Political Branding Analysis of @Gibran_Rakabuming Tiktok Accounts during the 2024 Presidential Election Campaign

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ABSTRACT

Social media, especially TikTok, is a platform that is currently used for political campaigns. Ahead of the 2024 Presidential Election, talks about presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates, especially Gibran, are increasingly being discussed in various media. The many pros and cons that have arisen among the public regarding the candidacy of Gibran Rakabuming Raka as a vice presidential candidate have become the culmination of the polemic. This study aims to analyze the political branding of TikTok @gibran_rakabuming accounts during the 2024 presidential election campaign. This research method uses a descriptive qualitative method and is analyzed using theories from Gelder and Sonies which consists of three indicators, namely, appearance, personality, and key political messages. Case studies on TikTok accounts @gibran_rakabuming were taken during the period from November 28, 2023, to February 10, 2024. The results of the research show that Gibran has successfully used the TikTok platform to build an image as a vice presidential candidate who is ready to bring positive changes to Indonesia with a relevant, close to the community, and adaptive to technological developments and the needs of the community, especially the younger generation. The use of social media platforms such as TikTok is also a powerful strategy to reach young people and make them candidates who not only talk about the future but also invite the public to work together to realize a more advanced Indonesia.

Introduction

The significant increase in internet use during the pandemic to date has had a considerable impact on various aspects of life. Based on data presented by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), in 2024 internet users have reached 221,563,479 people out of a total population of 278,696,200 people in 2023. The Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association also mentioned that the Indonesian population connected to the Internet in 2023 reached 78.19%. This indicates a significant increase in the positive trend graph of internet user penetration in Indonesia. The internet

also has a very important role in obtaining or disseminating information. Over time, the role of the Internet is not only a source of information but has developed into a very powerful platform to lead or influence public opinion. An increasingly wide internet connection has opened the door to opportunities, including in the political realm. According to (Festy Rahma Hidayati, 2021) This digital transformation has brought new political opportunities. In the world of politics, elections are a crucial moment where candidates compete to win public support to achieve the desired position. The 2024 election in Indonesia is now in the main spotlight, where national political dynamics will play an important role in determining the country's future direction. The election of the president and vice president is one of the most important aspects of the election. In obtaining election vote support, candidates not only rely on political platforms and political parties but also through one of the strategies that are increasingly gaining public attention, namely through social media by building political branding to build and manage the image of politicians in the eyes of the public.

In the world of politics, branding is the most important thing to minimize the public's bad stigma regarding the world of politics political branding is carried out with the aim of building, managing, and maintaining the image of a politician or political party in the eyes of the public. (Dharma Putra, Armawati Sufa, & Ratnasari, 2022). In the previous election, many politicians actively communicated and built political branding through social media.

As a media of change that continues to develop, social media has a very important role, especially for politicians who can later foster a culture of participation, and aspirations, and establish and maintain interaction relationships with the audience without any limitations of space or time. (Atiek Nur Hidayati, 2024). The existence of social media also makes political campaigns more open and easily accessible. One of the platforms that is currently popular is TikTok. TikTok has become the center of attention, especially for millennials, and has a considerable influence in shaping cultural trends and public opinion. According to data from We Are Social, in October 2023, there were 106.51 million TikTok users and of this number, Indonesia is the 2nd country with the most TikTok users in the world. When compared to last year in the same period, the number of TikTok users increased by around 28.8% or 272 million users. So in the political context, TikTok can be an effective tool to build a positive image of politicians, expand the reach of campaigns, and build political communication through posted content that can later increase political participation among the younger generation.

The 2024 General Election in Indonesia is an opportunity to re-strengthen the foundation of democracy, which has recently declined. According to the Democracy Index published by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), Indonesia has been included in the category of less-than-optimal democracy for the past 13 years. Several political and legal events are often a challenge to the progress of democracy in Indonesia. One example is the Constitutional Court's decision regarding the requirements for presidential and vice presidential candidacy in October 2023, which received a variety of responses from various circles of society. Many figures from various backgrounds, such as academics,

religious figures, artists, and activists, expressed concern and disappointment over the decision, which was considered to prolong the era of dynastic politics in Indonesia. The results of the poll from Kompas Research and Development also reflect the public's view of political progress which is considered to be related to dynastic political practices that are less popular in the context of electoral democracy.

The many pros and cons that have arisen among the public regarding the candidacy of Gibran Rakabuming Raka as a vice presidential candidate have become the culmination of the polemic. With the change in the minimum age limit for presidential and vice presidential candidates contained in Article 169 letter q of the Election Law, it states "at least 40 (forty) years old or have/is occupying a position elected through general elections, including the election of regional heads". This decision is considered to provide opportunities or open opportunities for Gibran to be further involved in the world of politics. In addition, the Constitutional Court (MK) Decision rejecting all applications for testing Article 169 letter q is also an additional factor that affects this situation. Based on information gathered from the MKRI which decided to reject all applications for testing against Article 169 letter q of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, as interpreted in the Constitutional Court Decision Number 90/PUU-XXI/2023. Reporting from Kompas.id, various negative public reactions such as the emergence of opinions that assessed that material testing efforts were indeed carried out to provide a political path for Gibran as a vice presidential candidate and this was considered by the public as dynastic politics. Therefore, this is interesting to research and it is necessary to know the political branding of Gibran Rakabuming Raka as the 2024 vice presidential candidate through Tiktok social media.

The emergence of new media with several available platforms, such as social media, blogs, podcasts, and video sharing, can be used by individuals to build, strengthen, and manage their image online. Some of these platforms are a platform for individuals to express their personality, interests, and expertise through relevant, creative, and consistent content with continuous interaction with followers to strengthen their self-image. According to (Yoneji Masuda 1981) in (Greetings, 2020) There are 3 advantages of new media, namely the nature of information is non-transferable, in this media the information is not consumable, which means that the information can be used repeatedly by different users, the nature of information is accumulative, which means that this information is relevant and various needs can access the information.

Political branding by politicians is a strategy used to build, manage, and promote political images and identities clearly and consistently to the public. According to (Abidin & Cindoswari, 2019) (Arnanda, 2023), branding can also be used by politicians to change and maintain their image and to gain public support. This includes a variety of efforts to highlight their values, vision, and mission, as well as something that sets them apart from their political opponents. This political brand is a concept that appears in the minds of individuals related to political products such as political parties, political organizations, or political candidates in the context of elections (Mulyani, 2021)Political branding also includes efforts to build trust and credibility to maintain a positive image. This often

involves a quick response to negative issues, to show transparency and commitment to addressing existing issues, because political branding is an approach similar to consumer branding which is used to form a political reputation/identity.

Previous research that examined Prabowo-Gibran's political branding in the 2024 election on their Tiktok content, focused on highlighting the visual aspects and branding strategy of the Prabowo-Gibran pair in general which was analyzed using Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic theory. (Fitri, Ichsan, & Yunita, 2024). Meanwhile, research by (Fatikha, 2023) Who used a comparative analysis of political branding by Ganjar Pranowo and Anies Baswedan in building political communication ahead of the 2024 Presidential Election through their Twitter account shows that the political branding they carry out is massive and intensive. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct more specific research with different theories to examine the political branding built by Gibran Rakabuming Raka as a 2024 vice presidential candidate amid the dynastic political controversy that surrounds him.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a type of descriptive research, by Creswell's view which means that qualitative research is a method used to understand problems involving humans and the social environment, to produce a comprehensive picture which is then explained in detailed words and supported by data obtained from accurate information sources. (Stocks, 2016). The main focus of this study is to analyze the content posted by Gibran Rakabuming on his TikTok account by using theories from Gelder and Sonies to look at appearances, personalities, and key messages to find out the political branding that is built. The data collection techniques used in this study include observation, documentation, and literature studies. Observations were carried out online by observing interactions with the public and analyzing content related to political branding from TikTok @gibran_rakabuming accounts posted during the 2024 presidential election campaign or from November 28, 2023, to February 10, 2024. The types of data or documents that can be used in this study include photos, audio, visuals, and audio-visuals by collecting data from content posted during the campaign period by sorting out content that is related to political branding. The literature study conducted refers to references, journals, and various sources that discuss political branding in the context of politics or general elections through social media. This study uses data reduction data analysis techniques, data presentation, and conclusions drawn. According to Miles & Huberman, this data analysis technique consists of three categories, namely, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. (Noor, 2011). The analysis in this study uses source triangulation by comparing and evaluating the data obtained from each source which is then used to search and dig deeper into the validity of the information obtained.

Results and Discussion

Political Branding Gibran Rakabuming Raka

Gibran Rakabuming Raka's political branding in the 2024 Presidential Election campaign shows a very structured approach. Through three indicators, namely, a fresh and modern appearance, a personality that is close to the community, and a key political message oriented to the welfare of the community, Gibran has succeeded in building his image as a vice presidential candidate who is ready to lead and provide positive changes for Indonesia. The use of social media platforms such as TikTok is also a powerful strategy to reach young people and make them candidates who not only talk about the future but also invite the public to work together to realize a more advanced Indonesia.

Appearance Indicators

This appearance indicator can be seen from the aspects of clothing, campaign attributes, hand gestures, hairstyles, and symbols used in the campaign. In TikTok content posted in January, Gibran often wears clothes that are not too formal such as long/short sleeve shirts, peci, and contemporary denim jackets with motifs of images and writing. This casual outfit gives the impression of being close to the people and does not seem rigid, especially for young voters or from the lower middle class. On several occasions, Gibran also wore batik clothes and traditional clothes that reflected Indonesia's cultural identity. This reinforces the impression that Gibran is part of Indonesian society, not just an elite politician. In several videos, Gibran wears a piece in his campaign that gives a positive impression, ranging from simplicity, authority as a vice presidential candidate, the relationship with religious values, and the local culture of Muslims. In each campaign, Gibran often wears shoes from the local brand Aerostreet. Wearing shoes from domestic brands is interpreted as a strategic effort to build closeness with the community, especially millennials, and also shows that Gibran supports local brands and invites the public to appreciate and use local products more. In addition to the style of clothing, Gibran also used several campaign slogans such as posters, banners, campaign t-shirts, and jackets that read "SAMSUL". Gibran's campaign poster or banner is one of the visual elements that are most often seen in his TikTok account uploads. This poster generally displays Gibran's image with a modern and simple graphic design. This poster often contains slogans or taglines that are easy to remember, such as the use of the tagline "Gibran Mendengar" at the Gibran Hearing Tour Indonesia Meet the Community event which was shared through his Tiktok post. This poster or banner is also an important tool to introduce the image and vision of the mission to the public. The use of technology for the campaign is such as the use of a Videotron that displays Prabowo-Gibran's 3D animation with visual effects in the form of animation coming out of the screen and highlighting the number 2 which is their serial number. 3D campaigns with Videotron are very different compared to traditional advertising that only uses billboards. This can interpret Gibran as a figure who is adaptive to the development of modern communication technology and also provides a modern touch that can attract the attention of the audience, especially young people. Gibran's hairstyle is also an important part of his appearance in the campaign. In his TikTok posts, Gibran is often seen with a hairstyle that seems neat and modern. Gibran

also had time to share his activities through a TikTok livestream entitled "Sua-karta" on January 7, 2024. This show lasted for approximately 1 hour and received a positive response with a total of 2.8 million likes. On the same day, Gibran shared a post while getting a haircut with the title "Cut Your Hair Before Watching the Presidential Debate". This post stole a lot of attention from netizens with a total of 3.7 million views, 51.6 thousand likes, and 1.5 thousand comments. T-shirts with Gibran's logo or campaign slogan are also attributes that are often used in his TikTok content. This t-shirt is designed using the party logo, serial number, passport name, and dominating colors. In addition, hand gestures play an important role in the way messages are conveyed to the public. In his Tiktok uploads, Gibran often uses natural and expressive hand gestures that are impressive with movements that show emphasis on certain words. The two-finger hand gesture (V sign) has a meaning that refers to the number 2 which is the number of the Prabowo-Gibran candidate in the presidential election. Campaign t-shirts are not only used by Gibran but also by volunteers or supporters. In the TikTok post, this t-shirt is an easily recognizable symbol of support and can build a sense of togetherness among Prabowo-Gibran supporters. In addition to physical attributes, Gibran often highlighted the dominant colors associated with his party during the campaign period. Light blue often called sky blue is used in campaigns that contain the meaning of coolness and tranquility. The consistent use of symbols or colors also aims to strengthen the image of political identity and party affiliation among voters. So overall, the performance indicators used by Gibran in the 2024 presidential election campaign posted on his TikTok account are very strategic and designed to increase visibility to build an emotional connection with voters, especially the younger generation who are active on social media. By using various elements such as clothing, campaign attributes, hand gestures, hairstyles, and symbols used in the campaign, Gibran tries to present a fresh, modern, and easily accepted image by the public so that it can attract wide support among the public.

Personality Indicators

The personality of a political candidate can be observed from various elements including personality. Gibran's personality includes his speaking style, behavior, body language, relationships with society, persuasion skills, and a career track record that has been built. Starting from his speaking style, Gibran shows a simple but clear speaking style in every one of his TikTok uploads. Gibran often speaks in language that is easy to understand, does not seem formal, more relaxed, and familiar which is tailored to the young audience who is the main target in social media. This also reflects his image as a vice presidential candidate who is "down to earth" and does not seem far from the community. As seen in his Tiktok upload with the title "hi kidz hai" which shows the use of millennial language. In the video, Gibran uses a light greeting "Hi kidz" which creates a familiar and relaxed impression as if he is talking to his peers, not with voters or a formal audience. This greeting also shows that Gibran wants to be closer to young people by eliminating the distance between himself as a vice presidential candidate and the community. In his TikTok post, Gibran showed his behavior as a confident and not awkward figure in front of the camera. Gibran often shows a smile and cheerful

expression to the audience. His body movements also tend to be simple but full of meaning, such as raising two fingers (symbol number 2) or giving an open hand gesture and adding to the impression of himself as an open vice presidential candidate. Building close relationships with the community is also one of the characteristics of his campaign. In his Tiktok uploads, Gibran often interacts directly with the community, starting by talking about the importance of change and the vision and mission that will be implemented. As seen in his TikTok post which shows the atmosphere of a visit to Trusmi Batik MSMEs in Cirebon, fun futsal sarung with samples, playing football with the Tulehu community, fun match games fest, Sunmori, visits to the digital marketing marketplace social bread, visits to the Kendal area, visits to Wonogiri, Papua, Bali, East Java, Central Java, and West Java. Visits to various regions, participation in social activities, and support for MSMEs and the local economy help strengthen Gibran's image as an innovative figure, socially concerned, caring for MSMEs, and able to reach various levels of local society and the younger generation. In addition, Gibran's persuasion ability is also reflected in the delivery of campaign messages. In his TikTok upload, Gibran not only talks about his vision and mission but also tries to touch the emotions of his audience by using language that is inviting, not coercive, and often conveys his messages in the form of questions or motivational invitations. For example, by using phrases such as "Let's make changes together!" or "We are the golden generation that built a Golden Indonesia". Gibran not only conveyed the vision and mission to be achieved but also invited the audience to be involved in the change process. Gibran's career track record is also one of the important parts of shaping his personality in the eyes of the public. As the Mayor of Solo, Gibran already has experience in government and city development which he is often proud of in his TikTok account uploads. Such as uploading a video titled "What Do They Think About Solo" with the concept of an interview video with visitors which essentially discusses positive changes in the city of Solo. Gibran also shared a video related to the Solo Safari tour which is not only a tourist destination, but also a catalyst for economic movement for the local community. In addition, as the Mayor of Solo, Gibran also emphasized Solo as a tolerant city that guarantees the freedom and security of every religious community in every celebration. This shows that Gibran can lead and manage a region. This experience interprets Gibran not only as a presidential son but as a leader who has been tested at the local level and is ready to take on greater responsibilities at the national level.

Political Key Message Indicators

The key political message indicators include political promises, political ideas, aspirations, hopes, and political ideologies. In his TikTok uploads, Gibran often conveys political promises that focus more on improving the welfare of the Indonesian people. The promises mentioned in his TikTok upload include free lunch programs, millennial start-up credits, Islamic boarding school endowments, healthy child cards, more prosperous ASN, and virilization for mining, agriculture, and fisheries commodities. In addition, in several videos uploaded Gibran often conveys his vision, namely Golden Indonesia. This vision emphasizes the importance of human resource development from

an early age. Gibran's political vision reflects the ideals for a more advanced and prosperous Indonesia by providing opportunities for children as the next generation through better access in the fields of Education, Health, and creative empowerment. Then the political ideas highlighted are oriented toward a government that is transparent, efficient, and free from corruption. The aspiration is to jointly build Indonesia by providing equal opportunities for all levels of society, both in big cities and in remote areas. Gibran's main hope, which is often conveyed in TikTok uploads, is to realize a developed and prosperous golden Indonesia. Gibran invited voters to unite in achieving their goals and believe that positive change can be achieved through cooperation between the government and the community. In various uploads, Gibran uses narratives that invite hope and optimism, such as saying "Indonesia can be better". In the context of political ideology, Gibran carries nationalism that is oriented towards the welfare of the community. This political ideology is reflected in many of his TikTok uploads, where Gibran voices the importance of sustainable economic development and the empowerment of domestic sectors. Gibran is trying to introduce himself as a vice presidential candidate who can bring real change to Indonesia.

Conclusion

This research reveals that Gibran Rakabuming Raka's political branding in the 2024 Presidential Election campaign has succeeded in creating a positive, modern, and close image to the community, especially the younger generation through the use of the social media platform TikTok. Gibran uses three main indicators in building his political image, namely appearance indicators, personality, and key political messages.

In terms of appearance, Gibran uses casual clothes such as shirts, peci, and denim jackets that reflect his closeness to the community. The use of consistent campaign attributes such as t-shirts, and posters, and the use of campaign technology in the form of 3D videotrons further strengthens the impression that Gibran is a candidate who is adaptive to the times. In terms of personality, Gibran shows himself as a committed figure. His relaxed and easy-to-understand speaking style and interaction with the public shared through his uploads on TikTok give the impression that Gibran is close to young voters. His visits to various regions also strengthened Gibran's image as a caring and innovative vice presidential candidate, especially in supporting MSMEs and regional development. The key political message conveyed by Gibran focuses on the welfare of the community with promises such as free lunch programs, assistance for millennial start-ups, and support for Islamic boarding schools. The vision of "Golden Indonesia" also emphasized the importance of developing clean and transparent human resources and government with the hope of realizing a more advanced and prosperous Indonesia.
Overall, Gibran has succeeded in building an image as a vice presidential candidate who is ready to bring positive changes to Indonesia with a relevant, close to the community, and adaptive to technological developments and the needs of the community, especially the younger generation.

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