

DIGITAL CAMPAIGN: CHARACTER BRANDING AND FRAMING TOWARDS THE 2024 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Ahmad Zuhdi

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kerinci
zuhdi69@gmail.com

Cecep Suryana

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung
cecep.suryana@uinsgd.ac.id

Rodon Pedrason

Universitas Pertahanan Indonesia
rodon.pedrason@idu.ac.id

Satryo Sasono

Universitas Sebelas Maret Surakarta
s4tryosasono@gmail.com

Ahmad Musabiq Habibie

UIN Salatiga

gusmus32@gmail.com

Abstract

The existence of social media allows us to interact with anyone quickly and inexpensively. Political figures then use this as a medium in carrying out digital campaigns. This research was carried out to see how social media is used as a digital campaign tool by politicians to build a certain character or image in the eyes of society or the public. This research will be carried out using a qualitative approach and descriptive analysis. The data used in this study comes from the results of previous studies. The results of this study found that it is necessary to have a good brand or image from the public for the popularity of these politicians so that the implementation of digital campaigns can run effectively. Therefore, character-building needs to be done so that the digital campaign carried out to carry out the presidential election in the future can run well.

Keywords: Digital Campaign, Social-Media, Brand Character.

Abstrak

Adanya media sosial memungkinkan kita untuk berinteraksi dengan siapa saja secara cepat dan murah. Tokoh politik kemudian menggunakan ini sebagai media dalam melakukan kampanye digital. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk melihat bagaimana media sosial digunakan sebagai alat kampanye digital oleh para politisi untuk membangun karakter atau citra tertentu di mata masyarakat atau publik. Penelitian ini akan dilakukan dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan analisis deskriptif. Data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini berasal dari hasil penelitian sebelumnya. Hasil penelitian ini menemukan bahwa perlu adanya brand atau image yang baik dari masyarakat untuk kepopuleran para politisi tersebut agar pelaksanaan kampanye digital dapat berjalan dengan efektif. Oleh karena itu, character building perlu dilakukan agar kampanye digital yang dilakukan untuk melaksanakan pilpres ke depan dapat berjalan dengan baik.

Kata Kunci: Kampanye Digital, Media Sosial, Karakter Merek.

INTRODUCTION

The success of information and communication technology, marked by the presence of the internet, has changed how we communicate today. The presence of digital media, such as social media, allows for connectivity where there are no limitations of space and time. Contemporary literature is characterized by adages such as connected world, connected age, human web, and web society.¹

Today, the internet influences everything, from how we shop, read the news, and live our everyday lives to how businesses, parliaments, and governments transform the social fabric, political institutions, and economy. This digital shift has presented politicians, journalists, political institutions, and the media with new difficulties and chances to reconnect with and engage with citizens. Social media presents new political opportunity structures.²

The internet creates active participation between governments and citizens in the political field. The internet has become an alternative communication channel for countries and societies that have advanced in the aspect of information resources. Internet technology has become a source of information in today's civilization. Technology does enable a better distribution of knowledge. The internet also increases community participation and mobilizes community networks, coalitions, and political lobbying.³

The subsequent development of the internet gave birth to social media, which has become part of a modern lifestyle for some people in the world. Social media encourages a two-way process of social interaction. With the support of internet technology, it can change communication patterns from one to many audiences to many audiences.⁴

The number of internet users in the world in 2022 will reach 4.95 billion people. Most are used for social media of more than 4 billion people. Indonesia is one of the countries with the world's largest internet users (including social media). In Indonesia, there are 210 million internet users or more than 70 percent of the total population of 275.77 million. This number increases from year to year. More than 50% of internet users are social media users.⁵

This potential number of social media users creates opportunities to strengthen and enrich relations between citizens and central leaders, regional leaders, political figures, public officials, political parties, social movements and interest groups, and local, national and global governance

¹ Szymkowiak, Andrzej, et al. "Information Technology and Gen Z: The Role of Teachers, the Internet, and Technology in the Education of Young People." *Technology in Society* 65 (2021): 101565.

² Culpepper, Pepper D., and Kathleen Thelen. "Are We All Amazon Primed? Consumers and the Politics of Platform Power." *Comparative Political Studies* 53.2 (2020): 288-318.

³ Kassen, Maxat. "Understanding Decentralized Civic Engagement: Focus on Peer-To-Peer and Blockchain-Driven Perspectives on E-Participation." *Technology in Society* 66 (2021): 101650.

⁴ Hannonen, Olga. "In Search of a Digital Nomad: Defining the Phenomenon." *Information Technology & Tourism* 22.3 (2020): 335-353.

⁵ Modarress Fathi, Batoul, Alexander Ansari, and Al Ansari. "Threats of Internet-of-Thing on Environmental Sustainability by E-Waste." *Sustainability* 14.16 (2022): 10161.

institutions. Social media influences social life because it changes the way we communicate and interact with one another. Social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Podcasts, and others, are the mainstream digital communication channels that increase democratic participation.⁶

Social media supports the development of democracy and political communication in various countries. One of the illustrations is the rise of the Arab World or what is known as the Arab Spring. This social movement, through social media, succeeded in bringing down the regimes in power in several Arab countries such as Tunisia and Egypt. In further developments, the social movement Occupy Wall Street developed in New York in 2011. This social movement then inspired other countries to succeed in bringing about changes in the economic and social fields. Meanwhile, Barack Obama's victory in the United States Presidential election in 2008 proved that the internet has the power to influence voters to make Barack Obama President of the United States.⁷

Social media is considered to have a strategic role as a medium for change and development and an effective medium for receiving and responding to public aspirations. Leaders in regional and central governments optimize social media to maintain political communication with the public while building personal branding through political communication on social media.⁸

Through social media, local and national political leaders receive and respond to public aspirations. This political leader can maintain communication and interaction with his citizens based on previous literature. Political communication on social media can foster a culture of participation, aspirations and closeness without space and time limitations.⁹

The policies of political leaders are also optimal when communicated through social media. It is believed that this will increase political support, trust in government performance, and democracy. Political leaders gain public support and trust by presenting brands as populist, responsible and professional leaders.¹⁰

⁶ Lovari, Alessandro, and Chiara Valentini. "Public Sector Communication and Social Media: Opportunities and Limits of Current Policies, Activities, and Practices." *The Handbook of Public Sector Communication* (2020): 315-328.

⁷ Altourah, Albaraa F., Khin Wee Chen, and Ali A. Al-Kandari. "The Relationship between Media Use, Perceptions and Regime Preference in post-Arab Spring Countries." *Global Media and Communication* 17.2 (2021): 231-259.

⁸ Kadarisman, Muh, Arie Wahyu Wijayanto, and Anjar Dimara Sakti. "Government Agencies' Readiness Evaluation towards Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0 in Indonesia." *Social Sciences* 11.8 (2022): 331.

⁹ Hendriks, Carolyn M., and Jennifer Lees-Marshment. "Political Leaders and Public Engagement: The Hidden World of Informal Elite–Citizen Interaction." *Political Studies* 67.3 (2019): 597-617.

¹⁰ Mansoor, Mahnaz. "Citizens' Trust in Government as a Function of Good Governance and Government Agency's Provision of Quality Information on Social Media during COVID-19." *Government Information Quarterly* 38.4 (2021): 101597.

One of the ways social media increases democratic participation is through the global connectivity potential of this technology. The use of social media for campaigns by political leaders in many countries shows a trend of increasing personalization in the election of political leaders at the local to national levels. The pattern of personalization of female legislative candidates using social media at the local level in Indonesia, the largest democratic Muslim country in the world. This paper examines the trend of increased personalization on social media, which has contributed to the increasing political participation of women in election campaigns and their representation in local legislatures.¹¹

The role of social media and the influence of candidate image in the UK in building equality in voter-candidate relations is also a finding in Hultman's study, which explains that social media seems to affect candidate image positively. Examining the moderating effects of political ideology, this paper examines the role of candidate image as a mediator between social media and the equality of voter-candidate connections, drawing on branding literature and social identity theory. His research found that social media affects candidate image positively, but not all social media variables are directly related to relationship equity.¹²

Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Youtube have significant potential to penetrate and connect with the global population. Social media has an enormous latent capacity to bridge and facilitate the growth of social capital. Based on the description above, it appears that the role of social media, especially in providing an alternative to democracy in digital political communication.¹³ This article will address the concept of branding and framing in politics in the era of social media-driven digital political communication. The author applies theories and research on political communication and branding in the digital age.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Political Communication in the Digital Age

Communication in politics is essential for political mobilization and fostering trust between political actors and the administration. Because the power of symbols and signs conveyed is so influential, political leaders construct messages through the construction of meticulous branding. Conventional political communication is the delivery of messages for political purposes, characterized by political actors conveying messages to achieve certain goals,

¹¹ Boulianne, Shelley. "Twenty Years of Digital Media Effects on Civic and Political Participation." *Communication Research* 47.7 (2020): 947-966.

¹² Hultman, Magnus, Sera Ulusoy, and Pejvak Oghazi. "Drivers and Outcomes of Political Candidate Image Creation: The Role of Social Media Marketing." *Psychology & Marketing* 36.12 (2019): 1226-1236.

¹³ Hazra, Ummaha, and Asad Karim Khan Priyo. "Mobile Financial Services in Bangladesh: Understanding the Affordances." *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries* 87.3 (2021): e12166.

delivering messages from non-political actors to political actors, and conveying messages from political actors through the mass media.¹⁴

Then in the last two decades, the internet has influenced various aspects of human life, including democracy. In Indonesia, since the arrival of the internet in the late 1990s, political communication has shifted from conventional to digital. These characters create opportunities and challenges for political actors to communicate effectively and quality politics with audiences.¹⁵

Political communication is defined as a complex communication activity using language and symbols, which leaders use, media, citizens, citizen groups, and experts to give effect and to the results imposed on the public policy of the nation, state or society. Traditional political communication in the form of orations, speeches, and lectures, is now being optimized through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube in the form of campaigns in cyberspace (cyber-campaign).¹⁶

Perloff explained that there are seven main dimensions of political communication, namely communication activities that bridge between political institutions and the media; emphasizing symbols and language, mediation and mediatization; media technology; diverse, multifaceted media, and decline of gatekeeping; interactions among leaders, media, and citizens, and the functioning of economic and political structures.¹⁷

Social media allows political actors to reduce the costs involved in political campaigns. A political leader can reach a wider audience by optimizing personal social media accounts. In Indonesia, an example of a public official with the most social media followers in 2022 after President Joko Widodo is West Java Governor Ridwan Kamil, with millions of followers on various social media, be it Instagram or Twitter.¹⁸

In the United States, technology companies, particularly Facebook, Twitter, Microsoft, and Google, shape the political communications of election campaigns. These tech corporations are motivated to work in the political realm for marketing, advertising revenue, and relationship development in support of lobbying initiatives. To enable this, these businesses have built organizational structures and employment patterns that reflect the partisan nature of American politics. Plus, Facebook, Twitter and Google do more than promote available features and digital

¹⁴ Susila, Ihwan, et al. "Symbolic Political Communication, and Trust: A Young Voters' Perspective of the Indonesian Presidential Election." *Journal of Political Marketing* 19.1-2 (2020): 153-175.

¹⁵ Barrinha, André, and Thomas Renard. "Power and Diplomacy in the Post-Liberal Cyberspace." *International Affairs* 96.3 (2020): 749-766.

¹⁶ Hyland-Wood, Bernadette, et al. "Toward Effective Government Communication Strategies in the Era of COVID-19." *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 8.1 (2021): 1-11.

¹⁷ Sunarso, Sunarso, Benni Setiawan, and Ni Putu Pande Satya Anjani. "The Political Satire of Mojok. co in the 2019 Indonesian Election." *Heliyon* 8.7 (2022): e10018.

¹⁸ Zhuravskaya, Ekaterina, Maria Petrova, and Ruben Enikolopov. "Political Effects of the Internet and Social Media." *Annual Review of Economics* 12 (2020): 415-438.

ads. The digital company also provides political campaigns for politicians. They ultimately act as digital consultants shaping digital strategy, content and execution.¹⁹

B. Branding in Politics

Branding is a concept that was originally used in marketing and then expanded to various disciplines, including communications and politics. A brand based on three elements: identity, image, and positioning. Identity is what the brand projects through positioning to create a certain image. Previous studies have also explored the concept of personal branding, namely as a set of individual characteristics (attributes, values, beliefs, etc.) that are translated into different narratives and images to build a competitive advantage in the minds of target audiences.²⁰

Political branding highlights the growing phenomenon that parties, politicians, and political leaders can usefully conceptualize as brands. Political actors use branding in politics to create awareness among the general public or voters. Political branding is defined as political concepts, theories, and frameworks to provide differentiation from political competitors and identification between citizens and political entities. This branding concept is designed for leaders, parties and policies to differentiate from the competition. This branding will build trust, influencing political participation.²¹

Branding is increasingly being utilized in politics to blend symbols, philosophy, values, and policy pledges into political parties and politicians. Consequently, this branding is exploited by political actors and political parties via a variety of principles, beliefs, and promises. Previous study on elections in Indonesia indicates that young voters construct their knowledge of politics and political parties through "tales" and symbolic representations of political candidates. Politicians, political leaders and parties are busy building brands based on ability, character and trust to gain public trust and support. Democracy requires credible candidates and parties.²²

Research on the importance of political leader branding began to attract attention in the 2014 Presidential Election. Joko Widodo is known as a low-profile and non-military figure. Then, during the 2019 Presidential Election, Jokowi positioned himself as a leader of the people who

¹⁹ Kreiss, Daniel, and Shannon C. McGregor. "Technology Firms Shape Political Communication: The Work of Microsoft, Facebook, Twitter, and Google with Campaigns during the 2016 US Presidential Cycle." *Political Communication* 35.2 (2018): 155-177.

²⁰ Freelon, Deen, and Chris Wells. "Disinformation as Political Communication." *Political Communication* 37.2 (2020): 145-156.

²¹ MacDonald, Alexander Ewan, Roger Sherlock, and John Hogan. "Using Cognitive Mapping to Longitudinally Examine Political Brand Associations." *Journal of Political Marketing* 18.3 (2019): 267-302.

²² Mufti, Mariam, and Farida Jalalzai. "The Importance of Gender Quotas in Patriarchal and Clientelistic Polities: The Case of Pakistan." *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy* 42.2 (2021): 107-123.

has worked tirelessly for Indonesia's wealth and progress. Other studies highlight the long-term link between developing strategies and processes for developing and managing brands.²³

Furthermore, identity, image, reputation, or position will ultimately support the development of strategy and management of branding in politics. At the same time, there is the Big Five model that explains human personality traits, namely extraversion (social skills, energy, charisma); agreeableness (cooperative behavior, pro-social, avoidance and tolerance and conflict); conscientiousness (discipline, responsibility and a feeling that life must be regulated); emotional stability (calm, detachment, emotional stress and low anxiety); and openness (curiosity, tendency to create new experiences).²⁴

RESEARCH METHOD

This research will be carried out using a qualitative approach. The analytical method used is a descriptive analysis method to explain the character-building of leaders through social media in conducting digital campaigns. The data used in this study comes from the results of previous research or studies still relevant to this research. The research data that was successfully collected will be processed by the researcher so that later the results of this research can be found.²⁵

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Populist Leader Character Development

Populist leadership style is one of the important concepts in political communication. Considering that in recent years political support has been won by parties and individuals characterized by populist references, populism has grown central, and populist has even become the mainstream style in democracy. Populists can be analyzed and understood that political leaders are encouraged to speak in idioms closer to the people, popular, and accepted by society to gain support.

In this case, the political leader combines the delivery of information and entertainment to popularize himself in politics and the personalization inherent in the logic of the media. Political leaders adopt a style and language that suits the needs of their followers on social media. The result is the diffusion of the type of "soft populism" in the framework of direct and simple communication through social media.

²³ Laksmana, Evan A. "Reshuffling the Deck? Military Corporatism, Promotional Logjams and Post-Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations in Indonesia." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 49.5 (2019): 806-836.

²⁴ Grenni, Sara, L. G. Horlings, and K. Soini. "Linking Spatial Planning and Place Branding Strategies through Cultural Narratives in Places." *European Planning Studies* 28.7 (2020): 1355-1374.

²⁵ Nugrahani, Farida, and M. Hum. "Metode Penelitian Kualitatif." *Solo: Cakra Books* 1.1 (2014): 3-4.

Twitter plays a critical role in hybridizing and redefining political communication in creating the character of a populist leader. Tweets have evolved into the digital equivalent of soundbites, and politicians use them to reach a larger audience due to the features provided. It is stated that Twitter is the perfect medium for forming populist brands in implementing public communication in the digital era. Political actors use social media for three main reasons, namely to reduce ideological complexity by simplifying their messages; obscuring populist ideology to facilitate the inclusion of their messages in 'private action frames'; to spread fragments of populist ideology among like-minded people.

The political communication style is an 'important conceptual tool for exploring contemporary politics'. The keys to this political communication strategy include style, rhetoric, and tactics used by political actors. However, populist does not need to be understood as an ideology; it is just a leadership style because the brand is attached to the political leader. Quoting Pels, the populist communication style is a way of speaking, acting, seeing, displaying, and dealing that merges into a symbolic whole that combines material and methods, messages and packages, arguments and rituals. This definition integrates verbal and nonverbal elements to compose a unique set of communications that characterize the different communications of various political actors.

Two unique factors influence the communication style used by leaders: the communication mode (positive vs negative) and the communicative goal of the tweet (personal vs political/campaign). The first dimension, which is especially important in identifying populist communication styles, is expressed in two different communicative performances: the first is 'Champion of the people,' a style directed at defending the people against the elite, which mainly covers political issues, taking positions, simple and informal; and the second is 'Man on the street,' a character presented with more vulgar language that exploits local anxieties, fears, news, and policies.

The first, called 'Intimate,' intended at personalizing political tales through revealing feelings and parts of personal life, or simple talks about current affairs; and the second, labeled 'Engaging,' directed toward election campaigning, self-promotion, and audience participation. This component is an important part of the 'popularization' of politics, which is driven by the logic of media that political actors with tales are increasingly pushing, as well as personal and intimate stories. In social media, the indicators of populist style and political personalisation exhibit two very distinct communication approaches, where the presence of populist ideology in tweets is a trait of the populist approach in digital political communication.

Historically, the Indonesian state has also had populist leaders, namely the First President of the Republic of Indonesia Ir. Sukarno. The populist brand sticks because of its charismatic

leadership style and close to the people. In 2014, Indonesia again had a populist image of a leader, namely Joko Widodo or Jokowi. As a populist figure, Jokowi's inherent brand is people, empathy, and real work. Jokowi carried out political communication through social media with three strategies. First, Jokowi relies on work. Second, his *blusukan* style (going to a place to know something) gives new hope to the small community. Third, Jokowi promotes caution in making policies.

The branding of the formation of the leader character with this populist style shows that this character is quite popular in digital campaigns in presidential elections, including the presidential election in 2024. This is because the community will feel close to the leader so the leader feels that he understands the various problems in the community.

B. Characteristics of Professional and Amateur Leaders in Social Media

The use of social media in election campaigns can also give the impression of a professional or amateur leader through interactions made on social media. One example of the formation of this character brand is during the presidential election process in the United States between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. There are three findings: first, election campaigns using social media are used as a marketing tool. Regarding engagement with his followers on social media, Donald Trump implemented a strategy to limit his engagement to retweeting selected tweets. To shape the brand, politicians control the message and promotion to start a campaign of open public debate.

Second, campaigns through social media continue to grow by presenting professional political communication being challenged by amateurs. Each candidate chooses to utilize the technology infrastructure for network communications. Hillary Clinton displayed clear signs of professionalism in social campaigning. At the same time, Donald Trump tends to be more amateurish. However, these amateur political campaigns have rhetorical claims for authenticity that successfully compete with the professionalism of more refined or controlled campaigns. Then, on the other hand, Norwegian Prime Minister Solberg combined professionalism and amateurism on his social media sites in executing digital campaigns making it more accessible than Clinton but more subdued than Trump.

Third, social media is a means to build and maintain a candidate's image. Social media allows political outsiders and amateurs to make political communication successful. Researchers believe this is disturbing the comfort zone of established and professional politicians. Trump's more amateur but authentic campaign style on social media shows deprofessionalization and even amateurism as a contra trend in political communication.

This digital campaign shows the formation of character branding as a professional leader, even though it looks better than amateur leader character branding, the interaction results shown by amateur character branding appear to be far more authentic and original than professional leader character branding.

C. Humanist and Popular Character Branding

In Indonesia, many regional heads have actively used social media to improve political communication with their citizens. For example, West Java Governor Ridwan Kamil, Central Java Governor Ganjar Pranowo, and former DKI Jakarta Governor Anies Baswedan. Social media makes it easier for regional heads to communicate with their people so that they reach a wider public.

The Governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pranowo, has successfully carried out his digital campaign. Followers of Ganjar Pranowo on his social media reach millions, both on social media Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Thanks to his popularity on social media, Ganjar Pranowo's name has skyrocketed in the survey for the 2024 presidential nomination market. Ganjar's electability far outperforms Puan Maharani as Chair of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP) DPP. Ganjar built a personal brand as a good leader, and humanist, close to the people to build people's trust in him by writing, 'My lord, yes the people, the governor is only a mandate'. This branding also differentiates from other candidates.

Ganjar Pranowo also used social media to describe the results of his performance as head of the Central Java region. Its digital content contains strategic issues in its area where it absorbs aspirations from the community so that they can find solutions together. Through social media, Ganjar Pranowo is described as a humanist and populist leader. This effort brought success with the election of Ganjar Pranowo as Governor of Central Java for two terms. His electability allowed him to enter the national political stage.

Seeing the development of the digital campaign carried out by Ganjar Pranowo, it cannot be denied that the character branding carried out by Ganjar Pranowo can facilitate him in the presidential election in 2024. Apart from that, Ridwan Kamil and Anies Baswedan also generally use the same digital campaign steps so both have the same high electability as presidential candidates in 2024.

D. Personalization on Social-Media

One of the issues in the election of legislative members or regional heads is the issue of women's representation in politics. Gender issues are considered a strategy in political communication. Across the globe, many female political leadership candidates are leveraging

social media to post content that exploits the power of feminine stereotypes by sharing their personal lives, particularly any parenting roles they play. Candidates for political leaders also display their personalization on social media by displaying attractive self-images. The qualitative finding in the study is that political leadership candidates on social media personalize themselves as caregivers for their children. However, this could also deem parenting incompatible with competent political leadership. On social media, female political leadership candidates use more political communication strategies like that.

Politicians tend to personalize themselves on social media. It is used to get public support online. By promoting their agenda, politicians are increasingly profiling themselves or personalizing themselves through various social media. Self-personalization is often used as a political communication style and is most often present in visual communication. Using a more emotional and personal style provides a useful tool for politicians' impression management. Emotional and personal content produces a positive effect on engagement, the audience demand to get closer and evoke emotion.

In Indonesia, female legislative candidates also use this personalisation strategy in political communication on social media. As a country with the largest population of Muslims, this political leader candidate uses religious elements on social media. Religious components in political campaigns are becoming more prevalent on social media. Women have equal access to and control over social media campaign techniques as men. Personalization of Islamic women through digital content on social media is an effective advertising approach. This technique is beneficial because it gives women in Aceh greater opportunities to participate in politics. The greater the female parliamentary candidate's religious standing, the greater the positive response from voters.

As is the case with communication in general, political communication also aims to convey messages from political actors to the public for specific purposes. There are at least four communication goals: attitude change, opinion change, behavior change, and social change. In the political context, political communication by Denton and Woodward is defined as communication with political goals with the following characteristics: communication is carried out by political actors with specific goals; communication is addressed to political actors by non-political actors; and communication is related to political actors through traditional mass media.

Along with the development of technology and information, political communication utilizes social media to achieve the goals set. The presence of social media has proven to achieve success towards the era of digital democracy. For example, the emergence of the Arab Spring social movement, Occupy Wall Street in New York, and others. Social media is a new medium

that communicates and influences public opinion. This can be seen from the rise of regional heads who use social media to communicate and interact with their citizens.

In general, social media has facilitated political leaders and candidates for political leaders to achieve their political goals. Using social media is seen as one of the factors in Barack Obama's success in winning the United States presidential election. In Indonesia, Ridwan Kamil and Ganjar Pranowo actively used social media to gain the most votes. They were asked to become Governor of West Java and Central Java.

Social media is often seen as a platform that allows for more direct connections between political leaders and their citizens. Social media serves to support the campaigns of politicians. In the end, political leaders began to realize the importance of social media for political communication rather than just using the mainstream mass media.

According to studies on political communication on social media, social media is utilized to communicate and interact with citizens (media to reconnect and engage with citizens). This is both a challenge and an opportunity to create new political frameworks through which politicians, journalists, political institutions, and the media may reconnect and engage with their constituents. In addition, social media is also to absorb aspirations and form branding as a worthy leader.

Concerning political branding, it is an emerging phenomenon that parties, politicians, and political leaders can usefully conceptualize as brands. Branding in politics is utilized by political actors in general or voters. This branding concept is designed for leaders, parties and policies to differentiate from the competition. This branding will build trust, which then influences political participation.

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of political communication in the era of social media is a common practice in politics today. Initially, the practice of political communication used "traditional" channels, but as technology developed, it switched digitally. One important factor for a political leader to gain popularity on social media is to have a good brand so that the goals of political communication can be achieved effectively. Namely in gaining support and influencing their social media followers. Brand, image, or credibility has been proven to play a role in explaining the effect of support for political leaders on social media. In addition, political leaders on social media must also have engagement with their followers. Because the character of social media is interactive and two-way. This is useful for absorbing the aspirations of the community. Therefore, for the presidential election to run well, the prospective leader needs to brand his character through this digital campaign.

REFERENCES

- Altourah, Albaraa F., Khin Wee Chen, and Ali A. Al-Kandari. "The Relationship between Media Use, Perceptions and Regime Preference in post-Arab Spring Countries." *Global Media and Communication* 17.2 (2021): 231-259.
- Barrinha, André, and Thomas Renard. "Power and Diplomacy in the Post-Liberal Cyberspace." *International Affairs* 96.3 (2020): 749-766.
- Boulianne, Shelley. "Twenty Years of Digital Media Effects on Civic and Political Participation." *Communication Research* 47.7 (2020): 947-966.
- Culpepper, Pepper D., and Kathleen Thelen. "Are We All Amazon Primed? Consumers and the Politics of Platform Power." *Comparative Political Studies* 53.2 (2020): 288-318.
- Freelon, Deen, and Chris Wells. "Disinformation as Political Communication." *Political Communication* 37.2 (2020): 145-156.
- Grenni, Sara, L. G. Horlings, and K. Soini. "Linking Spatial Planning and Place Branding Strategies through Cultural Narratives in Places." *European Planning Studies* 28.7 (2020): 1355-1374.
- Hannonen, Olga. "In Search of a Digital Nomad: Defining the Phenomenon." *Information Technology & Tourism* 22.3 (2020): 335-353.
- Hazra, Ummaha, and Asad Karim Khan Priyo. "Mobile Financial Services in Bangladesh: Understanding the Affordances." *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries* 87.3 (2021): e12166.
- Hendriks, Carolyn M., and Jennifer Lees-Marshment. "Political Leaders and Public Engagement: The Hidden World of Informal Elite–Citizen Interaction." *Political Studies* 67.3 (2019): 597-617.
- Hultman, Magnus, Sera Ulusoy, and Pejvak Oghazi. "Drivers and Outcomes of Political Candidate Image Creation: The Role of Social Media Marketing." *Psychology & Marketing* 36.12 (2019): 1226-1236.
- Hyland-Wood, Bernadette, et al. "Toward Effective Government Communication Strategies in the Era of COVID-19." *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 8.1 (2021): 1-11.
- Kadarisman, Muh, Arie Wahyu Wijayanto, and Anjar Dimara Sakti. "Government Agencies' Readiness Evaluation towards Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0 in Indonesia." *Social Sciences* 11.8 (2022): 331.
- Kassen, Maxat. "Understanding Decentralized Civic Engagement: Focus on Peer-To-Peer and Blockchain-Driven Perspectives on E-Participation." *Technology in Society* 66 (2021): 101650.
- Kreiss, Daniel, and Shannon C. McGregor. "Technology Firms Shape Political Communication: The Work of Microsoft, Facebook, Twitter, and Google with Campaigns during the 2016 US Presidential Cycle." *Political Communication* 35.2 (2018): 155-177.
- Laksmana, Evan A. "Reshuffling the Deck? Military Corporatism, Promotional Logjams and Post-Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations in Indonesia." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 49.5 (2019): 806-836.
- Lovari, Alessandro, and Chiara Valentini. "Public Sector Communication and Social Media: Opportunities and Limits of Current Policies, Activities, and Practices." *The Handbook of Public Sector Communication* (2020): 315-328.

Ahmad Zuhdi, Cecep Suryana, Rodon Pedrason, Satryo Sasono, Ahmad Musabiq Habibie: Digital Campaign: Character Branding And Framing Towards The 2024 Presidential Election

MacDonald, Alexander Ewan, Roger Sherlock, and John Hogan. "Using Cognitive Mapping to Longitudinally Examine Political Brand Associations." *Journal of Political Marketing* 18.3 (2019): 267-302.

Mansoor, Mahnaz. "Citizens' Trust in Government as a Function of Good Governance and Government Agency's Provision of Quality Information on Social Media during COVID-19." *Government Information Quarterly* 38.4 (2021): 101597.

Modarress Fathi, Batoul, Alexander Ansari, and Al Ansari. "Threats of Internet-of-Thing on Environmental Sustainability by E-Waste." *Sustainability* 14.16 (2022): 10161.

Mufti, Mariam, and Farida Jalalzai. "The Importance of Gender Quotas in Patriarchal and Clientelistic Polities: The Case of Pakistan." *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy* 42.2 (2021): 107-123.

Nugrahani, Farida, and M. Hum. "Metode Penelitian Kualitatif." *Solo: Cakra Books* 1.1 (2014): 3-4.

Sunarso, Sunarso, Benni Setiawan, and Ni Putu Pande Satya Anjani. "The Political Satire of Mojok. co in the 2019 Indonesian Election." *Heliyon* 8.7 (2022): e10018.

Susila, Ihwan, et al. "Symbolic Political Communication, and Trust: A Young Voters' Perspective of the Indonesian Presidential Election." *Journal of Political Marketing* 19.1-2 (2020): 153-175.

Szymkowiak, Andrzej, et al. "Information Technology and Gen Z: The Role of Teachers, the Internet, and Technology in the Education of Young People." *Technology in Society* 65 (2021): 101565.

Zhuravskaya, Ekaterina, Maria Petrova, and Ruben Enikolopov. "Political Effects of the Internet and Social Media." *Annual Review of Economics* 12 (2020): 415-438.