Digital political discourse in #nazarpemilu hashtag on X/Twitter in the 2024 Indonesian presidential election

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Abstract

#nazarpemilu on X/Twitter was a unique digital political reality during the 2024 Indonesian presidential election. It stood out as the only political hashtag that had practical consequences in the real world. On January 6, 2024, there were 49,562 mentions of #nazarpemilu on X/Twitter. The movement involved 6,432 accounts. This study aimed to describe and critique the construction of digital political reality on #nazarpemilu. This research uses a qualitative approach with a critical discourse analysis method. Through analyzing #nazarpemilu documents, conducting in-depth interviews with account owners, utilizing library data, and exploring intertextuality, it was discovered that social media acted as a public platform for expressing political aspirations in the face of inactive state institutions. #nazarpemilu represented a manifestation of despair against the inefficacy of formal state institutions, supporting candidates who shared similar values and opposing those who lacked integrity or violated the constitution. The research concluded that the dynamics of social media showcased a wave of positive, creative, and constructive energy that transcended into the physical realm. The readiness to embrace differing opinions online and offline led to many ideas and creativity, as evidenced by #nazarpemilu. The results of the study show that hashtags on X/Twitter are an arena for discourse battles to thwart candidates in political contests. Furthermore, social media goes beyond its original nature and function. It has turned into a political action that mobilizes citizens.

Introduction

In contemporary political contestation, particularly in general elections, social media involvement is an absolute necessity (Stier et al., 2018); (Dimitrova & Matthes, 2018); (Irawanto, 2019); (Purbolaksono, 2020)both at the national level and general election of

regional heads (Pilkada. Social media was involved in various contexts, such as competition between candidates, the role of political parties, dissemination of political messages, voter diversity, and so on. Studies of the construction of social media in various aspects of general elections in various countries such as Pakistan (Ali et al., 2023), Malaysia (Ridzuan et al., 2023), the United States (Kowal, 2023), India (Narasimhamurthy, 2014) showed this.

Using hashtags on X/Twitter in political contestation in general elections became interesting. Much research was conducted on this matter, such as by Mas Manchón & Guerrero-Solé, (2019) regarding the political branding of candidates in the Spanish Presidential Election; Barber, (2020) on predicted winners in presidential contests in the United States; Abanoz, (2020) on hashtag and mention analysis in elections in Türkiye; Research by Soares & Recuero, (2021) in Brazil regarding the hashtag war which resulted in disinformation. Asmawarini et al., (2022) on the hashtags of three candidates for the 2024 presidential election in Indonesia.

In the context of the 2024 Indonesian presidential-vice presidential election, there was a unique political reality, namely, the appearance of the hashtag #nazarpemilu on X/Twitter. It was called unique because the hashtag #nazarpemilu was the only hashtag that required the accounts involved to fulfill it. The account would be guilty if the election nazars were not carried out. The hashtag #nazarpemilu contained, on the one hand, opposition to the Prabowo-Gibran presidential candidacy and, on the other hand, support for Anies-Muhaimin in the 2024 presidential election.

The emergence of the hashtag #nazarpemilu was a form of public resistance and support, especially in the digital realm, for the two pairs of presidential-vice presidential candidates. However, the rejection of the Prabowo-Gibran pair and support for Anies-Muhaimin in the digital world extended to or had implications for actual political reality. Because the majority of the public involved in the #nazarpemilu campaign would realize their promises in real life. Thus, there was a close connection between digital political reality and actual political reality in the context of the hashtag #nazarpemilu.

This article aimed to describe, analyze, and criticize the digital reality construction of the hashtag #nazarpemilu on X/Twitter. Then, from the micro-dimensional discourse battle #nazarpemilu to macro-dimensional discourse in political battle in 2024 Indonesian presidential election. This happened during the 2024 Indonesian presidential election campaign and spread to the world of politics in general.

Two big questions were answered in this research. 1) How was the construction of public support for Anies-Muhaimin and public rejection of Prabowo-Gibran in the 2024 Indonesian President-Vice President election via #nazarpemilu on X/Twitter? 2) What were the practical and theoretical implications of public support for Anies-Muhaimin and public resistance to the Prabowo-Gibran pair in the 2024 Indonesian President-Vice President election through #nazarpemilu on X/Twitter?

This article departed from several reasons. First, discourse on social media changed the pattern of public support and rejection of power, including presidential and vice presidential candidates who had similarities and conflicts with public values and aspirations (Hermida, 2015) (Yan, 2021). Second, social media was a medium for strengthening civil society. Contemporary freedom of opinion and expression was more effective and efficient if channeled through social media rather than traditionally conveyed face-to-face (Fuchs, 2015). Third, a fair and democratic presidential election could only be born from an honest and healthy process, not violations of ethics and law. Candidates who shared the same values as the public were supported. On the other hand, if it went against ethics and violated the Constitution, it became an enemy that must be fought together.

In the context of the 2024 presidential election campaign, this study is interesting because social media is used as a tool to block candidates, on the one hand, and to provide support to different candidates, on the other hand. And, the hashtag #nazarpemilu on X/ Twitter has never happened in previous Indonesian presidential election campaigns.

Backround of #nazarpemilu

There has been much research on Prabowo's candidacy since 2014, 2019, and 2024, but nothing has touched on the public rejection through #nazarpemilu. On the other hand, no research has been found regarding digital political support with the same hashtag for Anies-Muhaimin. Because #nazarpemilu only occurred in the 2024 candidacy of Anies-Muhaimin and Prabowo-Gibran. In the 2019 presidential election, Prabowo carried the jargon of populism (A. D. Ritonga, 2020). Meanwhile, in the 2024 presidential election, Zein's research (2023) drew Prabowo's figure from the front and backstage. Based on a study by Firmansyah et al. (2017), Prabowo, paired with Hatta Radjasa, had used social media (one of which was X/Twitter) for his campaign but had not succeeded in becoming President. At that time, he was defeated by Joko Widodo-Jusuf Kalla.

Several reasons could be put forward as to why the public rejected the Prabowo-Gibran pair in this presidential election. First, Prabowo was a presidential candidate with privileges (Iskandar et al., 2017). He was the son of New Order economic leader Sumitro Djojohadikusumo, a former minister in President Soeharto's cabinet, and founder of Indonesian National Bank (BNI 1946), the former son-in-law of President Soeharto. His ex-wife, Titik Soeharto, was the third daughter of the New Order ruler. On the other hand, Prabowo was highly resistant in the public's minds, namely, violators of Human Rights. Prabowo admitted to kidnapping nine pro-democracy activists before the fall of the New Order regime. He was then dishonorably discharged from the Indonesian Republic Army (Various, 2013); (Gunarjo, 2023). Second, there was opposition to Prabowo in the 2024 presidential candidacy because he appointed Gibran Rakabuming Raka, President Joko Widodo's first son, as vice presidential candidate. Gibran qualified to become vice presidential candidate after the Constitutional Court changed the minimum age from 40 to 35 years or had previously served as regional head. When the lawsuit was filed, Gibran was 36 years old. Civil society's public protests and pressure on the Constitutional Court formed the Honorary Court of the Indonesian Constitutional Court (MKMK). The MKMK decided that Chief of Constitutional Court Anwar Usman was fired for violating a severe code of ethics (Perdana et al., 2024).

Third, Prabowo ran for office thrice (2014, 2019, and 2024 elections). Especially during the 2019 presidential election, many of Prabowo's fanatical supporters were angry because he decided to join President Joko Widodo's cabinet by becoming Minister of Defense (Ekawati, 2019). In the 2014 presidential election, Hatta Radjasa was paired against Joko Widodo-Jusuf Kalla. In the 2019 presidential election, Sandiago Uno was appointed as vice president.

Digital Political Discourse

Discourse was a unified whole between text, context, and social practice. It was a way of producing knowledge and its social practices. It was subjective and had power relations behind knowledge and social practices. So that all the elements were interconnected (Piliang, 2011). According to van Dijk (1997), political discourse was the statements made by politicians, professionals, and political institutions in specific political contexts and practices. Political discourse also had to include political elements, such as citizens, other groups, mass media, and other participants. Thus, in political discourse, a dialectic occurs between the communicator, the message, the media, and the political communicant. Political

discourse was the totality of speech acts used in political discussions and public policy rules sanctified by tradition and proven by experience. Political discourse was a linguistic expression of public practice within the scope of political culture. It was the professional use of language based on its speakers' nationally and socio-historically conditioned mentality (Farangiz, 2022).

In the context of digital political discourse, the presence of social media such as X/Twitter, which was online, the themes discussed, hashtags, and all the netizens involved were components of digital political discourse. Also, the presence of netizens' ideologies, powers, and interests attached to it could be said to be part of digital political discourse (Naiyf Qaiwer, 2020). In Jan Blommaert's (2022) view, digital infrastructure had become part of what was conventionally described as social structure. These digital infrastructures now require more attention in research on messages and meaning. Digital systems and communications formed new sociolinguistic conditions for contemporary discourse production, circulation, and uptake. Analysis of digital political discourse could not avoid paying attention to the sociolinguistic situation and conditions that were currently developing.

From this (political) discourse, according to Foucault, a theory of the relationship between knowledge and power or power and knowledge emerged. Power and knowledge were a pair that expressed the close ties between discourse and the expression of the production capacity of power to create discourse. Knowledge and truth, knowledge and facts, always had a systemic relationship. The relationship between knowledge and power did not cancel out but strengthened each other. Power is always actualized through knowledge and has a powerful effect (Robinow, 2011). In the context of the spread of political discourse and propaganda in the digital era, according to Shamilishvili and Sabashvili (2023), the role of social media found momentum and truth.

Social Media Hashtag

Social media was recognized as a group of internet-based applications built on Web 2.0 ideology and technology, enabling the creation and exchange of messages between users (Kaplan, 2015). Everyone can express their opinions and attitudes on social media, including political choices. One form of expression on social media, particularly on X/Twitter, was creating hashtags.

Hashtags are symbols on social media used to influence and invite fellow netizens to adopt the same attitudes, opinions, and stances (Jamil et al., 2019). It had to be admitted that specific hashtags triggered the emergence of different and even contradictory hashtags. This was where polarization was born (Triwibowo, 2017); (Laucuka, 2018). Thus, the presence of a particular hashtag on X/Twitter had a specific purpose from its creator or bearer (Bruns & Burgess, 2011).

In the context of political choice and empowerment, hashtags on X/Twitter became an inevitable tool. Through hashtags on X/Twitter, the public channeled their political desires and aspirations. Venting aspirations on social media was a form of public dissatisfaction with the existing political system (Lai et al., 2015); (Davis, 2013). The public trusted social media more than channeling their voices to official state institutions such as the executive, legislative, and judiciary. The public assessed that state institutions were weak in fighting for public aspirations to uphold law and ethics. When formal institutions or channels of aspiration were blocked, social media through specific hashtags became the public's realistic choice. Ignoring voices of public dissatisfaction triggered mass movements on social media. (Berg et al., 2020)

Method

This research utilized a qualitative approach. One of the characteristics of a qualitative approach was that it had a unique setting and only occurred in a particular context (Yin, 2011); (Mulyana, 2010). Public support for Anies-Muhaimin and rejection of Prabowo-Gibran through #nazarpemilu on X/Twitter in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election were included in the criteria for this qualitative research. The research method used was critical discourse analysis.

In Fairclough (1992) view, discourse started from a statement on connecting the micro text and the macro socio-cultural environment. Therefore, the analysis model consisted of the text, the media environment that produced the text, and the macro social environment in which the media operated. This was what Fairclough called critical discourse analysis as a model of social change.

According to Jorgensen (2007) this discourse analysis model united three traditions. Namely, first, detailed textual analysis in the field of linguistics. Second, macro-sociological analysis of social practices. Third, the interpretive and micro-sociological tradition in sociology is where life is treated as the product of one's actions. This three-dimensional discourse analysis model contributed to constructing social identity, social relationships, and systems of knowledge or meaning.

Data collection techniques were collected through observation, interviews, library data, and drone-emprit documents with the keyword #nazarpemilu. Observations began with the emergence of #nazarpemilu, with researchers taking notes on digital political discourse during the phenomenon.

Interviews were randomly conducted with netizens who had tweeted using #nazarpemilu. Accounts with the most retweets were prioritized. Additionally, interviews included informants, initially Prabowo supporters, before shifting their support to Anies. There was also an interview with a political party supporter advocating for Anies-Muhaimin, who had participated in the #nazarpemilu discussion. There were five informants interviewed. They came from Jakarta, Bandung, Tangerang, and Surabaya. The interviews were conducted online.

The research results and findings of #nazarpemilu in the X/Twitter text using critical discourse analysis methods were connected to contemporary Indonesian political realities. The results of the analysis of the discourse battle on social media X/Twitter were deepened through in-depth interviews, comparison with reference data, literature, and analysis of interconnected documents. Searching library data was one way to extract data from books, journals, or websites according to the themes discussed in this research.

Result and Discussion

Construction of #nazarpemilu

Based on Drone-Emprit's search, the @imrenagi account tweeted #nazarpemilu first on X/Twitter. He created the hashtag #nazarpemilu on Saturday, January 6, 2024, at 07.07 a.m. This tweet was viewed by 1.4 million X/Twitter users. It then received 232 retweets, 2.5 thousand comments, 6.2 thousand likes, and 655 accounts made embedded tweets. The hashtag #nazarpemilu ended at 10.00 p.m. on the same day.
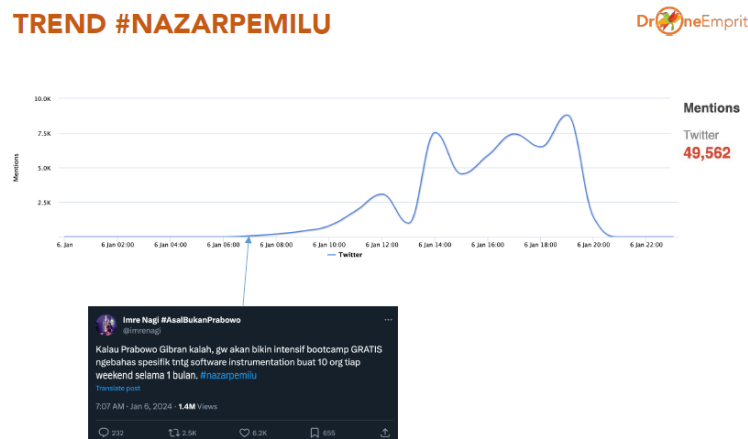
Figure 1 shows that the first tweet of #nazarpemilu was made by the @imrenagi account on Saturday, January 6, 2024, at 07.07 a.m.

Following that, thousands of other accounts followed suit, tweeting about the hashtag #nazarpemilu, which reached 49,562 mentions. The total number of netizens involved in the hashtag #nazarpemilu was 6,432 accounts. Of these, 4,990, or 78 percent, pledged to fulfill their nazars if Anies-Muhaimin won, and 1,442 accounts, or 22 percent, pledged to fulfill their nazars if Prabowo-Gibran lost.
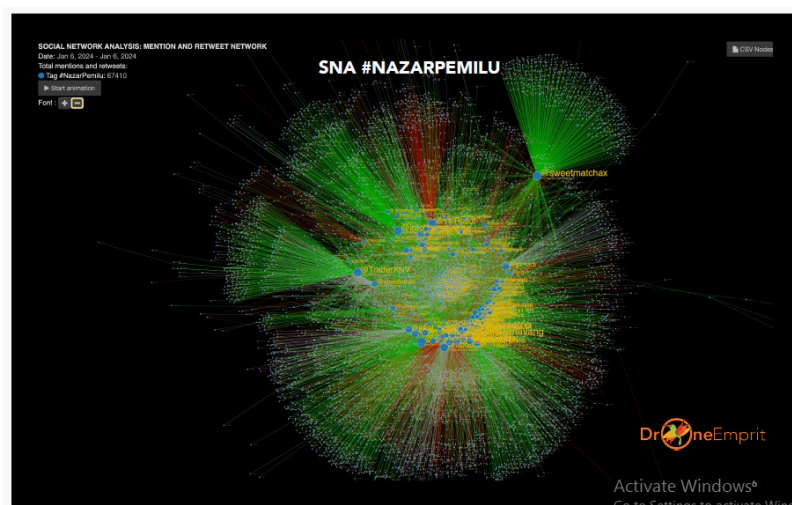

Figure 2 Social Network Analysis: Mention and Retweet Network #nazarpemilu

Below is a list of the four most retweeted #nazarpemilu hashtags and the most shared images. The most retweeted netizen posts on #nazarpemilu were those supporting the Anies-Imin. Following were posts from those who wanted Prabowo-Gibran to lose and those hoping for an Anies-Imin victory. Of the four most recent account uploads, they were retweeted with different vows. One person vowed to provide scholarships for three high school graduates. Another pledged to hold a free intensive boot camp for ten people every weekend for a month, discussing software instrumentation. Meanwhile, others promised scholarships for five individuals with undergraduate degrees in data science, computer science, design, and digital business.

No	Account name	Image content
1	Akbar Selamat	If Anies Imin won, I chose ten high school or college students for one-on-one high school mentoring on getting scholarships— from writing essays and interviews to personal branding. I graduated from ITB with three scholarships, and then it was time for us to make changes.
2	Another of me	THREAD IF PRABOWO GIBRAN-LOSE SHARE THIS USEFUL GIFT GUYS
3	Imre Nagi#AsalB...	If Prabowo Gibran loses, I will hold a FREE intensive boot camp for ten people every weekend for one month, discussing specifics about instrumentation software.
4	TxtfromRea	If Anies-Imin wins, I want to give S1 SCHOLARSHIPS majoring in Data Science, Computer Science, Design, and Digital Business to five people UNTIL THEY GRADUATE to: High school level (including Islamic boarding school students) who are economically limited, online motorcycle taxis, MSMEs who are high school graduates, max age 30 years.

Figure 3. Most retweeted #nazarpemilu in X/Twitter

Meanwhile, the four most retweeted picture accounts had different vows. The account @Ridwan_Spea... vowed that if the Anies-Imin couple won, they would compensate the orphanage for five years. Through the @vira account, a husband and wife promised themselves and their husband that they would monitor computer programming languages for two people. Meanwhile, @vira provided an English course for three months at BPP LIA for one interested person. Two more accounts displayed images as a symbol of rejecting Prabowo and Gibran because they had problems with human rights and from a constitutional perspective.
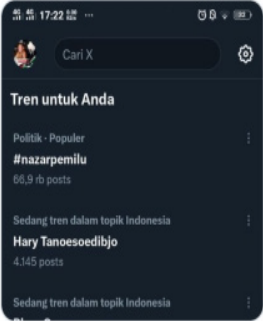
No	Account name	Image content
1	Ridwan_Spea...	BREAKING NEWS...! Trending Topic If the AMIN couple wins, I will support the orphanage every month (nine basic supplies) for five years.
2	Kuy	Beaten left and right
3	Txt dariFoto D...	
4	Vira	If Anies-Imin wins....by the way, this nazar also applies to all voters (02 & 03).

Figure 4. Most shared images #nazarpemilu di X/Twitter

Based on the analysis by the founder of Drone-Emprit, Fahmi, (2016), there were several issues and public opinions in the conversation with the hashtag #nazarpemilu. Firstly, free classes or training, such as research classes, market research training, Al-Quran reading training, and design thinking for business training, were suggested to be provided. Secondly, assistance or donations were proposed, such as providing makes and sarongs to mosques/prayer rooms, slaughtering goats, and sharing food with orphanages. Thirdly, the need for mentorship or guidance was highlighted, such as mentoring for hackathon competitions, mentoring students writing theses on marketing, and offering career coaching in marketing. Fourthly, giving goods or gifts from Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (UMKM), such as books, cold milk, coffee, and food products, was recommended.

Movement to Tackle Prabowo

Since Prabowo ran for vice president alongside Megawati Sukarnoputri in the 2009 presidential election, pro-democracy civil groups, especially activists concerned with human rights issues, rejected him. The reason was that Prabowo was suspected of being involved in the kidnapping of activists before the fall of the New Order regime in 1997. On the other hand, this group believed it was challenging to separate Prabowo as part of the New Order family regime, which committed many human rights violations when it was in power.

This rejection then continued when Prabowo ran for president in the 2014 Presidential Election, paired with Hatta Rajasa, and again when he was paired with Sandiaga Uno in the 2019 Presidential Election. Human rights activists attempted to thwart Prabowo's candidacy, but these efforts always failed. Many human rights activists who previously tried to stop Prabowo were now in a coalition supporting Prabowo as a presidential candidate paired with President Jokowi's eldest son, Gibran.

Apart from the group that was blocking Prabowo, another group emerged that also wanted to stop Prabowo's candidacy, namely those who were disappointed when Prabowo joined President Jokowi's cabinet after the 2019 presidential election. Broad public support for Prabowo to become an opposition to President Jokowi's second term government was never taken into account. He even accepted President Jokowi's offer to become Minister of Defense. This triggered the emergence of other anti-Prabowo groups.

Another opposition group was anti-Gibran, which was indicated to be the result of nepotism at the Constitutional Court. Gibran could become a vice presidential candidate because the Constitutional Court changed the minimum age from 40 to 35 years, or he had previously served as regional head. When the lawsuit was filed, Gibran was 36 years old. This decision by the Constitutional Court resulted in the Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court, Anwar Usman, seriously violating the code of ethics.

Various efforts were made to thwart Prabowo's presidential candidacy, starting from street demonstrations and discourse wars in the mass media to creating hashtags on social media. So, #nazarpemilu is one of the efforts to thwart Prabowo on social media platforms like Twitter. This can be traced to the first tweet on the @imrenagi account. He named his account Imre Nagi #AsalBukanPrabowo (#as long as it's not Prabowo), indicating that #nazarpemilu was created to reject Prabowo (and Gibran) as candidates for president of Indonesia for 2024-2029. Thus, it is clear and firm that #nazarpemilu was created to prevent Prabowo's presidential candidacy.

I was a Prabowo voter in 2019. However, for the 2024 presidential election, I wanted to vote for 01 (Anies-Muhaimin). I became disappointed when he (Prabowo) joined Jokowi's cabinet. Prabowo had disappointed me and millions of other supporters. I would not say I liked Jokowi's

party (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle/PDIP). "Now, I did not like Prabowo joining Jokowi." (interview with Akbar/2024)

Based on the results of interviews with informants, the desire to fill and play a role in #nazarpemilu was triggered by various disappointing political events surrounding the 2024 presidential election campaign. For example, President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) showed non-neutrality. According to them, President Jokowi sided with the Prabowo-Gibran couple (President Jokowi's eldest son) by spreading social assistance in various regions, especially in the Anies-Muhaimin and Ganjar-Mahfud voting pockets such as Central Java and East Java. Meanwhile, the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) allowed these violations. Likewise, the People's Representative Council (DPR), which was supposed to monitor President Jokowi's performance, did not make a sound.

The attraction to Anies contrasted with the dislike for Prabowo. In the informants' view, Anies wallowed in achievements. On the other hand, Prabowo had a lousy track record regarding human rights (HAM) in the past. Plus, he collaborated with Gibran, who had ethical problems.

"Honest and upheld ethics in state administration while serving as the Governor of DKI Jakarta. There was no need to discuss ethics with Prabowo. It was a political problem that could not be resolved simultaneously as opportunities existed quickly. Prabowo? He had had many ethical issues and problems in the past" (@asfan-warah)

Apart from his vision and mission, his honesty and commitment to ethics determined the informants' interest in Anies. Anies came from ordinary people and did not have power, unlike Prabowo (Minister of Defense in President Jokowi's Cabinet) and Gibran (Mayor of Solo, Central Java).

"The thing we (and Anies) had in common was that we were both people. We did not have power, and we did not have a big party. He (Anies) was from the small people. Anyway, he came from an academic family. Prabowo looked like he already had power and a position. Second, he (Anies) was a family man. He seemed to be pious and fatherly. Yes, it was ethics and manners that interested me" (@kongkosan_bu)

On the other hand, #nazarpemilu also mentioned the Anies-Muhaimin campaign method, which attracted netizens. The Anies-Muhaimin success team succeeded in creating a dialogic campaign under the name "Desak Anies-Slepet Imin" in various cities in Indonesia. This dialogical campaign program attracted the interest of thousands of audiences. Most of those attending "Desak Anies-Slepet Imin" came from young people. The dialogical campaign "Desak Anies-Slepet Imin" used the face-to-face method, which was the opposite of the campaign carried out by Prabowo, known as "Joget Gemoy Prabowo."

Anies did not get carried away by his feelings; he was open to criticism and suggestions. This was important to ensure we could still have interactions on social media. The Desak Anies campaign program was a favorite, proving he was not allergic to criticism and input. (interview with Eko Harjo/2024)

Social Media and Social Movement

There is no doubt that social media offers various means of public action and protest in the world of contemporary politics (Chodak, 2016); (Jost et al., 2018)especially when it comes to protest behavior. Whether or not this is the case, the analysis of "Big Data" generated by social media usage offers unprecedented opportunities to observe complex,

dynamic effects associated with large-scale collective action and social movements. In this article, we summarize evidence from studies of protest movements in the United States, Spain, Turkey, and Ukraine demonstrating that: (1; (Wurst et al., 2023); (Harris, 2010); (Deen & Pan, 2022). Actions and organizations on social media, such as creating hashtags, have become tools of resistance against power, injustice, and arbitrariness (Cabico et al., 2023). Social media resulted from technology, a significant factor that made it easier for the public to express disapproval of power (Saxton et al., 2015). However, it was difficult for movements on social media to gain legitimacy because they were temporal, fleeting, and limited to their users (Poell, 2019). Moreover, various conflicting voices appeared very quickly and abundantly on social media. Hashtag idealism became increasingly challenging to achieve because there was no leader. It appeared sporadically, without direction. To raise protests and disapproval. (Poell et al., 2016).

The emergence of hashtags on social media was one of the changes in public political movements from actions on the streets (demonstrations or taking to the streets) to actions on social media. Changes from social movements in natural public spaces to digital public spaces. From writing in traditional mass media to writing on personal blogs. From appearing on mass television to making personal vlogs. In short, citizen journalism production was a form of public participation in contemporary politics (Ritonga & Syahputra, 2019).

Social media was not a vacuum without interests. Similar to actual reality, the world of social media as a digital reality was also a place where various interests were contested (Rehman & Riaz, 2021). Social media was a place of struggle for various powers and ideologies. The emergence of political buzzers and influencers illustrated that social media was where many interests competed, including economic and political interests. Buzzers and influencers on social media were a power business. They could be used and traded according to the interests of capital and power owners (Sugiono, 2020); (Amalia et al., 2021). This also applied to political contestation in various countries, especially in general elections, which carried the principle of one man, one vote. With social media, candidates with significant capital and political power had a great opportunity to dominate the thoughts and minds of the public. Messages displayed and distributed via social media on a massive scale significantly influenced the public's choices in general elections (Kurt & Karaduman, 2012).

Social movements, including those in the digital realm, such as #nazarpemilu, for change were not always successful. Many social movements had failed. This meant that social movements did not guarantee success. The most important thing was that there was an effort to change the situation in a better direction(Johansson & Scaramuzzino, 2023); (Gordon, 2015) (Kidd & McIntosh, 2016). The existence of hashtags on social media X/Twitter in various political movements showed the dynamics of digital politics and political movements in actual reality. Even though they did not always appear and move simultaneously, ideally, there was an engagement between social movements in the digital realm and actual reality (Palmieri-Branco, 2021); (Wahyuningroem et al., 2024).

Public Political Participation in Civilized Campaigns

Political hashtags on X/Twitter during the era of executive and legislative election campaigns were a form of public participation in the digital world. The more political hashtags there were, the more public participation increased. This indicates increased freedom of expression and opinion in a democratic country (Passini, 2017); (Introduction et al., 2019). In a healthy democracy, there should be no censorship, fear, or threats toward voices that differ from the government or state. The state was obliged to guarantee the public's freedom and independence to speak on political themes on social media and in

the real world because freedom and independence are the most fundamental values of a country that claims to be democratic (Sumartias et al., 2023).

However, what needed to be avoided and watched out for was the emergence of negative hashtags as part of a black campaign. Negative hashtags were based on lies that aimed to trip up or bring down political opponents (Schöne et al., 2021). Posts on social media that violated the principles of equality, justice, and human rights made the digital public space polluted and murky (Iskandar et al., 2023); (Setiawan et al., 2021); (Utomo, 2022). Of course, this condition was unsuitable for developing democracy in a democratic country. Therefore, the public had to have the courage to delete, block, and even speak out against negative political posts on social media (Fitriani et al., 2022). In this way, public participation in digital politics, especially in the context of civilized campaigns, had two tasks: posting civilized political themes on the one hand and opposing negative posts on the opposite side (Setyasih, 2021).

In Iskandar's (2017) research, it was found that the 2014 and 2019 Indonesian presidential election campaigns were marked by discourse battles that tended to be sarcastic. This condition significantly differed from what was observed before the 2024 presidential election (Iskandar et al., 2023). Hoaxes on social media and fake news on mass media circulated very massively. The ease of internet access and the use of gadgets accelerated the production and spread of hoaxes and fake news. The spread of hoaxes on social media and fake news on mass media caused social conflict and divided society. In contemporary political dynamics, political campaigns on social media, such as creating hashtags on social media, have become a place for public innovation in political campaigns for presidential and vice presidential elections. Social media contributed to moving people who were previously ignorant and apathetic towards politics to become politically literate (Zaiter et al., 2023; Ghani et al., 2020; Petrova et al., 2021). Political campaigns on social media grew along with the penetration of social media in various aspects of society's social and political life (Syahputra et al., 2021; Iskandar et al., 2017).

Campaigns in general elections had to be transparent and accountable so that the public could digest and assess their contents. Being open meant it was conveyed to the public transparently; there was nothing to hide. They had no hidden agenda. Being accountable meant the promise could be realized and accounted for when winning the contest (Dunning et al., 2019). With the principle of accountability, when elected, the public could collect on these promises based on the track record of campaign promises. With this open and accountable principle, the public could assess and measure the promises of each candidate. Campaigns had to be civilized to produce leaders with integrity (Arboleda & Manfredi, 2024); (Akbar, 2022); (Brady et al., 2006); (Aragonès et al., 2007).

Conclusion

Based on data from Drone-Emprit, the construction of #nazarpemilu on X/Twitter is 22 percent supporting Prabowo-Gibran and 78 percent supporting Anies-Muhaimin. No one supports the Ganjar-Mahfud MD pair. Thus, what hinders Prabowo-Gibran's steps to become president and vice president is 78 percent.

Practically, the presence of freedom of expression and opinion on social media, such as the #nazarpemilu X/Twitter construction, encouraged the creation of a democratic society both in digital and actual political reality. Social media encouraged the public to create social and moral movements such as #nazarpemilu.

Social media was a public forum to discuss, criticize, and even adjudicate political matters that lacked integrity, violated the Constitution, and were not based on morals.

It also supported those who had similar values and ideas. Social media was an effective, efficient, and appropriate vehicle for the public to become a balancing force against the voice and power of blind, silent, and co-opted state institutions

The existence of social media in various contemporary political movements was absolute. There was no empty political space that did not involve social media. The construction of #nazarpemilu spurred the emergence of a similar digital political reality in a different space, time, and momentum

For further research, the object and subject of research on hashtags on X/Twitter can be expanded. For example, by comparing with different or similar hashtags on other social media. Likewise, the approach and methods used can be different from those used in this study.

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