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Election Insecurity in Social Media Campaigns: An Analysis of the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election

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Abstract:

This study examines the emerging vulnerabilities within Indonesia's electoral process, focusing on the role of social media during the 2024 presidential election. While digital platforms offer new avenues for political mobilization, they also introduce significant risks to electoral integrity, which are still underexplored in existing literature. This often separates technical campaign analysis from societal impact. The research investigates how social media campaigns, driven by informal volunteer networks (buzzers), shape political contestation and foster insecurity through hate speech and misinformation. Employing a qualitative method, the study utilizes Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis to examine textual, discursive, and socio-cultural dimensions of online political content. The findings reveal that social media enables rapid rebranding and youth engagement, as seen in the successful "gemoy" strategy. However, it simultaneously exacerbates polarization, normalizes unregulated influencer activism, and strengthens identity-based conflicts. The study concludes that the unmonitored power of digital volunteers creates a critical vulnerability in Indonesia's democracy, necessitating enhanced digital literacy and robust regulatory frameworks to safeguard future elections.

Keywords: *social media, contestation, politics, mobilization, conflict*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini menganalisis kerentanan baru dalam proses elektoral Indonesia dengan fokus pada peran media sosial selama Pemilihan Presiden 2024. Meskipun platform digital menawarkan jalur baru untuk mobilisasi politik, platform tersebut juga memperkenalkan risiko signifikan terhadap integritas pemilu yang belum banyak diteliti dalam literatur yang ada, yang sering memisahkan analisis teknis kampanye dari dampak sosialnya. Penelitian ini menyelidiki bagaimana kampanye media sosial, yang didorong oleh jaringan relawan informal (buzzer), membentuk kontestasi politik dan menciptakan kerawanan melalui ujaran kebencian dan misinformasi. Dengan menggunakan metodologi kualitatif, penelitian ini memanfaatkan Analisis Wacana Kritis Norman Fairclough untuk mengkaji dimensi teks, wacana, dan sosial-budaya dari konten politik daring. Temuan mengungkapkan bahwa media sosial memungkinkan pencitraan ulang yang cepat dan keterlibatan pemuda, seperti terlihat dalam strategi "gemoy" yang sukses, tetapi secara bersamaan memperburuk polarisasi, menormalisasi aktivisme influencer yang tidak teregulasi, dan memperkuat konflik berbasis identitas. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa kekuatan relawan digital yang tidak terawasi menciptakan kerentanan kritis dalam demokrasi Indonesia, sehingga memerlukan peningkatan literasi digital dan kerangka regulasi yang kuat untuk melindungi pemilu di masa depan.

Kata Kunci: *media sosial, kontestasi, politik, mobilisasi, konflik*

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Introduction

The dynamics of Indonesian politics following the 2019 general election indicate an increasing level of social fragmentation influenced by the intensity of communication within digital spaces, particularly across various social media platforms. Social media has not only become a channel for public participation in the democratic process but has also reinforced the construction of political identities that are often dichotomous and exclusive (Kodir & Arinta, 2025). This polarization is reflected in the reproduction of social categories such as santri, priyayi, and abangan, which have re-emerged in contemporary political discourse (Hefner, 2025; Nurish, 2021). In practice, political competition is increasingly perceived as an arena of winning and losing, thereby encouraging group fanaticism and claims of absolute truth that potentially generate hate speech and discursive conflict in digital spaces (Solehudin et al., 2024). This phenomenon has become more evident in several political contests, such as the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election and the 2024 presidential election, which were marked by the mobilization of support through hashtags and political narratives on social media (Juhász & Bene, 2022; Tapsell, 2021a). These conditions indicate that while social media expands democratic participation, digital spaces also introduce new vulnerabilities to electoral integrity, thereby necessitating systematic efforts to understand and manage the impact of digital politics on the quality of democracy in Indonesia.

A growing body of research demonstrates that social media has transformed the practice of political campaigning in presidential elections across various countries. Tapsell (2021b) argues that contemporary electoral campaigns operate within two arenas: formal campaigns conducted through mainstream media and digital campaigns that are more fluid, often characterized by identity politics and disinformation. Research by Merry (2022) and Triga et al. (2023) reveals that social media enables direct communication between candidates and voters, although in practice such interactions often remain largely one-directional. In the Indonesian context, research by Belcastro et al. (2022) shows that Twitter has been intensively utilized by campaign teams to disseminate political messages through hashtags. Analytical approaches have also developed through the use of big data and sentiment analysis to predict voter behavior. Meanwhile, recent studies in Indonesia highlight the increasing polarization of digital politics, the spread of hoaxes, and the use of political gimmicks in online campaigns, as well as the strategic use of Instagram to construct candidate images and shape public perception. This body of literature indicates that although social media broadens political participation, digital platforms also pose new challenges to the quality of democracy and electoral integrity.

Despite the growing number of studies examining political campaigns on social media, most previous research has primarily focused on aspects such as political communication strategies, the use of digital platforms by candidates and campaign teams, public sentiment analysis toward candidates, and the construction of political images through various forms of digital content (Subekti, Nurmandi, et al., 2025). These studies generally emphasize how social media is utilized as a tool for voter mobilization, dissemination of political messages, and strengthening candidates' personal branding in electoral contests. However, these studies have not specifically examined in depth how social media campaign practices may generate election insecurity, particularly in relation

to the complex interaction between the spread of disinformation, digital network mobilization, the use of political buzzers, and the exploitation of identity issues that may trigger social polarization (Morejón-Llamas et al., 2024). These aspects have important implications for the integrity of electoral processes and the stability of democratic systems. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by systematically examining the dynamics of social media political campaigns in the 2024 Indonesian presidential election and analyzing their implications for electoral security, the quality of political participation, and the sustainability of electoral democracy in Indonesia.

This research is important because the development of digital communication technology has transformed patterns of political mobilization and electoral campaign practices in Indonesia, particularly through social media, which enables the rapid and massive dissemination of political information. Previous findings indicate that the majority of internet users in Indonesia have been exposed to fake news, especially through platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram, which often exploit political and ethnic-religious issues to influence public perception. In the context of political contestation, buzzers and social media volunteers have become crucial actors in shaping public opinion, mobilizing support, and disseminating political propaganda that may trigger polarization (Kocak & Kıbrıs, 2023; Trepte, 2021). These dynamics became increasingly complex during the 2024 presidential election, when digital image-building strategies, entertainment-based content, and the mobilization of religious, ethnic, and economic capital identities were intensively used to influence voter behavior. These conditions demonstrate that digital campaigns function not only as instruments of political communication but also as potential sources of electoral vulnerability, including the spread of disinformation, emotional mobilization, and social fragmentation (Subekti, Yusuf, et al., 2025). Therefore, examining the relationship between digital political mobilization and potential election vulnerabilities is essential for understanding the dynamics of electoral democracy in Indonesia.

This study aims to examine how political mobilization through social media shapes campaign dynamics and potential election vulnerabilities in the 2024 Indonesian presidential election. Specifically, this study seeks to identify patterns of social media usage by campaign teams, digital volunteers, and political buzzers in producing and disseminating political messages to the public. It also aims to examine how identity-based political mobilization strategies—such as those related to religion, ethnicity, and economic capital—are employed within digital spaces to influence voters' perceptions and political choices. Furthermore, the study attempts to explain how the interaction between digital mobilization, candidate image construction, and the dissemination of political propaganda may affect the quality of political participation and the integrity of the electoral process. Ultimately, this research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the role of social media in generating electoral vulnerabilities while offering a conceptual contribution to the development of digital political communication studies and electoral democracy research in Indonesia.

Method

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to examine the use of social media for political mobilization during Indonesia's 2024 presidential election. It focuses on political contestation as manifested through identity construction and the stigmatization of opposing groups, often expressed via cyberbullying. These online behaviors contributed to the spread of hate speech and the manipulation of facts. The study draws on perspectives from political sociology and political psychology, using

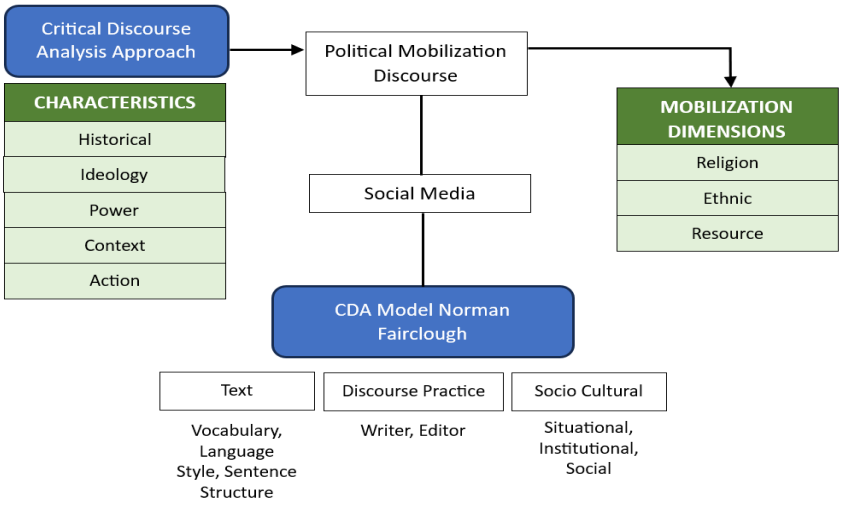
critical discourse analysis as its main methodological framework.

The data sources in this study were social media content related to the 2024 presidential election campaign, comprising posts, videos, comments, hashtags, and digital campaign materials circulated on platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok by candidates, campaign teams, volunteers, and social media supporters. Secondary data were obtained from reports, survey findings, and previous studies related to digital political campaigns and electoral dynamics in Indonesia. Data were collected through online observation, documentation, and digital content archiving, focusing on campaign narratives, symbolic representations, and interactions that reflected political mobilization, identity framing, and the circulation of political messages during the election period.

This study employs content analysis, guided by Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, to explore three key dimensions: textual, discursive practice, and socio-cultural context (Durmaz & Yogun, 2022). The analysis identifies patterns and structures while interpreting meanings embedded in codes, symbols, and messages through qualitative and quantitative approaches. The research involves several stages: breaking down data, comparing information, categorizing and classifying content, and connecting datasets to address the research questions and draw meaningful conclusions (Bungin, 2005).

Figure 1

Norman Fairclough's CDA Analysis Thinking Framework



Note.

Fairclough's CDA framework emphasizes three interconnected dimensions: text analysis, discourse practice analysis, and sociocultural practice analysis.

Results and Discussion

Result

In 2018, Daily Social collaborated with the *Jakpat* Mobile Survey Platform to survey 2,032 smartphone users from various regions. The survey revealed a vulnerability to fake news or hoaxes, with 82.25% of respondents reported encountering fake news on Facebook, 56.55% on WhatsApp, and 29.48% on Instagram. The survey indicates that political and ethnic-religious issues predominantly influence the type of fake news, manipulating emotional sentiments to influence perceptions of information credibility. A contributor to the creation and spread of fake news is often referred to as a buzzer.

The JASMEV volunteers (Jokowi Ahok Social Media Volunteers) are often regarded as the prototypical model for buzzers in Indonesia. JASMEV was established on August 12, 2012, during the DKI Jakarta Regional Election. Political competition through social media emerged as a trend in this election. The political rivalry between Jokowi and

Basuki Tjahaya Purnama, (Ahok) heavily relied on JASMEV volunteers led by Kartika Djoemadi. Each volunteer could freely express opinions, guided by standard themes from the Cyrus Network Team in managing the Jokowi-Ahok war room, coordinated by Hasan Hasbi Batupahat. Approximately 15,000 individuals served as volunteers across RT and RW levels, supported by 706 coordinators and 42 strategy supervisors.

The success of JASMEV volunteers in the 2012 DKI Jakarta gubernatorial election (*Pilgub*) was replicated in the 2014 presidential election. At least 1,248 volunteer organizations participated in the 2014 presidential election contest, featuring the competition between Jokowi-JK and Prabowo-Sandi. As a new model of political engagement, these volunteers effectively influenced public opinion and voting behaviour. However, image-building dynamics on social media contributed to conflicts among volunteers, fostering hateful political propaganda.

Hate speech, manifested through smear campaigns and negative messaging, is notably effective in establishing damaging stigma. This stigma relates to physical defects, compromised character, and ethnic-religious issues. The core purpose of black and negative campaigns is to foster a negative perception of certain candidates in political contests. Three voter models influence political decision-making. *First*, the sociological model is shaped by factors such as religion, ethnicity, age, gender, education, and income, making issues of religious and ethnic identity frequently employed as mobilization strategies. *Second*, the psychological model is significantly affected by perceptions of a candidate's character, campaign themes, and political parties, commonly referred to as partisanship or party identification (Party ID). *Third*, the rational model is assessed through an economic lens based on profit considerations, where political parties make offers that are evaluated by voters. Campaign strategy that creates stigma and promotes hate speech is designed to sway individuals' political choices, particularly among undecided voters, in line with these voting models.

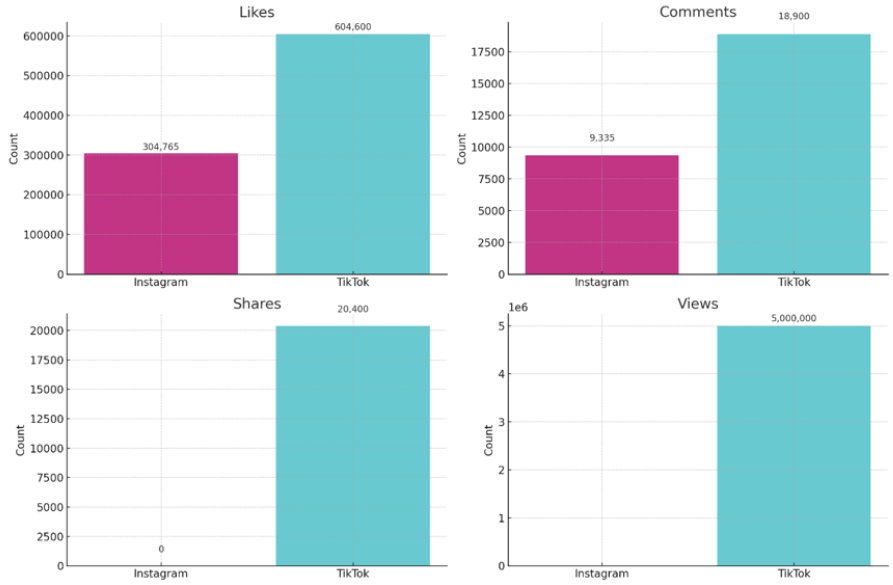
Three pairs of candidates contested in the 2024 presidential election. The first pair comprised Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar, supported by the change coalition, consisting of Nasdem, PKB, and PKS. The second pair featured Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka, backed by the Advanced Indonesia Coalition (KIM), comprising Gerindra, Demokrat, Golkar, and PAN. The third pair included Ganjar Pranowo and Mahfud MD, supported by PDIP and PPP. Buzzers continued to propagate hate speech and spin, acting as unofficial, informal volunteers.

Several volunteers supporting Jokowi and those backing Prabowo in the 2019 presidential election collaborated to form a unified team for the 2024 presidential election. Volunteers managing social media, for instance, were organized by the Prabowo National Volunteers – Gibran Digital Team (Pride). The Pride volunteers utilized social media to reshape Prabowo Subianto's image from firm and expressive in the 2019 presidential election to a cooler and endearing figure through the political advertisement "Prabowo Gibran *Memang Istimewa*." Uploaded to the Gerindra Party's YouTube account on December 13, 2023, this advertisement had garnered 1,156,663 views by March 15, 2024.

The Instagram account @gerindra uploaded a 26-second video of Prabowo dancing in public on September 21, 2023. By December 15, 2023, the post had received 304,765 likes and 9,335 comments. On the Gerindra Party's TikTok account @partaigerindra during the same period as the YouTube account, the video was viewed 5 million times, garnered 604,600 likes, was reshared 20,400 times, and received 18,900 comments. Videos of Prabowo dancing with smiling gestures were widely used by volunteers as responses and comments to negative news on various social media. Accompanied by *Gemoy* videos and images, the capitalized phrase "*DIFITNAH TETAP SANTAI*" circulated widely. See the

graph below:

Graph 1
Social Media Engagement for Prabowo's 'Gemoy' Dance Video



Note. Prabowo's 'Gemoy' dance video on TikTok achieved the highest engagement with 5 million views, surpassing other platforms.

Prabowo successfully rebranded his political image by framing a smile as Gerindra's weapon against bad news, often referred to as the "power smile". Prabowo's first *Gemoy* video, uploaded on TikTok on October 26, 2023, had been viewed 443,300 times by December 16, 2023, receiving 52,300 likes, and 2,543 comments. Another video, titled "Is it permissible to be this *gemoy*?" uploaded on November 2, 2023, went viral. By December 16, 2023, the video had been viewed over 9.9 million times and garnered 1.3 million likes.

The campaign message of the Prabowo-Gibran pair was the *Gemoy* association, glorified through *gemoy* dancing and posters with artificial intelligence, generated cartoon-like designs. Prabowo's clothing style has evolved from previous presidential election contests. Once known for his white safari attire as a former Kopassus Commander, he now appears in a sky-blue Apollo shirt. This strategy carries a symbolic interactionist meaning for voters, indicating that Prabowo-Gibran has adapted to appeal to the youth. The Sky-Blue identity was massively promoted through e-commerce platforms to commercialize the campaign among volunteers and the winning team.

Social media is a highly effective medium for quickly disseminating information and building political branding compared to other channels. The content used by the winning team, volunteers, and Prabowo-Gibran candidates tends to be informal and appears humorous. Terms such as "starfruit," "folic acid," and "*samsul*" originated from this account's post. The cyber war targeting Gibran was frequently countered with self-deprecating humor.

Gibran and the winning team, including the *Bocahe Mase* Volunteers in Central Java, actively engaged with criticisms and comments on social media informally and humorously. Political communication on social media emphasizes reinforcing millennial symbols and identity through lighthearted and informal messaging. Strong

framing to create differentiation is crucial in shaping public perception and support. As the youngest candidate, Gibran was even considered "not old enough" to participate, highlighting his genuine youthfulness and innocence.

The use of images and videos in political contestation is defined by Gen Z and millennials, who favor informality. TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube users are primarily young people categorized as first-time voters. Engaging political expressions significantly influence young people's participation in politics, as reflected in the large number of Prabowo-Gibran volunteers, who are predominantly young individuals and social media influencers. Campaign content infused with entertainment, joy, and relatable family themes appeals to young people and social media users, leading to frequent re-shares. The level of popularity, measured by the number of likes, views, comments, and shares, directly impacts the candidate's popularity.

The success of buzzers as a political communicator is influenced by several factors. *First*, they effectively utilize new media features, particularly social media, to sway first-time and undecided voters (swing voters). For instance, JASMEV volunteers were mobilized through updates and independent registration via the www.jasmev.com portal. Psychologically, volunteers developed a sense of closeness to candidates through the provision of e-certificates signed by the candidate pairs.

Secondly, electoral success depends on a flexible yet structured information system. Buzzer showcases volunteers who utilize social media platforms, such as JASMEV and Pride volunteers, without relying solely on directives from the winning team. The adaptability enables new issues and responses quickly, resulting in the rapid dissemination of supportive content or the immediate execution of counterattacks to localize potentially harmful issues against the candidate.

Third, the competition for support through mass communication is greatly influenced by the ability to engage public participation. Buzzers, or social media volunteers, operate with considerable freedom, making them difficult to regulate under election monitoring. They manifest a form of new power, as voluntary politics expressed through informal and unregistered networks with the winning team has emerged as a tool of resistance against an imperfect political system.

Community fragmentation strengthened after Gerindra and PDIP clashed over candidate nominations for the 2024 presidential election. Prabowo Subianto, as Chair of the Gerindra Board of Trustees, and Megawati, as Chair of the PDIP, had previously aligned during the 2009 Presidential Election through the Batu Tulis Agreement. Jokowi and Gibran Rakabuming Raka did not announce their resignation from PDIP until the presidential election, while PDIP also did not dismiss or revoke Jokowi and Gibran's party membership.

Volunteer activism is often highly competitive. The massive mobilization of opinions in mass media and social media by winning team and social media volunteers, or buzzers, has fueled the rise of irrational supporters. Additionally, several survey institutions serve as "covert" political consultants, demonstrating partisanship by inaccurately capturing voter preferences. Population samples based on economic strata, education levels, ethnic majorities and minorities, religions, and age groups are often underrepresented. Surveys conducted by several institutions often contribute to stigmatization and efforts to shape candidates' images.

The 2024 presidential election has highlighted the role of mass media in

constructing political identities. Anies Baswedan, identified as the candidate with the least funding, utilized YouTube to broadcast "*Desak Anies*," while Ganjar Pranowo launched a series of campaign events titled "*Ganjar Nginap* in Residents' Houses. " A campaign popularity survey conducted by the Paradigma Institute in Central Java from January 1-15, 2024, found that 65.3% of respondents were aware of *Joged Gemoy*, 19.8% recognized the *Ganjar Nginap* event, and 14.9% were familiar with *Desak Anies*.

The close relationship between regional authorities and public support in the 2024 presidential election prompted political parties to pursue dual strategies during the legislative elections. Several political parties engage in two-legged politics by nominating candidates for governor-deputy governor, or vice regent-deputy regent without relying on the previous national presidential coalition. Some political parties considered coalition consistency in nominating candidates for the 2024 regional elections disadvantageous. The political prestige of 2024, as reflected in the DKI and Banten gubernatorial elections, suggests that Prabowo's political camp, through the Advanced Indonesia Coalition (KIM) Plus, has secured victory in terms of seat allocation and specific vote thresholds.

The split in support is influenced by rationality, particularly regarding political money profits. Money politics is no longer stigmatized as a bad practice; instead, they have gained a positive perception in several regions of Indonesia. These transactions, with their various methods and practices, have undergone a perceptual shift in every political contest. The term NPWP, or "*Nomer Piro*, *Wani Piro*," has developed among the Indonesian electorate. For instance, in Central Java, 50.9% of the population tolerates money politics, while 46.6% in Banten and East Java hold similar views. These figures indicate money politics is viewed as a common practice.

The Prabowo-Gibran coalition marked a departure from the political norms of Central Javanese society, which typically unite the *abangan* and *santri* groups to form the Green-Red coalition. In the 2024 presidential election, Prabowo-Gibran secured 12,096,454 votes, or 53.08%, in Central Java. The PDIP-backed candidates, Ganjar-Mahfud, received 7,827,335 votes (34.35%), while Anies-Muhaimin received 2,866,373 votes (12.58%). The significant vote difference between Prabowo-Gibran and Ganjar-Mahfud underscored a new reality: Central Java, long considered as a "*bullpen*," struggles to support national-level candidates, even though they may continue to succeed locally in district, city, and Provincial DPRD elections.

PDIP has established itself as the dominant party in Central Java in the post-New Order legislative elections. Since 1999, PDIP has consistently secured the most seats in the 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, and 2024 elections. Central Java, the third most populous region after West Java and East Java, comprises 35 districts or cities organized into 10 electoral districts, with 32 districts/cities serving as PDIP strongholds. Regional head contests have also reinforced PDIP's dominance through victories in every election period. However, Ganjar-Mahfud, the party's presidential and vice-presidential candidates, were defeated in the 2024 presidential election.

Ethnographically, the people of Central Java are collectively identified as Javanese. These conditions significantly influence the strong Javanese cultural tradition in politics, exemplified by the "*ewuh-pakewuh*" attitude. Voters in Central Java demonstrate considerable loyalty to the PDIP elite, particularly towards incumbent candidates. PDIP has governed Central Java since the first direct regional elections were conducted. The gubernatorial election on June 22, 2008, brought victory to Bibit

Waluyo-Rustriningsih, who were endorsed by the PDIP. During the gubernatorial election period held on May 26, 2013, PDIP again won with Ganjar Pranowo-Heru Sudjatmoko. In the 2018 contest, Ganjar Pranowo, paired with Taj Yasin Maimoen, achieved victory under PDIP's nomination.

The strategy of encircling support was implemented by the Prabowo-Gibran team and its volunteers, who recruited several *kyai* and Islamic students. Various figures from the Central Java *Nahdlatul Ulama* (PWNU) Regional Management, for instance, established many winning teams outside of the main team structure during the 2024 presidential election contest. The shift in political support seen in the 2014, 2019, and 2024 presidential elections followed changes in the configuration of political party coalitions at the national level. For example, Habib Luthfi bin Yahya became a central figure in mobilizing the community in the western coastal region of Central Java through the "*Nderek Dawuh Guru*" volunteer team, also known as *Ndaru* volunteers.

The disparity between the DPR/DPRD elections and the 2024 presidential election in Central Java reinforced the tradition of divided political loyalties. The configuration of patronage and loyalty among PDIP voters is influenced by money politics, which has increasingly been perceived as normalized. Additionally, patronage through personal networks can be reconfigured through social media, which crafts a new image for the Prabowo-Gibran pair. The primordial character or political rationality driven by money politics is particularly prevalent among individuals in impoverished conditions and with limited education. This presents an ironic reality, as poverty and low educational attainment remain widespread in Central Java.

Discussion

Political mobilization is a process that influences individuals and communities to align with a specific collective identity. This strategy fosters an "us and them" or "friend and enemy" identity, significantly shaped by a shared sense of enmity. Political mobilization distinguishing between "friend and foe" can be examined through two models: vertical and horizontal mobilization (Klandermans & Staggenborg, 2002; Hu, 2024; Kosim et al., 2023).

Vertical political mobilization occurs through top-down and bottom-up relationships, while horizontal political mobilization aims to strengthen voter loyalty and political orientation (Cox et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2024). These two models underscore the significance of accommodating party interests based on participant types (Erfort, 2024; Wurst et al., 2023). At least ten participant models exist in accommodation politics: officeholders, office seekers, active party members, passive party members (Pajares, 2023), active members of semi-political organizations, passive members of semi-political organizations, participants in mass actions, participants in internal political discussions, voters, and apathetic participants (Jeroense & Spierings, 2023; Rojon et al., 2025). These models shape communication strategy because greater political participation usually requires less intensive mobilization.

The incorrect mapping of potential voters undermines the mobilization efforts. This weakness is exploited by brokers who coordinate certain interest groups through vote-buying. Brokers, formalized as success teams, primarily relied on personal connections to offer opinions in a structured, systematic, and extensive manner. In this context, buzzers or social media volunteers act as political mobilizers, potentially

creating vulnerabilities in the election process.

The Indonesian political system, which still reflects a disconnect between candidates and potential voters, or electoral disconnect, is one reason why buzzer practices disregard the domino effect of social media content (Kristiyanto et al., 2023; Lim, 2012; Rakhmani, 2024). The widespread presence of social media volunteers, who are not officially part of the winning team, ultimately influences loyalty relationships driven by political irrationality or mass psychological games (Baulch et al., 2024; Karman et al., 2024). Therefore, the mobilization construct can be described in three dimensions.

First, there is religious mobilization. Religious sentiment in the political process helps build positive perceptions as part of a collective identity within society (Soderborg & Muhtadi, 2023; Widian et al., 2023). Its role in the presidential election of 2014, 2019, and 2024 can be understood through various expressions of faith, including doctrine, worship practices or rituals, views on religious figures, religious institutions, legal systems, and the behaviors or emotions of religious individuals (Marijan et al., 2025a). Therefore, the contest of the 2024 presidential election tends not to rely on religious sentiments, as each pair of candidates presents elements of a winning team or religiously based volunteers (Pepinsky, 2025). Religious mobilization thus involves doctrine, worship practices, religious figures, religious institutions, and emotional appeals related to faith.

The mobilization of doctrine in contestation occurs during Friday prayers (Lussier & Ahnaf, 2024). Sermons in these prayers often serve as discourse, leveraging a strategic mass base that organizes independently (Sumaktoyo, 2025). As an essential part of the prayer, the congregation must listen to the sermon under any circumstances (Brooke et al., 2023). The political nature of Friday prayer's sermons, often highlighted through social media, significantly influences the emergence of social movements and conflicts (Saparudin & Emawati, 2023). Religious mobilization in the 2024 contest, including the glorification of Prabowo-Gibran's piety, is noteworthy (Aminulloh et al., 2025). This is evident in pilgrimages and prayer meetings associated with Habib Lutfi bin Yahya, a supporter of Prabowo-Gibran (Marijan et al., 2025b). Mobilization through worship was executed by Prabowo Subianto's supporters through the congregational morning prayer movement, titled "Indonesia's Great Dawn," which served as a strategy to consolidate support through mosques across Indonesia.

Second, ethnic mobilization is viewed as a social group sharing a specific identity and serves as a strategy for establishing suitable political differentiation (Warganegara & Waley, 2024). The 2024 presidential election, for instance, illustrates ethnic rivalry among candidates. Anies Rasyid Baswedan, of Arab Hadhrami descent from Yemen, faced attacks claiming he was not a native Indonesian (Alyatalatthaf et al., 2024). In both local and national elections, groups with varying political views have intensified the political struggle between the Chinese and Arab ethnic minorities (Chong et al., 2026). Anies Rasyid Baswedan, representing the Arab Hadhrami *diaspora* in Indonesia, secured nominations from *Nasdem* and *PKB* (Wahid, 2025). Ethnic commodification has fueled misidentification through the emergence of new identities, accompanied by ongoing debates over the legality of the Ba'alawi lineage.

Third, capital mobilization occurs among those who hold political and economic capital (Damanik et al., 2025; Sahab et al., 2025). The fragmentation of society, supported by divisive politics, can be manipulated by a small group that

controls wealth and power, commonly referred to as oligarchs (Berenschot et al., 2024; Grasse, 2022; Seimel, 2024). The dominance of these elites influences the potential for investor-driven or capital-based violence.

Democratization involves reclaiming public space from discrimination and the alienation of power, which elites often manipulate to create stigma, such as framing radicalism during presidential elections or promoting other forms of hate speech (Afrimadona, 2021; Fossati, 2024; Kirk & Schill, 2024). Hate speech encompasses speech, writing, actions, and activities intended to incite violence or foster negative prejudice, aiming to stigmatize individuals or groups (Lepoutre et al., 2024). Additionally, hate spin refers to a political strategy that manages inflammatory communications, offenses, and insults by intensifying emotions related to specific political identities.

Conclusion

Movements to garner political support during general election contests are increasingly popular on social media. Many celebrities publicly endorse candidates through these platforms. Campaign teams and political volunteers often use social media to highlight identity issues, which serve as effective framing tools because they resonate with the psychobiographical aspects of political candidates. However, this strategy has also fueled the rise of hate speech and identity-based sentiments. An organized and registered volunteer team is needed to address election violations. At present, no legal framework holds buzzers or social media volunteers accountable during political contests; ultimately, enforcement relies solely on reporting under the Information and Electronic Transactions (ITE) Law.

Psychobiography is a crucial factor for voters who emphasize emotional and sociological elements. In this context, engaging the mass base through social media effectively connects the psychological awareness and empathy of potential voters with political candidates. Competition between political parties and civil society encompasses not only the struggle for power in presidential and regional head elections but also an ongoing cycle of control. The current political contest involves three main aspects: strategies for gaining and establishing power structures, strategies for exercising authority, and strategies for overseeing the flow of power. Politics after the 2024 presidential election, for instance, has created a new pattern of national politics dominated by oligarchs with significant capital and substantial influence.

Political contestations that require significant resources for mobilization require regulations to simplify and minimize political costs. State responsibility for financing political parties and electoral contests can at least diminish transactional practices in each election. Sanctions that revoke political rights for two election periods for politicians or party members convicted of corruption will significantly affect cadre recruitment and leadership selection.

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