religious affiliation is an individual's place of birth, or what Indonesians term *daerah asal*. An example of this is that someone who is born in Bali would usually be assumed to be a Hindu, whereas an individual born in the province of Aceh would be assumed to be a Muslim. These birthplace identities are correlated to frequent racial stereotyping and determine many aspects of Indonesian social life (Renaldi, 2018). For example, people originating from a certain province would often not consider marrying others from certain provinces due to preconceived stereotypes (Prasetyo, 2022).

To account for distance, we proxied for how 'Islamic' an employee's place of birth was by gathering data from Indonesia's Central Bureau of Statistics on the percentage of Muslims in the birthplace province. The idea is that non-Muslims from more Islamic provinces would be perceived as having 'closer' distance to the Muslims vis-à-vis non-Muslims from provinces which have a lower percentage of Muslims, as the increasing exposure towards Muslims would likely lead to more sharing of identity markers, such as social background and cultural values (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998). We also complement the variable *Percentage of Muslims in birthplace* with alternative variables below and confirm that our results all hold.

Control variables. We controlled for several human capital variables, which may affect career advancement. We first controlled for employee *i*'s *Performance score*, lagged by a year.

We included the variables *Female* (a dummy set as "1" if the employee is a female and "0" otherwise), *Rank* (a number from 1 to 13, denoting the employee's rank at GovMinistry), *Age* of employee and *Age squared*, *Tenure* (the number of years the employee has been employed at GovMinistry) and *Tenure in rank* (the number of years the employee has been in the same rank). To account for education, we included *Highest education*, which is a dummy variable ranging from "0" to "4". We set the variable as "0" if the employee's last education level was a high school degree, "1" for an associate or a vocational degree from an institution post-high school, "2" for an undergraduate degree, "3" for a Master's degree, and "4" for a PhD.

We recognize that network and competitive effects could play a crucial role in the selection to managerial positions (Seibert, Kraimer, and Liden, 2001). Specifically, we tried to account for the explanation that non-Muslims may be disadvantaged not because they are perceived differently, but because they are systematically less able to construct the networks needed to be promoted to managerial positions vis-à-vis Muslims (Leonard, Mehra, and Katerberg, 2008; Mehra, Kilduff, and Brass, 1998). We thus included several departmental-level variables which proxied for networks and competition. We first controlled for the count of minority employees at employee *i*'s department in year *y*, both for Christians and Buddhist/Hindus. We then controlled for *Count of Islamic managers* and *Count of managers* at employee *i*'s department, to proxy for the leadership network of Muslims versus non-Muslims. As one's education institution and place of birth have historically been seen as strong markers of identity (Renaldi, 2018), we controlled for the count of managers and employees in the department who were alumni of the same education institution and from the same province of birth as employee *i*. We also did this to account for the potential argument that employees with different religious backgrounds may be disadvantaged due to different educational credentials or being born in different provinces.

We included job category fixed effects, which consisted of technical jobs (i.e., technical analysts, scientists), professional occupations (i.e., lawyers, accountants, policy analysts), administrative jobs (i.e., administrators, data input roles), and supporting roles (i.e., in-house doctors and dentists who serve GovMinistry employees, security staff). We also included year and department fixed effects in all our models.

Estimation. It was important that our sample of Muslim and non-Muslim employees were comparable. As GovMinistry was mostly comprised of Muslims, we wanted to avoid running analyses on non-Muslims who differed dramatically on individual and job characteristics from Muslims. As such, before running models predicting managerial position, we first deployed a coarsened exact matching procedure (CEM) on our full dataset to match Muslim and non-Muslim employees based on the following characteristics: *Performance score* lagged by a year, *Tenure in rank*, *Tenure*, *Age of employee*, *Rank*, education (whether the employee had a bachelor's degree), and job category. Our full dataset consisted of 2,586 employees and 7,722 observations, whereas our matched dataset consists of 2,196 employees and 4,950 observations. 111 observations were later dropped due to the supporting roles job category being a perfect predictor in the logistic regression. We confirm that distributions of the aforementioned continuous variables become more similar after the CEM procedure, which we show in Table 4. We also show Kernel distributions of the continuous variables *Performance score* and *Age of employee* before and after the matching procedure in Figure 1.

Insert Table 4 and Figure 1 about here

We then tested the likelihood of an employee occupying a managerial position by running random-effects logit regression models with robust standard errors on the matched sample. This method allowed us to estimate between-individual differences over the years as well as time-invariant parameters as explanatory variables. In our case, using a fixed-effects

approach would not have been appropriate because our main independent variables of religious affiliation had no within-variance (Cameron and Trivedi, 2010). It is also worth noting that since a managerial position at GovMinistry is not a permanent role (i.e., employees can be appointed manager for a year, cease to be in a managerial position, and be re-appointed manager at a later time), we opted to refrain from using survival analysis models. In other words, an employee continues to be 'at risk' of holding a managerial position every year, rather than being 'at risk' for initial promotion only. We showcase models without the CEM procedure in the online supplementary.

Supporting a model assumption. Central to our theorization is the idea that Muslims, as the majority group at GovMinistry, perceive colleagues who adhere to other religions differently. Although this perception seems likely, given how there is ample discussion of differential treatment of religious minorities in Indonesian society (Mubarrak and Kumala, 2020; Sirait, 2019), our quantitative data did not provide for an opportunity to directly capture this perception from the point of employees. Thus, to examine whether the Muslims in our sample did indeed generally differentiate between themselves and other religious groups in the workplace, we followed DesJardine, Shi, and Marti (2023) who, when faced with similar challenges, drew on Cornelissen and Kaandorp's (2023) idea of 'causal triangulation' and engaged in interviews with implicated actors to validate assumptions in their reasoning and theoretical models. As a result, we engaged in background interviews with six people who have worked for GovMinistry. In these interviews, we focused on a range of questions to specifically understand how Muslims viewed other religious groups at GovMinistry. A Muslim employee in the IT department, for example, noted that "they [i.e., Christians] are just different. They can't join us in our everyday prayers, they do their own thing. Even their holidays are different. We take long holidays during Eid, they have Christmas." Similarly, an HR professional mentioned that Muslim employees often viewed other religious minorities as "different and

malicious." She further elaborated: "In Indonesia, religion is always a hot issue. And so, when interests don't match, that's when the religious 'us versus them' really comes to play." When discussing the possibility of non-Muslim employees rising to leadership positions at GovMinistry, a number of Muslim interviewees drew our attention to a specific Quranic verse, as a potential underlying reason for why Muslims may have an issue with selecting non-Muslim leaders:

> "O you who believe! Do not take for leaders those who take your religion for a mockery and a joke, from among those who were given the Book before you and the unbelievers; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah if you are believers." (Al Maaidah: 51)

Further, a Christian employee mentioned how Muslims often felt threatened by non-Muslim leaders because "if a Christian goes up to be leader, Muslims think that they will probably start to favor their own people more." Overall, the interviews we conducted suggested that Muslims indeed saw a difference between themselves and other, non-Muslim employees, which provided a further point of reference to suggest that the Muslims within GovMinistry thought and felt along the lines implied in our theorizing and model assumptions.

RESULTS

Results of the logit models predicting managerial position are shown in Table 5. In the controls-only model (Model 1), individual-level variables generally have the expected significant effects and showcase many similarities between GovMinistry and other organizations studied by management scholars. Model 2 investigates baseline Hypothesis 0, which is the effect of having minority group affiliation on career advancement, by including the variable *Non-Muslim*. Our hypothesis predicts that non-Muslims would have a negative correlation with career advancement (i.e., holding managerial positions). Our results support this as the coefficient of *Non-Muslim* ($\beta = -0.41$; $p = 0.07$) is negative and significant. We graph results in Figure 2. As can be seen, non-Muslims have about a 15.2% probability of holding a managerial position, whereas Muslims have about an 18% probability. Given that Muslims

only have an 18% probability of holding a managerial position, the difference of 2.8% between Muslims and non-Muslims is noteworthy (2.8%/18%=15.5% difference in conditional probability). We recognize that the p-value of the variable *Non-Muslim* is higher than the significance benchmark of $p = 0.05$, however, as we will discuss below, this is likely because the non-Muslims at GovMinistry are a combination of multiple minority groups, which may not be uniformly negatively correlated with holding a managerial position.

Insert Table 5 and Figure 2 about here

We then tested Hypothesis 1 by including the variables *Christian* and *Buddhist/Hindu*. Hypothesis 1 suggests that Christians are less likely to hold managerial positions vis-à-vis Buddhist and Hindus due to being closer to Muslims. Our results provide support for Hypothesis 1, as we find *Christian* ($\beta = -0.54$; $p = 0.01$) to be negative and significant, whereas *Buddhist/Hindu* ($\beta = 1.44$; $p = 0.06$) is positive. We graph both results in Figure 2. As is shown in the figure, the variable *Christian* corresponds to an approximately 14.5% probability of holding a managerial position, whereas Muslims have about an 18.1% probability. In the figure showing the results of the variable *Buddhist/Hindu,* we can see that *Buddhist/Hindu* corresponds to about a 29% probability of holding a managerial position, whereas again Muslims have about an 18% probability. Our explanation for the latter is that Buddhist/Hindus may not be perceived as big of a threat as Christians. These results make it less surprising that the effects of being a non-Muslim in the previous model exceeds the threshold of $p = 0.05$, as the positive effects of being a Buddhist/Hindu are about 3.06 ((29%-18%)/(18.1%-14.5%)=3.06) times larger than the negative effects of being a Christian, despite the smaller numbers of Buddhist/Hindu employees.

We tested Hypothesis 2 by including the interactions between minority religious affiliation and *Population of Muslims in birthplace* where a higher Muslim population proxies

for closer distance with the majority category. As shown in Model 4, our results support Hypothesis 2, in that a Buddhist or Hindu employee born in a province with more Muslims is less likely to advance, as the interaction between *Buddhist/Hindu* and *Population of Muslims in birthplace* is negative and significant (β = -5.53; p = 0.00). We graph results in Figure 3 at the mean level of the *Population of Muslims in birthplace* moderator and one standard deviation above and below. As the figure shows, a Buddhist or Hindu born in a highly Islamic province is about 6.5% less likely to hold a managerial position vis-à-vis a Buddhist or Hindu from a province with less Muslims. While the interaction between *Christian* and *Population of Muslims in birthplace* (β = -0.27; p = 0.83) is also negative, suggesting similar dynamics at play for Christians, it is non-significant. We confirm that our results remain substantively the same without first performing the CEM procedure. Overall, our results support our hypotheses in that closer distance seems to render a religious minority group *more* discriminated.

Insert Figure 3 about here

Refining the mechanism of distance. In this section, we attempt to refine our mechanism of distance, since we argue that Christians have a lower distance to Muslims vis-à-vis the Buddhists and Hindus. First, we ran t-tests to investigate differences between Christians and Buddhist/Hindus in relationship to the Muslims based on variables of human capital which proxy for distance. The idea here is to see the difference in these characteristics between the minorities and the Muslims: if Christians are closer in distance than Buddhist/Hindus, then the former's characteristics are likely to be more similar to the Muslims than the latter. Specifically, we tested birthplace characteristics by comparing the percentages of Muslims in the birthplace provinces and the number of colleagues from the same birthplace province of each religious group.

We found that provincial birthplaces of Christians were less likely to be Islamic, as the mean percentage of Muslims in the birthplace of Christians was 0.75 compared to 0.93 for the Muslims ((|T| > |t|) = 0.00), i.e., Muslims made up about 75% of the population in the provincial birthplaces of Christians, whereas they made up about 93% of the population in the birthplaces of Muslims. Christians also had less colleagues in the department born in the same birthplace (about 10.75 colleagues for Christians compared to 24.8 colleagues for Muslims (|T| > |t|) = 0.00).

We found a similar case for the Buddhist and Hindus, but their birthplaces were in significantly less Islamic areas compared to the Christians ((|T| > |t|) = 0.00 for both Buddhists and Hindus). The mean percentage of Muslims in the birthplace was only 0.39, which meant that Muslims made up only about 39% of the population in Buddhist and Hindu birthplaces, which was even lower than the Christians, aforementioned at 75%. Moreover, Buddhists and Hindus had less colleagues that were from the same birthplace in their department (2.7 colleagues for Buddhists, 8.2 colleagues for Hindus).

The results of these t-tests suggest that Christians and Buddhist/Hindus do on average have different birthplaces compared to Muslims, as shown by the less Islamic birthplaces and the fewer number of colleagues from the same birthplace. However, aligned with our previous arguments, Christians at GovMinistry seem to be more similar to the Muslims in their background (i.e., their birthplaces) compared to Buddhists and Hindus.

Second, we consider the explanation that our measure of distance between groups may be conflated with distance between work or employee characteristics. In other words, we wanted to address the economically rational alternative explanation that religious minorities may simply have different work characteristics (i.e., work ethic or culture) that lead to the impediment of their careers vis-à-vis the Muslim majority. Although it is difficult to completely isolate unobservable work or employee characteristics – such as work ethic or culture – we

accounted for the distances in observable characteristics and proxied for the unobservables (see for example Ornaghi and Van Beveren, 2012; Wooldridge, 2009). In particular, we ran our full model (Model 4 in Table 5) whilst controlling for *Distance from average education*, *Distance from average tenure*, *Distance from average age*, and *Distance from average rank*. These distance variables were created by calculating the difference between employee *i*'s and the average employee characteristics in employee *i*'s department in year *y*. For instance, *Distance from average education* was created by calculating the difference between employee *i*'s education and the average education of all other employees in employee *i*'s department in year *y*. In models not shown here but accessible as online supplementary, our results remain the same. As such, we can be more confident that our results are not attributable *only* to differences in observable (and potentially unobservable) employee or work characteristics, but rather to the categorical distance between the majority and minority groups.

Finally, we also consider the possibility that our mechanism is explained not by distance but rather by the sizes of minority groups, in that the largest minority group may be seen as the most threatening and smaller groups as less threatening, thus driving career outcomes. While minority group size can play a role in how groups are perceived by the majority, a growing body of studies provides evidence for the idea that size is not a sufficient explanation for the threats perceived by majority groups when confronted with minorities (Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes, 2017; Schlueter and Scheepers, 2010; Strabac, 2011), often showing that "size (…) per se is of no consequence" (Hjerm, 2007: 1269). For example, studying the context of immigrant populations in host countries, Hjerm and Nagayoshi (2011) suggest that when looking at the threat experienced by majority groups, it is often much more important to evaluate the specific characteristics and the sense of 'difference' between groups, rather than purely focusing on the quantity of individuals in a given minority group. The authors state that when considering the threat of minority groups "not the size of the immigrant population as a whole (…) is

meaningful, but rather the composition of the immigrant group itself" (Hjerm and Nagayoshi, 2011: 818). As such, relating this to our case, we suggest that although size can be a driver of distance, it would not necessarily be the only and most central driver. Still, to furthermore analytically account for this alternative explanation, we proxied for size through the count of minority employees at employee *i*'s department in year *y*, of both Christians and Buddhist/Hindus, as controls in all our models. As can be seen in our models, our results all hold when including these controls. Additionally, in models not shown but accessible as online supplementary, we also tested to see the effects of the interaction between size and our independent variables. We found no significant effects of the interaction. As such, our results seem to align with previous literature that argues that size does not seem to have strong effects by itself.

Robustness checks. We ran several robustness checks to affirm the strength of our results, shown in Table 6. First, we ensured the veracity of our *Percentage of Muslims in birthplace* variable using an alternative measure, *Population per mosque in birthplace*. We argue this to be another variable to proxy for distance through how Islamic one's birthplace is. The Ministry of Religion of Indonesia provides data on how many mosques there are in each province. We divided the population of the province by the count of mosques in the province and created the natural log of this variable. We suggest that a higher population per mosque would indicate a less Islamic (fewer mosques serving people) place of birth and a smaller population per mosque as more Islamic (more mosques serving people). The correlation between our main moderator and this alternative moderator variable is -0.53. We show results in Model 1. As the model shows, our results hold and are identical to the main Model 4 of Table 5. Since our results are supported by two variables which both proxy for the "Islamicity" of a birthplace but have only moderate correlation with one another, we are more confident in

the robustness of our results. We use another variable to capture distance in models predicting performance scores below and find that those results also align with our main models.

Insert Table 6 about here

Second, we note that our theorization is that of the demand-side, in which we argue that religious minority individuals are negatively perceived by the majority. Nonetheless, for completeness and to rule out its (albeit remote) possibility, we considered a supply-side mechanism, namely, that adherents of religious minorities systematically perform worse than their Muslim colleagues, potentially reducing their likelihood of holding managerial positions. As discussed earlier, general upward career mobility at GovMinistry is characterized by going from one rank to the next and is almost 'a given' provided employees complete their assigned tasks in their current rank. We thus ran analyses to predict promotion in rank to account for the possibility of supply-side mechanisms driving our results. If adherents of minority religions were to perform worse, then their likelihood of promotion in rank should also be lower than that of Muslims. However, if there are no effects of minority religion, then we can have more confidence in our mechanisms being demand-side rather than supply-side driven. To examine this, we ran the same steps to predict managerial positions but changed the dependent variable to be promotion in rank. Results are shown in Models 2 and 3. As can be seen, there are no significant effects of *Non-Muslim* (β = -0.15; p = 0.28) or of *Christian* (β = -0.11; p = 0.44) and *Buddhist/Hindu* (β = -0.70; p = 0.32). We can thus be more confident that our results are driven by a demand-side mechanism (i.e., that religious minority groups are negatively perceived by the majority) rather than a supply-side one (i.e., that religious minority groups perform worse at their jobs than the majority group).

We also considered the possibility that managerial positions at a higher level may be more difficult to obtain than those at lower levels, thus implying potentially different

theoretical mechanisms of career advancements for managers who are more senior versus managers who are less senior. We accounted for this possibility by first dividing managers into two groups. The first group, the higher-level managers, consists of managers who are responsible for at least 50 employees. The second group consists of managers who are responsible for less than 50 employees. We then ran the same steps as in our main models to predict managerial positions in each of the two groups. Our results hold when predicting both groups of managers. Results for both groups are shown in Models 4 and 5. Results for the first group (i.e., the higher-level managers) are the same as with our main models. However, there was an insufficient number of Buddhist/Hindu managers for the second group (i.e., the lower-level managers), which is why the variable and its interaction were omitted from Model 4. On the other hand, Christian employees are less likely to become managers in the lower-level group when the percentage of Muslims in their birthplace is higher (β = -3.65; p = 0.06). In all, aligned with what we theorize in Hypotheses 1 and 2, disadvantages of minority groups seem to become more pronounced when the minority group is closer to the majority in distance.

Effect of employee and supervisor distance on performance scores. To try to capture the distance between the majority and minority groups, we opted to run additional models which proxied for distance between employee *i* and their supervisor. We did so by analyzing annual performance scores at GovMinistry. In our dataset, performance scores ranged from 51 to 107 with a higher performance score signifying a better performance. At the end of each year, similar to other organizational evaluation systems (Castilla, 2011), employees are appraised with a performance score by their direct supervisor. We were able to obtain access to information on the direct supervisors for 28 out of 54 departments at GovMinistry in the years 2017 and 2018. We first ran several t-tests of department characteristics – which were *Count of employees*, *Count of managers*, *Count of Islamic managers*, and *Average education in the department* – and found that the departments in which we had access to supervisor

information had fewer employees – on average 78 employees – compared to departments where we did not have access to supervisor information, which had an average of 96 employees ((|T| > |t|) = 0.00). To account for these differences, we opted to do a two-step Heckman selection model. We first used the department characteristics variables mentioned above to run a first-step logistic regression model predicting the likelihood of having supervisor information (with a dummy of "1" where we were given access to supervisor information and "0" otherwise). Based on the results, we then generated an inverse Mill's ratio. In the second step, we ran an OLS model predicting annual performance scores and included the inverse Mill's ratio. To simplify interpretation, we only ran analyses on employees with Muslim supervisors, as there were only two non-Muslim supervisors in our sample.[5] Results are shown in Table 7.

We tested Hypothesis 0 in Model 1 and our results support our hypothesis because the variable *Non-Muslim* (β = -2.68; p = 0.00) is negative and significant. In particular, it seemed that non-Muslims received annual performance scores of about 2.7 points less than Muslims, which is about 73.4% (2.68/3.65=0.734) of one standard deviation of the performance score variable. In Model 2, we tested Hypothesis 1 and found both the effect of *Christian* (β = -2.69; p = 0.00) and *Buddhists/Hindu* (β = -2.48; p = 0.00) to be negative. However, since the coefficient of Christians is larger than Buddhists and Hindus, the former seem to be more penalized on average in their performance scores than the latter, providing support to Hypothesis 1.

We then investigated how these relationships changed when considering the effect of individual distance. In order to measure distance between employee *i* and their supervisor, we created the variable *Difference in birthplace*, which is coded as "1" if the supervisor and employee were from a different birthplace province and coded as "0" if they were from the

[5] In the second-step models, we combined the variables *Count of Christian employees in department* and *Count of Buddhist/Hindu employees in department*, as there was not enough variation to include the variable *Count of Buddhist/Hindu employees in department* on its own.

same birthplace. We tested Hypothesis 2 and show results in Model 3. When we interacted the variable *Christian* and *Difference in birthplace* (β = 1.36; p = 0.06), we found the interaction to be positive and significant. This implied that Christians who were from a different birthplace than their supervisor received higher performance scores than Christians who were from the same birthplace. The graphing of results is shown in Figure 4. As can be seen from the figure, there is about a 0.3 point difference in performance scores between a Christian and a non-Christian for employees from different birthplaces than their supervisor. However, a Christian from the same birthplace as their supervisor would receive about a 1 point lower performance score than a non-Christian from the same birthplace. Since there was not enough variation in the interaction between *Buddhist/Hindu* and *Difference in birthplace*, this interaction was omitted from the model. In all, this result buttresses Hypothesis 2 in that not only Buddhist and Hindus can be more disadvantaged by a closer distance – as is shown in our main models – but that Christians can be disadvantaged as well. We also confirm that our results hold the same without the Heckman selection procedure and show these in the online supplementary.

Insert Table 7 and Figure 4 about here

DISCUSSION

We commenced our study with the observation that although scholars have started to pay attention to the varying experiences of different minority groups in organizations (Leslie, 2017; DiTomaso et al., 2007b), more theorization on unpacking their experiences of career advancements is necessary and has been called for (DiTomaso et al., 2007a). To investigate this, we drew on the categories literature (Durand and Paolella, 2013; Hsu et al., 2009) and specifically the concept of category distance (Kovacs and Hannan, 2015; Paolella and Durand, 2015) to hypothesize how and why certain minority groups may be more disadvantaged than others in their career advancements in organizations.

In the context of an Indonesian government organization and focusing on different religious minority groups, our results support our hypothesis that a lower category distance between a majority and a minority group penalizes the career advancement of such minority group. We find that Christians, which we argue is the minority group closer in distance to the Muslim majority group in our context, are less likely to hold managerial positions vis-à-vis Buddhists and Hindus, which we argue are the minority groups further in distance. We also find that individual members of the minority groups who are closer in distance to Muslims are more likely to be penalized in their prospects of holding managerial positions than others within their minority group who are individually more distant from Muslims.

Our study has implications for the literatures on careers, categories, and the role of religion in organizations, which we discuss below. We conclude with an outlook for future research opportunities and insights for practice.

Career advancements in organizations

When examining and explaining career advancements, studies to date have overwhelmingly drawn on social identity-based reasoning to suggest that ingroup favoritism and the associated discrimination of others is a major driver of disadvantage for minority groups (James, 2000; Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002). The idea being that, given the chance, evaluating decision makers will often prefer those who are the 'same' as they are and discriminate against those that are 'different' to them (Greenhaus et al. 1990). While these studies have been foundational, we suggest that they often leave little room to account for some of the more recent organizational realities and complexities when dealing with settings that feature a whole variety of different minority groups (Ghumman et al., 2013). To date, only few studies have provided insights into the drivers of variation of disadvantage across different minority groups' career advancements.

The present study responds to and adds to this conversation by invoking the literature on categories (Hannan et al. 2007; Durand and Paolella, 2013). We suggest that central to understanding heterogeneity in career advancements across multiple minority groups in more detail – and in so doing moving beyond prior work in this space – is considering the variation of category distance between the majority and minority groups in organizations. Interestingly, our results show how minority groups that are perceived to be closer in distance by the majority group can face more severe penalties in their career advancements compared to those that are perceived to be more distant. This, we argue, emerges when a majority group perceives a minority group to interpret the same shared identity makers in differing ways, leading a low category distance to be perceived as threatening by the majority group, rather than it fostering acceptance. Invoking the concept of category distance for the literature on careers thus allows a deeper understanding of the mechanisms underlying why different minority group members within a given organization may experience more disadvantage in their career advancements than others. Our insights extend prior work that, while insightful, has been confined to theorizing very specific differences between groups (e.g., groups' ethnic status; see Leslie, 2017). By conceptualizing distance through identity markers, we believe that our work can be better generalized to different types of majority and minority groups.

Further, our work allows for the introduction of the idea of a 'spectrum' of disadvantage among minority groups within a specific outgroup, rather than a binary state of disadvantage between an ingroup and an outgroup (Ghumman and Ryan, 2013; King and Ahmad, 2010; Percheski, 2008), and suggests a new way of thinking about disadvantage in career advancements. Importantly, our analysis and results further advance scholarly understanding of how inequality is experienced and manifested in organizations in varying ways (Amis et al., 2020; Arifeen and Gatrell, 2020) by providing a more nuanced explanation of why certain groups are more likely to be faced with social inequality than others. In this context, our

mechanism of category distance can be regarded as a valuable extension to other explanations for why certain groups are more prone to experiencing social inequality (DiTomaso et al., 2007b).

Further, while scholarship on career advancements has broadly studied the (often negative) experiences of implicated minority groups (Brands and Fernandez-Mateo, 2017; Percheski, 2008), this research tends to say less about the roles of the evaluating decision-makers and, especially, how and why these decision-makers may contribute to the persistence of disadvantages for certain minority groups. Our study extends this conversation by theorizing how the relationships between an evaluating (majority) group and minority groups plays a role in the career advancements of various minority groups in organizations. In so doing, we contribute to scholarship that has increasingly called for a move beyond purely employee-side factors in the study of career advancements towards a combination of employee- and evaluator-side factors to develop more holistic insights into the drivers or inhibitors of career advancements (Bode et al., 2022; Rivera, 2012).

Categories and category distance

Categories provide actors with a cognitive infrastructure useful for understanding commonalities and differences amongst entities, such as individuals and groups (Schneiberg and Berk, 2010). This involves acts of classification through which actors are better able to make sense of the social world before them (Durkheim and Mauss, 1963; Simmel, 1910). One particular way of going about understanding commonalities and differences through acts of classification is by drawing on the idea of 'category distance' (Kovacs and Hannan, 2015; Paolella and Durand, 2015). Although the concept of distance between groups has a long tradition in sociology dating back to Tarde (1962) and Granovetter (1973), it is still relatively underdeveloped in the literature on categories. Our study extends the discussion on category distance in two important ways.

First, we contend that the traditional definition of category distance as 'co-occurrences of labels' (Kovacs and Hannan, 2015; Paolella and Durand, 2015) limits how distance can be conceptualized and applied. For example, research in 'sociology' and 'genetics' is often presumed to be far in distance because research in either category is unlikely to be labelled both, whereas 'sociology' and 'gender studies' are closer in distance, i.e., work in sociology is often also labelled as work in gender studies (Kovacs and Hannan, 2015). However, in other contexts, such co-occurrence of multiple labels might not be feasible or even possible. For example, relating this to our context of different minority groups, a co-occurrence of multiple labels placed on an individual seems extremely unlikely as an individual is probably not both (labeled) a 'Christian' and a 'Muslim.' In other settings, the same logic applies: unless someone is of mixed race, an individual is unlikely to be (labeled) both 'Black' and 'Asian.' Based on these observations, we believe it crucial to advance the literature by extending the concept of category distance itself. To do so, we theorize distance with regards to the perceived sharing of identity markers between groups by drawing on the idea that categories are closer when they are more similar (Kovacs and Hannan, 2015; Syakhroza et al., 2019). This advances the concept (and meaning) of category distance from one that has traditionally relied and focused on co-occurrences of category labels among groups to make judgments about their distance to one by which distance can be understood through the perceived sharing of identity markers. This allows for a wider and more universal application of the concept and provides a useful tool for future researchers interested in studying related questions.

Second, although category researchers have shown that close categories can be more competitive towards one another (Mathias, Huyghe, Frid, and Galloway, 2017; Rao, Monin, and Durand, 2003; Syakhroza et al., 2019), little research has focused on the mechanisms that lets competition between very close groups emerge in the first place. Our theorization that shared identity markers can often be interpreted in differing ways – creating perceived threats

among implicated groups – presents one such mechanism that can help explain why and how competition between close groups can ensue. In doing so, our study expands the understanding of competition between categories (Carroll and Swaminathan, 2000; Porac, Thomas, and Baden-Fuller, 2011).

In this context, it is important to discuss when our theory can be best operationalized and generalized to different groups and contexts. We suggest that our theorization is most likely to hold under three conditions: First, identity markers need to be perceived as vital to the self-conception of implicated groups. In particular, the evaluating majority group needs to strongly feel that identity markers present a crucial aspect of who they are collectively, and that to uphold this identity it matters whose interpretation of the identity markers is the right one (i.e., the 'truth'). Of course, not all identity markers will be central to a group's collective identity and a differential interpretation of more peripheral identity markers is unlikely to lead to a perceived threat. In other words, groups and their members will often share identity markers (e.g., interest in music, sports, food) that lead to a close category distance, without such markers being perceived as important enough to be able to trigger a sense of threat among a majority group, which, thus does not lead to substantial negative consequences for the implicated minority groups. Second, information about individuals' identity markers needs to be readily available. That is to say that identity markers need to be discernable and very salient (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). Such information can come about, on the one hand, through obvious visual cues that evaluators pick up on – such as, for example, an individual's appearance – but can, on the other hand, also emerge in the absence of such visual cues, through the language and behaviors that individuals may display. This can inform evaluators about any attributes they may share with individuals and about how similarly they perceive and interpret these. Third, the association of identity markers with a specific group needs to be sufficiently taken-for-granted in the socio-cultural contexts that groups are embedded in. Our theorization of distance is less

likely to hold when it is difficult to establish whether the identity marker applies to a group or when there is not enough consensus on the attribution of the markers to the group.

While these conditions mean that our theorization may not apply to all groups and contexts, we are confident that it applies to a broad range of important minority groups. For instance, one could imagine how a closer *national* minority group (e.g., Japanese) that share identity markers with the majority group (e.g., Chinese, in a Chinese context) may be disadvantaged in career progression because identity markers (e.g., of cultural and historical significance) are interpreted very differently while also being salient and crucial to the majority's identity. Similarly, again assuming that identity markers are discernable through, for example, individuals' language or behavior, one could also envisage how a closer *political* minority group (e.g., liberal democrats in the UK) that share identity markers with the majority group (e.g., conservatives in the UK) may be disadvantaged in their career progression because identity markers (e.g., certain beliefs about how to run the economy and associated policies) are interpreted very differently while also being salient and crucial to the maintenance of the majority's identity within their organization.

Our theorization may play a less important role in social contexts where minority groups are heavily stigmatized and sanctioned. Here, category distance may be less relevant in organizational decision making as group members may want to (or even have to) conceal their category membership and downplay the identity markers that are often associated with the category. This makes it unlikely that organizational decision makers will be able to evaluate individuals based on markers. For example, the social and legal sanctioning of the LGBTQIA+ community in many Muslim countries may make considerations of distance and identity markers less relevant in organizational decision-making processes.

New perspectives on the role of religion in organizations

A striking 84% of the world's population identifies with a religious group (Sherwood, 2018). Yet, although religion has increasingly been shown to not only be a personal or social phenomenon but an important topic in organizations (Chan-Serafin, Brief, and George, 2013; Roulet, 2020), for the most part organizational scholars have "so studiously avoided" the topic in their research (Tracey, Phillips, and Lounsbury, 2014: 4). While some attempts have been made to unpack how religion can make individual employees more virtuous and ethical (Abu Bakar, Cooke, and Muenjohn, 2018; Chan-Serafin et al., 2013; Weaver and Agle, 2002) or, to the contrary, how it can lead to discrimination of individuals who seek to join an organization (Forstenlechner and Al-Waqfi, 2010; Ghumman and Ryan, 2013), to date, we still know little about the specific effects of religion on employees' activities and lives at work. We extend this area of inquiry by investigating the implications of religion for a central organizational activity, namely career advancements. In so doing, we advance conversations on the implications of religion within organizations by showing how and under what conditions belonging to a religious minority group can create more advantageous outcomes for individuals and provide insights into the potential broader influences that religion can have on organizational life.

Furthermore, our study advances the current understanding of the dynamics of religion in organizations by explicitly addressing the relations between multiple religious groups and their consequences. It shows how multiple religious groups may interact with one another around a central organizational activity and thus extends prior work that has often tended to focus on somewhat more rudimentary scenarios featuring adherents of a majority religion, mostly Christians, and those of a single minority religion, mostly Muslims, who are then discriminated against (Arifeen and Gatrell, 2020; Ghumman et al., 2013; King and Ahmad, 2010).

Limitations and Future Research

Our study, like all studies, carries with it some limitations, which, however, opens up promising avenues for future research. First, while the data available to us allowed an analysis into how perceptions of one central socio-cultural characteristic – religion – influenced which minority groups were more likely to be advantaged in their career advancements, it did not allow for a full investigation into how different individual-level characteristics of the career evaluators themselves (i.e., the Muslim managers) could shape their decisions related to career advancements of minority groups. An intriguing opportunity for future research would be to examine the evaluating decision makers in more detail to see the processes underlying their decision-making when it comes to others' career advancements. We would also encourage researchers to examine how other characteristics – such as gender or race – intersect with religion to see how those intersections may affect career discrimination (or advancement) in the workplace.

Second, we recognize that our theorization of category distance is context-dependent and that we, in our work, do not venture to prescribe ex-ante which groups will be closer to one another, or which identity markers will be most salient. In effect, one cannot easily do this without understanding the social context in which the evaluative processes take place. Nonetheless, we believe that the concepts of category distance and identity markers offer ample exciting research opportunities. For example, future research could inquire, potentially through a qualitative study with components of participant observation, how individuals may be able to identify the identity markers of others – both in overt or covert ways (Roulet, Gill, Stenger, and Gill, 2017) or how identity markers become more or less salient to groups. That is to say that rather than just picking up identity markers that are readily discernible, it would be intriguing to understand how individuals could actively seek out the identity markers of others in their contexts. This would be helpful because while in some instances – such as in the case

of race or religious affiliations (as in our study) – one's identity markers will often be more easily discernable through certain dress, language, or behavioral cues (Scheitle and Corcoran, 2017; Heliot et. al, 2020), in other cases – such as when, for example, considering one's political affiliation – this may be more difficult to do and may require some investigation to find out which identity markers individuals hold. Such inquiry would thus be able to complement our study by providing the "inputs", i.e., the identity markers necessary for judging category distance, based on which the effects we theorize in our hypotheses could be triggered. We can also imagine studies looking into changes of identity markers between groups. Rather than being consistent and static, how, why, and to what extent may some identity markers that groups initially share shift over time and what are the consequences for implicated groups?

Finally, we recognize that religion is correlated with many other individual and socio-cultural characteristics meaning that our study offers a correlational explanation, not a causal one. Given the nascent nature of studies on religion in organizations and the many remaining research opportunities, we thus encourage scholars to continue to examine how religion impacts a range of central organizational activities, for example, by using experimental methods to establish more causal relationships of how religion shapes organizational life. Additionally, we could envisage important studies that examine religion in organizations located in generally less-religious countries and contexts and see to what extent and how religion might (still) impact organizational activities in a variety of ways. Here, we would encourage future research to consider engaging in mixed methods approaches as a way to study the topic of religion in organizations, given that in many contexts quantitative information about one's religious affiliations will only be partly available.

Implications for practice

Concluding, our study also offers implications for practice. First, our study suggests that managers, particularly those who are engaged in evaluating the careers of others, need to become more aware of their own and others' socio-cultural biases towards minority groups. Here, our work specifically helps managers understand why some minority groups may experience more biases or discrimination than other minority groups within their organizations, or why they themselves may perceive different minority groups in different ways. In our case, we specifically highlight how such varied perceptions can emerge from the distance between socio-cultural characteristics or factors associated with decision makers (and their group) and those of different minority groups. In particular, one implication of our theorizing that challenges conventional wisdom (Chung, Singh, and Lee, 2000; Wagner, 1995) is that managers should try not to assume that similarity between individuals or groups within their organizations will necessarily lead to more collaboration and cooperation between them. Rather, the opposite may occur, in that closer distance between actors can lead to more perceived threats, competition, and consequentially discrimination. This has implications for how organizations may, for example, think about their DEI initiatives (Buchter, 2021). In particular, we suggest that rather than lumping minority groups together as one disadvantaged group and 'supporting' them in similar ways, organizations need to become more aware of the varying needs and expectations of minority groups in organizations and adjust their support accordingly.

Second, our study also touches on the notion of 'threats' that organizational decision makers may consciously or unconsciously encounter in their work. Such feeling of threats can often be heightened in organizational settings where groups compete for scarce resources, as in the context of career advancements (Barnett and Woywode, 2004; Davis, 2000; Karakayali, 2009). Our study thus points to the idea that organizations may need to pay more attention to

what decision makers might perceive as a threat and engage in actions to mitigate these feelings. For example, mitigating approaches could include specific organizational communication on how the career advancements of individuals from minority groups can be a source of strength for the overall organizations and something that is desirable. This may also trigger broader conversations and a reevaluation as to how the organizational culture is faring if innocent socio-cultural factors, such as one's religious affiliation, are already perceived as threats that can influence organizational outcomes in profound ways.

Taken together, we hope that our study into the heterogenous career advancements of minority group members, and the role that identity markers and category distance play, will allow both academics and practitioners alike to view the underlying mechanisms of the career advancements of minority group members in organizations in new and interesting ways.

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Table 1. Employee Characteristics of GovMinistry Employees in 2019

Variable	
Proportion Male	0.74
Proportion Muslim	0.88
Age (in years), average	38.9
Tenure (in years), average	15.13
Proportion Married	0.73
Proportion with a Bachelor's degree	0.43

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Table

	Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
1	Manager	0.15	0.35	0	1
2	Non-Muslim	0.12	0.32	0	1
3	Christian	0.11	0.31	0	1
4	Buddhist / Hindu	0.01	0.09	0	1
5	Percentage of Muslims in birthplace	0.90	0.15	0.11	0.98
6	Performance score	86.57	3.65	51	107
7	Female	0.25	0.43	0	1
8	Rank	6.92	2.01	1	14
9	Age	36.88	9.22	18	60
10	Tenure	13.17	9.24	0	42
11	Tenure in rank	2.26	1.23	1	13
12	Highest education	2.03	1.01	0	4
13	Count of Christian employees in department	10.82	14.99	0	52
14	Count of Buddhist / Hindu employees in department	0.71	1.40	0	6
15	Count of Islamic managers in department	5.52	2.99	1	16
16	Count of managers in department	6.37	3.36	1	16
17	Count of managers in department with same educ. inst.	0.60	1.21	0	10
18	Count of employees in department with same educ. inst.	7.53	14.28	0	88
19	Count of managers in department with same place of birth	1.34	1.65	0	8
20	Count of employees in department with same place of birth	22.05	28.60	0	99

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Table continued

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1	Manager																			
2	Non-Muslim	0.02																		
3	Christian	0.01	0.96																	
4	Buddhist / Hindu	0.03	0.24	-0.03																
5	Percentage of Muslims in birthplace	0	-0.45	-0.38	-0.31															
6	Performance score	0.22	-0.03	-0.03	0	0.07														
7	Female	-0.02	-0.02	-0.02	-0.02	0.05	0.05													
8	Rank	0.35	-0.02	-0.04	0.05	0.03	0.37	-0.01												
9	Age	0.23	-0.04	-0.05	0.03	0.01	0.25	-0.12	0.7											
10	Tenure	0.25	-0.05	-0.06	0.04	0.02	0.27	-0.07	0.67	0.86										
11	Tenure in rank	0.13	-0.01	0	-0.01	0.04	0.03	-0.01	0.07	0.17	0.21									
12	Highest education	0.25	0	0	0.01	0.08	0.26	0.09	0.46	-0.02	-0.05	-0.06								
13	Count of Christian employees in department	-0.17	0.11	0.1	0.03	-0.16	-0.24	-0.11	-0.23	-0.06	-0.14	-0.08	-0.29							
14	Count of Buddhist / Hindu employees in department	-0.12	0.1	0.09	0.02	-0.18	-0.22	-0.13	-0.24	-0.04	-0.04	-0.01	-0.34	0.79						
15	Count of Islamic managers in department	0.12	0.01	0.01	-0.02	-0.01	0.06	0.03	0.09	0.11	0.12	0.16	0.04	0.03	0.07					
16	Count of managers in department	0.12	0.05	0.05	0	-0.05	0.04	0.01	0.05	0.08	0.07	0.14	0.02	0.18	0.21	0.96				
17	Count of managers in department with same educ. inst.	0.07	-0.01	-0.01	-0.02	0.06	0.13	-0.01	0.16	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.3	-0.09	-0.11	0.3	0.3			
18	Count of employees in department with same educ. inst.	-0.1	0.02	0.02	0	0	-0.06	-0.07	0.04	0.02	-0.1	-0.06	0.1	0.34	0.08	-0.02	0.02	0.32		
19	Count of managers in department with same place of birth	-0.05	-0.14	-0.13	-0.05	0.23	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.14	0.17	0.13	-0.08	-0.03	0.02	0.43	0.38	0.16	-0.01	
20	Count of employees in department with same place of birth	-0.19	-0.15	-0.14	-0.05	0.23	-0.07	0	-0.05	0.17	0.18	0.08	-0.27	0.24	0.21	0.04	0.02	-0.02	0.17	0.55

Table 3. Comparison of Religions in Indonesia

	Islam	Christianity	Buddhism	Hinduism
Roots	Abrahamic	Abrahamic	Dharmic	Dharmic
Belief	Monotheism	Monotheism	Neither Monotheism nor Polytheism	Polytheism
God	Allah	God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit	No belief	Multiple gods
Holy Book	Quran	Holy Bible	No one book	No one book
Leadership	Imams	Priests	Monks and nuns	Gurus
History in Indonesia	13th century arrival through Arabic and Persian traders	16th century through Portuguese missionaries	Second oldest religion	Oldest religion in Indonesia, 2nd century CE
Followers in Indonesia	87%	10%	<1%	>1%
Number of places of worship in Indonesia	More than 740,000	More than 61,000	No national data	More than 12,000
Distance between Islam and other religions	As can be seen above, Islam holds more characteristics in common with Christianity than Buddhism and Hinduism. For example, both Islam and Christianity are Abrahamic and monotheistic. Both also believe in Jesus, although Jesus holds a different role in each religion.			

Source of Indonesian data: Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs and Ministry of Interior

Table 4. Distributions of Variables Before and After CEM Procedure

Before matching	**Islam = 0**		**Islam = 1**	
Variable	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Performance score, lagged	85.74	4.02	85.95	3.67
Tenure in rank	2.48	1.35	2.47	1.18
Tenure	12.97	8.23	14.57	9.10
Age	36.82	8.56	38.10	8.93
Rank	3.07	0.49	3.13	0.49
Bachelor's degree	0.39	0.49	0.43	0.50
Technical jobs	0.59	0.49	0.54	0.50
Professional jobs	0.29	0.45	0.26	0.44
Supporting jobs	0.03	0.18	0.05	0.22
After matching	**Islam = 0**		**Islam = 1**	
Variable	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Performance score, lagged	85.54	3.79	85.62	3.40
Tenure in rank	2.44	1.33	2.28	1.07
Tenure	12.85	8.13	12.74	8.11
Age	36.59	8.47	36.39	8.63
Rank	3.06	0.48	3.09	0.43
Bachelor's degree	0.39	0.49	0.39	0.49
Technical jobs	0.61	0.49	0.64	0.48
Professional jobs	0.29	0.45	0.26	0.44
Supporting jobs	0.03	0.17	0.02	0.14

Table 5. Logit Models Predicting Effects of Minority Religion Affiliation on Managerial Position (Matched Sample)

VARIABLES	Model 1 Controls only	Model 2 H0	Model 3 H1	Model 4 H2
Non-Muslim		-0.41+		
		(0.223)		
Christian			-0.54*	-0.21
			(0.220)	(1.026)
Buddhist / Hindu			1.44+	3.37**
			(0.753)	(1.230)
Christian * Percentage of Muslims in birthplace				-0.27
				(1.238)
Buddhist / Hindu * Percentage of Muslims in birthplace				-5.53***
				(1.584)
Percentage of Muslims in birthplace				0.99
				(0.841)
Performance score, lagged	0.12***	0.11***	0.11***	0.11***
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)
Female	-0.10	-0.09	-0.07	-0.07
	(0.169)	(0.167)	(0.167)	(0.167)
Rank	0.58***	0.59***	0.59***	0.59***
	(0.084)	(0.084)	(0.084)	(0.084)
Age	0.93***	0.93***	0.95***	0.93***
	(0.104)	(0.103)	(0.104)	(0.103)
Age, squared	-0.01***	-0.01***	-0.01***	-0.01***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Tenure	0.05*	0.05*	0.05*	0.05*
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Tenure in rank	0.28***	0.29***	0.30***	0.29***
	(0.071)	(0.072)	(0.074)	(0.072)
Highest education	0.68***	0.68***	0.70***	0.69***
	(0.110)	(0.109)	(0.111)	(0.112)
Count of Christian employees in department	-0.04+	-0.04+	-0.07**	-0.06**
	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.021)
Count of Buddhist / Hindu employees in department	0.01	0.03	0.31+	0.30
	(0.234)	(0.246)	(0.186)	(0.186)
Count of Islamic managers in department	-0.09	-0.11	-0.09	-0.10
	(0.121)	(0.121)	(0.122)	(0.122)
Count of managers in department	0.38***	0.40***	0.38***	0.39***
	(0.111)	(0.112)	(0.112)	(0.113)
Count of managers in department with same educ. inst.	-0.24***	-0.24***	-0.24***	-0.24***
	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.067)	(0.067)
Count of employees in department with same educ. inst.	0.01	0.02+	0.02+	0.02+
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Count of managers in department with same place of birth	-0.18**	-0.19**	-0.19**	-0.21***
	(0.061)	(0.060)	(0.060)	(0.060)
Count of employees in department with same place of birth	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Constant	-36.13***	-36.06***	-36.57***	-36.99***
	(2.970)	(2.969)	(2.999)	(3.054)
Job category	Y	Y	Y	Y
Department	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year	Y	Y	Y	Y
Number of employees	2,161	2,161	2,161	2,161

Observations	4,839	4,839	4,839	4,839

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 6. Robustness Checks

VARIABLES	Model 1 Alt. moderator	Model 2 Promotion to next rank	Model 3	Model 4 Lower level managers	Model 5 Higher level managers
Non-Muslim		-0.15			
		(0.141)			
Christian	-2.15		-0.11	2.10	-0.75
	(2.187)		(0.144)	(1.785)	(1.036)
Buddhist / Hindu	-11.78***		-0.70		3.28*
	(3.218)		(0.698)		(1.366)
Christian * Population per mosque, ln	0.23				
	(0.295)				
Buddhist / Hindu * Population per mosque, ln	1.47***				
	(0.400)				
Population per mosque, ln	-0.18				
	(0.133)				
Christian * Percentage of Muslims in birthplace				-3.65+	0.71
				(1.966)	(1.260)
Buddhist / Hindu * Percentage of Muslims in birthplace					-4.21*
					(1.651)
Percentage of Muslims in birthplace				1.30	0.75
				(1.536)	(0.856)
Performance score, lagged	0.11***	0.01	0.01	0.12***	0.07**
	(0.025)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.036)	(0.027)
Female	-0.05	-0.30*	-0.30*	-0.08	-0.01
	(0.168)	(0.118)	(0.118)	(0.256)	(0.186)
Rank	0.60***	1.19***	1.20***	-0.37**	0.78***
	(0.084)	(0.093)	(0.093)	(0.143)	(0.108)
Age	0.95***	0.07	0.07	0.90***	1.69***
	(0.104)	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.207)	(0.154)
Age, squared	-0.01***	-0.00***	-0.00***	-0.01***	-0.02***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.002)
Tenure	0.04*	-0.09***	-0.09***	-0.05	0.08**
	(0.021)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.044)	(0.025)
Tenure in rank	0.30***	0.80***	0.81***	-0.15	0.38***
	(0.073)	(0.060)	(0.060)	(0.097)	(0.072)
Highest education	0.70***	-0.59***	-0.60***	0.66**	0.73***
	(0.112)	(0.088)	(0.088)	(0.224)	(0.131)
Count of Christian employees in department	-0.07**	-0.00	0.00	-0.08+	-0.06**
	(0.021)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.043)	(0.024)
Count of Buddhist / Hindu employees in department	0.31	0.33*	0.27	0.39	0.31
	(0.187)	(0.162)	(0.169)	(0.389)	(0.202)
Count of Islamic managers in department	-0.11	0.22+	0.22+	0.33+	-0.25+
	(0.123)	(0.116)	(0.116)	(0.184)	(0.138)
Count of managers in department	0.40***	-0.20*	-0.20*	-0.04	0.50***
	(0.113)	(0.103)	(0.103)	(0.164)	(0.127)
Count of managers in department with same educ. inst.	-0.24***	0.09*	0.09*	-0.01	-0.27***
	(0.067)	(0.045)	(0.046)	(0.119)	(0.074)
Count of employees in department with same educ. inst.	0.02+	-0.01**	-0.01**	-0.03	0.03**
	(0.009)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.024)	(0.010)
Count of managers in department with same place of birth	-0.19**	0.13**	0.13**	-0.19*	-0.17*
	(0.060)	(0.044)	(0.044)	(0.086)	(0.070)
Count of employees in department with same place of birth	0.01	-0.01*	-0.01*	0.01	0.00
	(0.006)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.011)	(0.006)

Constant	-35.35***	-8.52***	-8.53***	-29.53***	-54.46***
	(3.221)	(1.664)	(1.664)	(4.934)	(3.977)
Job category	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Department	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Number of employees	2,161	2,161	2,161	2,068	1,835
Observations	4,839	4,839	4,839	4,123	4,631

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 7. OLS Regressions Predicting Effects of Minority Religion Affiliation on Performance Scores

VARIABLES	Model 1 H0	Model 2 H1	Model 3 H2
Non-Muslim	-2.68***		
	(0.741)		
Christian		-2.69***	-3.98***
		(0.742)	(1.005)
Buddhist / Hindu		-2.48**	-2.44**
		(0.867)	(0.870)
Christian * Difference in birthplace			1.36+
			(0.731)
Difference in birthplace			-0.44
			(0.297)
Female supervisor	0.20	0.20	0.64
	(0.541)	(0.541)	(0.634)
Performance score, lagged	0.37***	0.37***	0.36***
	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.041)
Female	0.20	0.21	0.21
	(0.187)	(0.188)	(0.188)
Rank	0.29**	0.29**	0.29**
	(0.092)	(0.092)	(0.092)
Age	0.04	0.04	0.04
	(0.088)	(0.088)	(0.088)
Age, squared	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Tenure	0.02	0.02	0.02
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Tenure in rank	-0.14	-0.14	-0.14
	(0.123)	(0.123)	(0.124)
Highest education	0.12	0.12	0.12
	(0.174)	(0.174)	(0.174)
Count of Christians and Buddhist / Hindus in department	-2.65***	-2.65***	-2.65***
	(0.705)	(0.705)	(0.706)
Count of Islamic managers in department	-0.13	-0.13	-0.12
	(0.496)	(0.496)	(0.499)
Count of managers in department	-0.28	-0.28	-0.28
	(0.282)	(0.282)	(0.282)
Count of managers in department with same educ. inst.	-0.05	-0.05	-0.06
	(0.105)	(0.105)	(0.104)
Count of employees in department with same educ. inst.	-0.01**	-0.01**	-0.01**
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Count of managers in department with same place of birth	0.03	0.03	0.02
	(0.081)	(0.082)	(0.084)
Count of employees in department with same place of birth	0.01	0.01	0.01
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Inverse Mills Ratio	5.08*	5.08*	5.04+
	(2.571)	(2.571)	(2.580)
Constant	66.64***	66.65***	66.59***
	(9.178)	(9.182)	(9.197)
Job category	Y	Y	Y
Department	Y	Y	Y
Year	Y	Y	Y
Number of employees	966	966	966
Observations	1,344	1,344	1,344
R-squared	0.413	0.413	0.414

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Figure 1. Kernel Distributions of Variables Performance Score and Age Before and After CEM

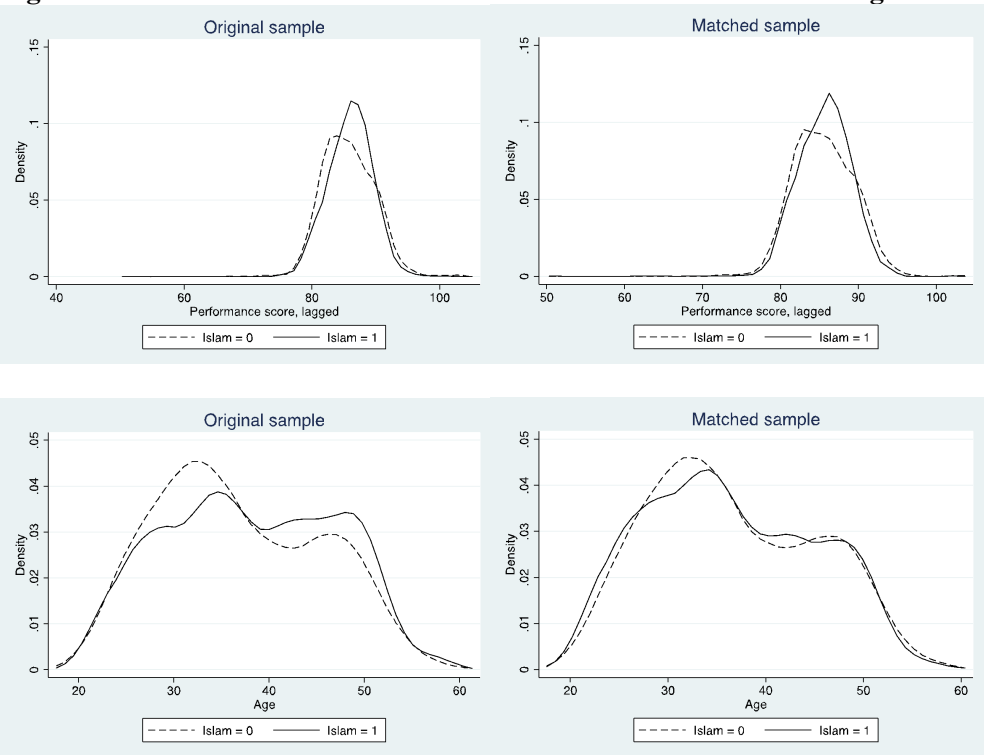

Figure 2. Effect of Non-Muslim Religious Affiliation and Christian and Buddhist / Hindu on Managerial Position

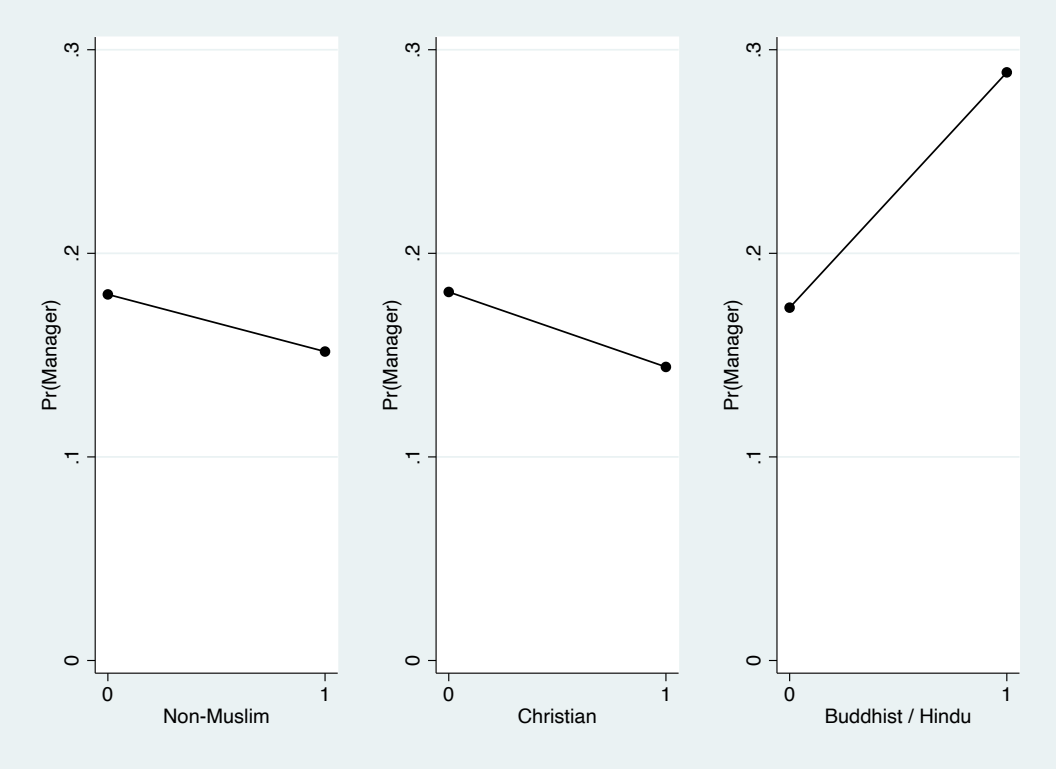

Figure 3. Interaction Between Buddhist / Hindu and Percentage of Muslims in Birthplace on Managerial Position

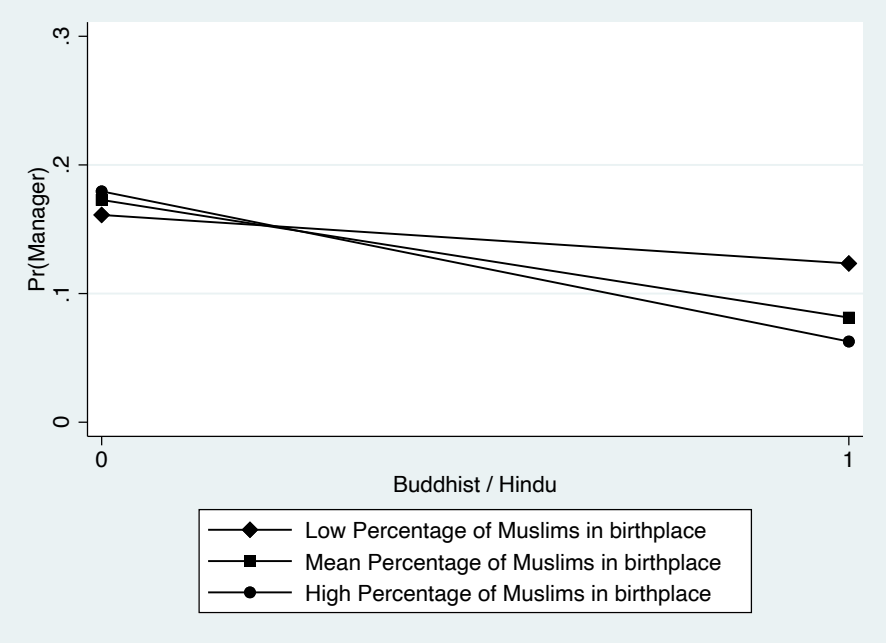

Figure 4. Interaction Between Christian and Difference in Birthplace on Performance Score