



Public Relations of Prabowo Subianto's Political Relations for Gen Z Voters in the 2024 Presidential Election

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ABSTRACT

Along with the development of information technology, currently the media is entering a new phase called new media, namely internet-based mass media that can be accessed online. Mass media is a means of publication, as well as a means of building reputation. The aim of this research is to analyze the role of Prabowo Subianto's political public relations for Gen Z voters in the 2024 presidential election. This research method uses descriptive qualitative methods with textual analysis of news related to the role of Prabowo's PPP for Gen Z voters. The results of this research show that the formation of a political image This new one is used to present Prabowo as a civil politician and position himself close to the community. This method is also used to attract the attention of young voters who will be the deciding group in the 2024 election.

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1. INTRODUCTION

A party or politician (party cadre) with a good ideology, vision, mission, and program will not be an option if it is not popular. This means that parties or politicians with ideal packaging without communication will not be optimal in obtaining votes (Putra & Raharjo, 2020). Often, the event of seeking popularity becomes the most interesting arena of battle in the general election of a country with a democratic system (Gaubatz, 1999; Mansfield & Snyder, 2007). Because that way, the party or its cadres are scrambling to get sympathy, and hope to become the candidate of choice for voters (voters) (Shafer, 1983).

Along with the development of information technology, currently the media is entering a new chapter called new media, namely internet-based mass media that can be accessed online. Mass media is a means of publication, as well as a means to build a reputation (Satira & Hidriani, 2021). Currently, the media is a reference for the public/audience to move and act, the public seems to be led by the media to behave in accordance with the existing issues. The reason is that if the media leads the public in a negative direction, this will have a less intended impact because it can affect the reputation of a political party (Harahap & Djufri, 2023). If the media is able to lead the opinion of the time in a positive direction, this will increase the reputation of political parties (Brader et al., 2013; Dalton, 2018). Therefore, it is very important for the public relations of a political party to establish a good relationship with the media (Strömbäck & Kioussis, 2011). Public relations activities in an institution, company, organization, or political party should aim to build a positive image and as a bridge to connect with the community.

Prabowo Subianto is one of the candidates for the 2024 election who is full of black records. In 1998, Prabowo was discharged from the military. He allegedly ordered the kidnapping of pro-democracy activists and dozens of them are still missing. He is also accused of human rights abuses against hundreds of civilians in East Timor, now known as East Timor. However, Prabowo denied all these allegations. The black record in question is a case of human rights violations (HAM) regarding the abduction of students in 1997-1998. The three times Prabowo Subianto passed the verification test for the presidential election contest seems to be enough to prove that Prabowo is clean from violations of the law, let alone gross human rights.

Prabowo is manoeuvring to build a political image ahead of the election with the aim of attracting the attention of young voters. Talking about this phenomenon, Louw in *The Media and Political Process* explained the concept of PR-ized politics. Simply put, Grunig, (2020) explained that political activities have been regulated by political PR (public relations) practitioners first (Grunig, 2020).

Uniquely, Prabowo rebranded his image ahead of the 2024 election. In the 2019 election, Prabowo built an image as a nationalist, charismatic, emotional, and assertive person. The image was changed to "friendly, cute, and cat lovers" ahead of the 2024 election.

In the context of Prabowo, uploads and tweets on social media have actually been regulated by Prabowo's political public relations. Furthermore, referring to Pardamean and Jajuli, (2023) (Pardamean & Jajuli, 2023), Prabowo's political public relations has carried out two political PR activities, namely media management and image management. They have set up Prabowo's personal social media to shape public opinion regarding the image Prabowo wants to form ahead of the 2024 election. Prabowo through his Political PR has been able to change the image of Prabowo as a figure who is difficult to approach, untouchable, and looks very difficult to communicate with. Lately, Prabowo has seemed very approachable, friendly, and comfortable being near media groups and content creators. Prabowo is trying to change his political style slowly so that he can be like other civilian politicians. Prabowo's efforts are one of his efforts to respond to the niche of Generation Z and new voters to win meaningful votes in the 2024 Presidential Election. In addition, this study has a new one, among which this research will prove whether the personal branding carried out by Prabowo Subianto with the hashtag "Gemoy" has succeeded in attracting generation Z as voters in the 2024 general election, or is it due to the influence of vice presidential candidate Gibran Rakabuming Raka as a vice presidential candidate as a representative of young people.

2. METHOD

Political Public Relations

According to Smith, (2020) Public relations is a special management function that helps build and maintain channels of communication, understanding, acceptance, and mutual cooperation between the organization and its public, involves managing problems or problems, helping management to stay informed and responsive to public opinion, defining and emphasizing management's responsibility to serve the public interest, helping management follow and take advantage of changes in a timely manner. effective, serves as an early warning system to help anticipate trends and uses sound and ethical research and communication as its primary tool (Smith, 2020).

Political public relations is the management process carried out by an actor for political purposes, through communication and action, seeking to influence and build, build, and maintain beneficial relationships and reputations with the public and key stakeholders to help support his mission and achieve his goals (Strömbäck & Kioussis, 2011).

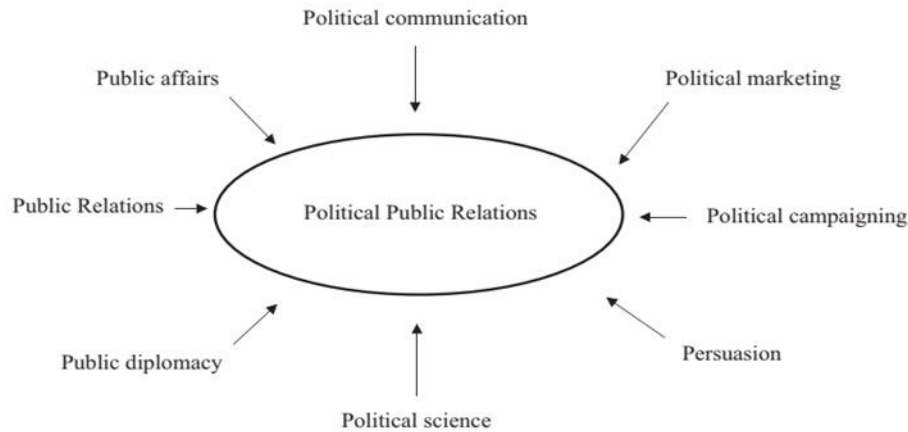


Figure 1. Political public relations

Digital Political Public Relations.

Politics has always been about reaching out and serving the community (Strömbäck & Kiouisis, 2011). Whether to reach out to the community to gain votes or support, or as a service to improve people's living standards, politics cannot function without society. The political system requires the people it serves, and the people it serves often use communication channels to access and assess the political system. Until now, Sweetser, (2019) noted how important Public Relations and communication strategies are in shaping public opinion and creating informed voters (Sweetser, 2019).

Digital political public relations, as a strategic approach in the field, provides opportunities for political actors to truly connect with citizens (Sanders, 2019). As communication channels evolve and digital tools emerge, the growth of digital political public relations presents a more efficient and even tailored opportunity for the political system and its players to connect with the public. Lee and Xu (2018) suspect that given the breadth of research showing the link between social media activity and election outcomes, political PR practitioners integrate digital tools as a key component of the overall strategy (Lee & Xu, 2018). This evolution takes digital political public relations far from the beginning where campaign strategists claim to avoid digital interactivity with constituents (Stromer-Galley, 2019) and are even accused of faking interactivity (Mitchell & Rosenstiel, 2012).

Media Massa Dan PR Politik

Gregory, (2020) mapped the core functions of PR and mapped them into political communication, a framework that can be used to place election campaigns. Jackson identified eight core functions of public relations (Gregory, 2020). First, public relations, which include the identification of key stakeholders and the maintenance of relationships through research-based communication. Second, symmetrical two-way communication, which includes the location of the win-win zone between the organization and its stakeholders based on the Grunigian paradigm (Demir et al., 2020). Third, hype which means getting attention through media relations or online public relations activities. Fourth, persuasion, in essence, the preparation and dissemination of messages to inform or change attitudes and behaviors. Fifth, relational, which includes the creation of a combination of communication and behavior intended to build relationships with key influencers. Sixth, reputation management, here is understood as brand image protection both as a long-term and short-term strategy. Seventh, relationships in the community, which includes participating in and structuring conversations about brands and encouraging the free flow of information into the public sphere. Eighth, community building, namely adopting a communitarian approach between the organization and the key public through open dialogue and inclusivity.

Research Method

The qualitative research approach is a research method that is generally used to understand social phenomena in depth. This approach aims to explore the meaning of the interpretation results

from the perspective of participants related to the focus of the research. This is different from the quantitative research approach that prioritizes statistical analysis measurement as the main ingredient of analysis. Qualitative research uses techniques such as interviews, observations, and document analysis to collect data that will be analyzed and conclusions drawn (Rifa'i, 2023).

This study uses a textual analysis method. The textual definition according to Nystrand, (2023) is a unit of language that is in the form of text and has abstract properties in the field of rows or discourses of sentences and words (Nystrand, 2023). Jones, (2024) argues that textual discourse analysis means analyzing texts that focus on internally being studied and looked at in form (cohesion) and meaning (coherence) (Jones, 2024).

The focus of this research is on the analysis of Political PR conducted by Prabowo in attracting the attention of young Gen z voters, in the digital era on Kompas.com online media. The reason why the researcher focused this study is to see how the role of political public relations in the two media in building a reputation for young voters (gen z). The sample criteria in this study are:

- 1) News about Political PR carried out by Prabowo in attracting the attention of young Gen z voters in the 2024 election contest. Prioritizing news about Prabowo Subianto's personal branding in building a reputation for young voters (Gen z).
- 2) The publication period on the Kompas.com website published is December 2023-February 2024, because this period is the campaign period in the 2024 election.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Textual analysis is generally defined as a method that includes all analyses of the content of the text, but on the other hand, content analysis is also used to describe a specific analytical approach. According to Holsti, the content analysis method is a technique to draw conclusions by identifying various specific characteristics of a message objectively, systematically, and generalistically. Objective means according to rules or procedures that if implemented by other people (researchers) can produce similar conclusions. Systematic means that the determination of content or categories is carried out according to rules that are applied consistently, including ensuring selection and coding data so that it is not biased.

The media political communication carried out by Prabowo Subianto is interesting to study from the perspective of Political Public Relations to find the construction or formation of images that appear in political news in the mass media, especially online media. The image that is present and appears in online media will be a reference material for attracting millennials and Gen Z in making choices when participating in the 2024 Presidential Election and also political participation for the next democratic party.

In the context of modern politics, mass media is not only an integral part of politics, but also has a central position in politics (Dunaway and Graber, 2022). A very prominent aspect regarding mass media related to politics is the function of mass media in political life. Dunaway and Graber, (2022) who identify three main functions of the media: (a) the surveillance of the environment. (b) the correlation of the parts of society in responding to the environment, and (c) the transmission of the social heritage from one generation to the next (Dunaway & Graber, 2022).

The presidential candidate pair number 02 Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming campaigned by focusing public attention on the figure of Prabowo. The campaign strategy chosen is to echo the jargon "gemoy" which means adorable. Prabowo's movement dancing on stage generated public sentiment that Prabowo's dance style was adorable. Because the public's attention to this jargon is quite large, Prabowo continues to use this dancing strategy repeatedly (Jonathan et al., 2024).



Figure 1. Spokesperson for the National Campaign Team (TKN) for the presidential and vice presidential candidate number 2, Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Dedek Prayudi at Fanta Headquarters, Menteng, Central Jakarta, Wednesday (29/11/2023). Source: (KOMPAS.com/NIRMALA MAULANA A)

Based on the image above, it shows that the background of the billboard above is a picture of Prabowo-Gibran with the words "young voters". This shows that the largest segment of voters who will be targeted by the number 2 pair is young voters. Color is considered to have the ability to calm the mind and improve concentration. The blue color can also give a professional impression to anyone who wears it.

Citing Very Well Mind, psychologically, color is believed to be a symbol of certain conditions such as a person's mood, emotions, and behavior (Mansur & Andalas, 2019). In accordance with Prabowo's assumption, the color blue does remind anyone of a feeling of calm and peace. Blue is also seen as a sign of stability. However, because it is liked by many people, blue is also considered a color that is not threatening and seems conservative and traditional.

Based on the analysis of the timing of the issuance of the "Gemoy" symbol on the news in kompas.com on November 29, 2023, it shows that this was deliberately made a day after the announcement of the initial period of the 2024 Presidential Election campaign, showing that this is the readiness of Prabowo Subianto's Political Public Relations team. This is important as a reminder that the word gemoy must be read often on social media. The reason is that not a few netizens use it. But we are often confused about the meaning because it is not in the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language or KBBI. Actually, gemoy is a pun on gemas by changing the suffix -y to -s to make it seem more cute. The pronunciation usually uses a nervous and spoiled tone as a form of expression of the word. In KBBI, the word gemas is an adjective or adverb. The function of this word is to describe or explain a condition. For example, when showing feelings of like, irritation and love. But in general, the word gemoy is used to describe something cute and adorable. This can be seen from babies, toys, animals, or other things. So the context can be quite broad.

Spokesperson for the National Campaign Team (TKN) for the presidential and vice presidential candidate number 2, Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Dedek Prayudi, said that the "gemoy" political narrative is used to attract millennials and Gen Z. This is based on data (Katadata, 2023) showing that the younger generation is the majority who dominate the number of voters, with the KPU recording that 55% or around 114 million voters come from the millennial generation and generation Z. A number that is quite fantastic to create a situation where The votes of young people are the main determinant in elections or are too big to ignore. Therefore, the perspective of young people is very important to be raised in political campaigns, 59.8% of young people have an interest in the world of politics and 87.2% of them stated that voting during elections is a form of political participation that young people do (Jonathan et al., 2024).

Dedek divides the political narrative into two, sensation and essence. The "gemoy" narrative, according to him, is included in the sensation. "This sensation is how to make people turn their heads.

After people turn their heads, we talk about *asta cita* (Prabowo-Gibran program), the politics of unity. This *gemoy* turns out to be catchy enough to make millennials and Gen Z glance and turn their heads," said Dedek at Fanta Headquarters, Menteng, Central Jakarta, Wednesday (29/11/2023). Here it shows that Prabowo's Political Public Relations team is trying to change the image that used to be attached to the figure of Prabowo Subianto with the term short axis to a person who displays a friendlier, approachable, and friendly attitude with media groups. The formation of this new political image is used to present Prabowo as a civilian politician and place himself close to the public. This method is also used to attract the attention of young voters who are the decisive group in the 2024 election. By being active on social media, Prabowo is trying to take an approach that will later generate sympathy and support from the millennial generation and generation Z.

The "Gemoy" which refers to the meaning of gem is often voiced by Prabowo's supporters. "We were not the ones who came up with the idea of "Gemoy", were we? This grows organically from the bottom and the interest of young people," said Roslan when met after inaugurating the Prabowo-Gibran Secretariat (TKN) headquarters in Menteng, Central Jakarta, Sunday (26/11/2023). Roslan said that the attention of young people starts from something that attracts their hearts. After that, young people will find out more and more deeply about Prabowo-Gibran's vision and mission.

Syntactic structure looks at the arrangement or sequence of facts such as the title, background of the event, lead (opening alenia) and closing. In the title, PSSI conveyed the political narrative "gemoy. The emphasis lies in the phrase "gemoy", the image of gemoy that is attached to Prabowo Subianto as the Minister of Defense and chairman of the Great Indonesia Movement (Gerindra) party is widely talked about by everyone, especially on social media. On Instagram, for example, the hashtag #prabowogemoy itself already has five thousand posts and had become a trending topic on X. Prabowo's witty characteristic character is then associated with the diction Gemoy as another meaning of *gador*, is a term that is indeed used to be attractive, the public is now considered to no longer like political figures who pretend and maintain a rigid and normative image, but those that are humorous and have personal appeal (Sihabudin et al., 2023). In addition, it does not necessarily reduce concentration for the vision and mission of Presidential Candidate Prabowo Subianto. Prabowo Subianto has successfully implemented various concepts of branding, positioning, and framing theory to strengthen his political image.

Spokesperson for the National Campaign Team (TKN) for the presidential and vice presidential candidate number 2, Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Dedek Prayudi, said that the "gemoy" political narrative is used to attract millennials and Gen Z. Dedek divides the political narrative into two, sensation and essence. The "gemoy" narrative, according to him, is included in the sensation. "This sensation is how to make people turn their heads. After people turn their heads, we talk about *asta cita* (Prabowo-Gibran program), the politics of unity. This *gemoy* turns out to be catchy enough to make millennials and Gen Z glance at and turn their heads to generation Z.

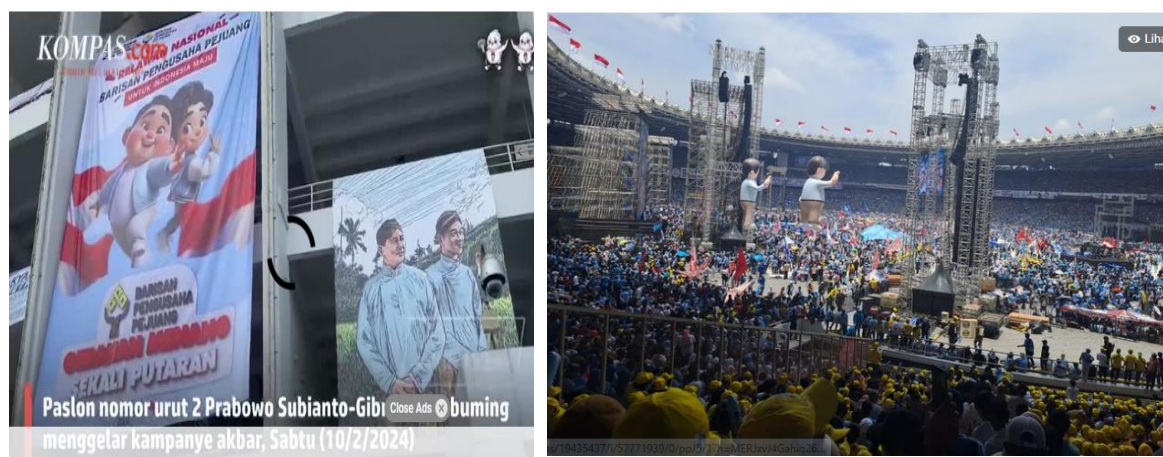


Figure 2. Implementation of the Grand Campaign. Source : Kompas.com

"Gemoy", the name of presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto, has become something that attracts the interest of the public, especially young people who love gemoy ducks. This was quite successful to attract public sympathy to see this pair of presidential-vice presidential candidates. In fact, now a Fotober2.Ai platform has emerged, which takes advantage of advances in Artificial Intelligence technology that allows people to collaborate with AI "Gemoy" Prabowo-Gibran.

Based on the analysis of the Thematic Structure, including details, sentence form, relationships between sentences, and pronouns. It shows that Prabowo Subianto's Political Public Relations team is trying to adjust to the current development trend. Where young people gen z are the technology generation. So they are no strangers to AI. Data shows that 1 in 5 Gen Z people use AI to facilitate communication, whether it is compiling emails or chat responses, and 23 percent use AI as a virtual assistant to make their daily lives easier.

Based on the analysis of the images and symbols in the image above, it shows that the Political Public Relations carried out by Prabowo Subianto's team by installing an image/model of Prabowo Subianto edited using AI to create a "Gemoy" symbol that aims to attract the interest of Gen Z. In the context of branding theory, Prabowo not only tries to build a new identity, but also recognizes changes in voter dynamics, especially the dominance of Generation Z and Millennials. This is not without reason, according to the Chairman of the General Election Commission (KPU), the 2024 election will be dominated by generation Z and Millennials. Both generations do seem more relaxed than the previous generation. Therefore, Prabowo must position himself to this generation to always be remembered. In addition, this is in line with Kapferer's political branding theory which says that if characteristics are already attached to the community, then when the name of the figure, brand, or party is mentioned, the public remembers the figure with its characteristics (Sihabudin et al., 2023).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion above, it can be concluded that the role of Political Public Relations carried out by Prabowo Subianto's team by targeting Gen Z voters has been very successful. This can be seen from the way they arrange words, symbols and contests on the news on the kompas.com. The image that is present and appears in online media will be a reference material for attracting millennials and Gen Z in making choices when participating in the 2024 Presidential Election. The campaign strategy chosen is to echo the jargon "gemoy" which means adorable. Prabowo's movement dancing on stage generated public sentiment that Prabowo's dance style was adorable. Here it shows that Prabowo's Political Public Relations team is trying to change the image that used to be attached to the figure of Prabowo Subianto with the term short axis to a person who displays a friendlier, approachable, and friendly attitude with media groups. The formation of this new political image is used to present Prabowo as a civilian politician and place himself close to the public. This method is also used to attract the attention of young voters who are the decisive group in the 2024 election. The limitation of this study is that this study only uses samples sourced from kompas.com media. So that for future research, it is necessary to develop it again to other media such as social media and other online media. In addition, this research is only limited to textual analysis so it is necessary to develop sound analysis, mimics, and others.

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