Political Participation of Supporters of Candidate 01 in the 2024 Presidential Election: A Study of the "@aniesbubble" Account

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ABSTRACT

In today's era, media has transformed into a primary aspect inseparable from human life, impacting not only entertainment and private life but also political aspects. Specifically, in the political realm, especially during elections, social media serves as a platform for individuals to express support in the contestation for power. Social media not only provides a space for individuals to express support but also acts as a tool for mass mobilization by creatively marketing political participation to the public during elections. In the 2024 Presidential Election, there is an intriguing phenomenon regarding the political participation of supporters of candidate 01, utilizing digital media and shared hobbies as a campaign tool to encourage individual participation. This study aims to delve into the phenomenon of voluntary political participation in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election, initiated by the Aniesbubble account, which leverages the Twitter platform to promote and endorse political participation by supporting a specific candidate. The method used is a qualitative research approach, aiming to explore and describe a phenomenon. Data was collected through interviews and social media content analysis. Respondents sampled in this study were individuals involved in voluntary political participation through the Aniesbubble account. The results show that Aniesbubble's political participation encouraged massive political participation from the public, particularly Gen Z, in the 2024 presidential election.

Keywords: Social Media, Political Participation, 2024 Election, Gen-Z

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the many post-colonial countries that has transformed into a democratic state. Historically, Indonesia's government system once experienced a monarchical governance style that was fragmented across different regions, with full power held by the king, eventually becoming a democratic state post-independence, where power is under the sovereignty of the people. The implementation of this democratic system certainly marked a turning point for the Indonesian people to determine the nation's direction according to the interests of the people, as sovereignty lies in the hands of the people. As explained by Soemeri et al., democracy is a government-owned by the people where the highest power (sovereignty) is placed in the hands of the people and exercised by the people and/or by individuals elected by the people based on democratic election principles for the benefit of the people (Soemeri et al., 2011). Through elections, all parties can be accommodated in what they want and aspire to, resulting in a better life (Sentosa & Agustina, 2021).

Elections represent the implementation of a democratic system in a country, a process that accommodates the democratic circulation of power by providing space for the people to determine their own choices. As time progresses, influenced by globalization, advancements in technology facilitate modern human activities, including the emergence of media. In today's era, media has transformed into a primary aspect that cannot be separated from human life, impacting not only entertainment and private life but also extending to the political aspect. One example of the connection between media and politics can be found in electoral activities such as elections. Elections acknowledge a contestation between individuals to gain power based on the people's will. This contestation provides space for the media to participate in the electoral process. In gathering votes, these individuals must be able to market ideas and personal branding to be known by the constituents.

The ease of information sharing offered by the media becomes an instrument and commodity to achieve these goals. In the modern era, social media activities become a central aspect of the electoral contestation process, particularly in the campaign stage. Studies in the United States show that social media is an effective campaign tool (Anshari, 2013). Social media plays a role in political communication. The influence of social media in the political world, particularly in political communication, especially in election campaigns (Chavez, 2012; Riaz, 2010; Stietglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2012). Campaigns become an arena for social media to contest in marketing candidates to win votes. Various previous studies that serve as the scientific foundation for writing this article include "Social Media and Political Culture of the Millennial Generation in the 2018 Elections" by Kokom Komariah & Dede Sri Kartini (2019), which discusses the impact of social media political communication on the millennial generation during the 2018 Regional Elections in Ciamis.

This study examines how mass political communication significantly influences the political preferences of millennials in Ciamis. "Creative Campaigns of Presidential Candidate Anies Baswedan on TikTok Social Media (2024)" by Nazma & Jamiati (2024), which explains the phenomenon of political marketing by presidential candidate Anies Baswedan through TikTok. The study highlights the use of creative and interactive strategies to emphasize the candidate's image, ideas, vision, and mission. "The Use of Social Media as a Campaign Tool

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and Digital Participation in the 2020 Depok City Regional Election" by Khalyubi et al. (2021), presents the digital campaign political participation by campaign team supporters in the Depok City Regional Election from the perspective of political participation. Farid (2023) shows that the use of social media in political campaigns can increase political participation by providing an easily accessible and interactive platform for individuals to engage in political discussions. Social media also allows political supporters to share information and disseminate campaign messages quickly.

The study by Hasibuan et al. (2024) indicates that the use of social media in political campaigns can also influence public perception of political issues and candidates. Social media provides a space for citizens to share opinions and views, which can affect public opinion and attitudes towards political issues. This paper will focus on the context of using social media in support of the 2024 presidential election candidate 01, driven by the phenomenon of public support not affiliated with the campaign team but actively participating voluntarily through social media activities. This represents a novelty and uniqueness in political marketing, where civil society support using social media is typically conducted by the candidate's campaign team.

METHODOLOGY

This research design employs a qualitative research approach aimed at exploring meanings to describe a phenomenon. The qualitative approach involves methods to explore and understand the meanings individuals or groups attribute to social or human issues (Creswell, 2016). According to Sugiyono (2018:213), qualitative research methods are based on the philosophy used to investigate scientific conditions (experiments) where the researcher is the instrument, and data collection and analysis techniques are qualitative, emphasizing meaning. The methods used in this research include interviews, social media content analysis, and literature review. The respondents sampled in this study are individuals involved in voluntary political participation through the Aniesbubble account. The interview instrument is designed to obtain primary data on the reasons and background of the formation of Aniesbubble and its relation to political perspectives, as well as literature analysis to describe the phenomenon based on scientific studies as a scholarly foundation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Political Participation Political participation can be defined as involvement in various political roles or activities in the country. In English, "participation" means taking part or taking part. Therefore, political participation refers to participation in state political activities or activities (Manik and Suharno, 2019). Political participation can generally be defined as the involvement of individuals or groups in political life, by electing state leaders and directly or indirectly influencing public policy. These activities include actions such as voting in elections, attending public meetings, becoming a member of a party or interest group, contacting government officials or members of parliament, etc. Therefore, in democratic countries, more participation from the people is usually considered better. In practice, a high level of participation shows that citizens follow and understand political issues and want to be involved in these activities.

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On the other hand, low participation is generally considered a bad indication, because this could mean that many citizens do not pay attention to state problems (Redjo and Kartini, 2021). In general, the typology of participation as an activity is divided into 3 parts, namely (Rahman, 2007): 1) Active participation, namely participation that is oriented towards input and output processes. 2) Passive participation, namely participation that is output-oriented only, in the sense of only obeying government regulations, accepting and implementing every government decision. 3) The white group (abstention) or the apathetic group, because they consider the existing political system to be deviating from what they aspire to. Thus, it can be said that active political participation orientation is related to political input and output, while passive participation is only related to output. Apart from that, there is also the view that society considers the existing political system to deviate from their expectations, so it tends towards apathetic political participation.

Social Media in Electoral Political Contestation

Social media has become the dominant platform for communication and interaction in this digital era. Social media has become an important tool in modern political campaigns. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube provide opportunities for political parties and candidates to communicate directly with voters without traditional media intermediaries. This not only changed the way campaigns were run but also expanded the reach and impact of political campaigns. With the ability to disseminate information quickly and widely, social media plays an important role in shaping public opinion, including in a political context.

The influence of social media on people's political choices is an interesting phenomenon, especially in seeing how information, political campaigns and interactions on social media influence people's political preferences. The use of social media is not only a tool to convey messages, but can also be used to mobilize voters. The use of social media can increase political participation by making voters feel more involved and connected to the political process. Social media platforms also facilitate the organization of grassroots movements, which can have a significant impact on public opinion and election outcomes (Woolley and Howard, 2016).

In this case, social media provides a platform for political parties and candidates to communicate directly with voters. This allows for more personalized and interactive delivery of political messages. Political campaigns on social media can mobilize voters and increase political participation (Wolley and Howard, 2016). Interestingly, voter mobilization is not only carried out by political parties or candidate participants but there is also a voluntary participation movement on social media carried out by the public to gain political support for certain candidates.

Aniesbubble Phenomenon

In the context of modern political participation, social media has become an important platform for mobilizing support and disseminating information. Social media plays an important role in marketing the vision, mission and persona of each candidate pair to attract the attention of

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voters, especially first-time voters, who spend almost all their time on social media. This happened during the contestation for the Indonesian presidential election in 2024 by supporters of candidate pair 01 via the Twitter platform with the account @Aniesbubble. Aniesbubble is an empirical example of how social media can play a role in helping people actively participate in politics by taking part in the support process before voting.

This is different from passive participation, where participation is only through voting. The aniesbubble account phenomenon is interesting because it was driven by civil society and not initiated by the winning team. The nature of Aniesbubble's participation emphasizes community volunteerism in participating in supporting candidate pair 01. Based on primary data from interviews with Aniesbubble account owners, this participation movement was motivated by a parody of celebrity fanbases without any intention of political tendencies. This became interesting when what Aniesbubble did, which was initially just a parody of the fanbase, transformed into a political participation channel for candidate pair 01. The presence of the Aniesbubble account is certainly an advantage for candidate pair 01 in the presidential election contestation to attract the attention of first-time voters with a target market of Generation Z who are active in social media Twitter.

Slightly in contrast to what Millbrath conceptualized regarding the reasons for political participation which are driven by the environment and interest in political issues. The aniesbubble account was led by an individual who was initially apathetic towards politics. The initial interest in aniesbubble was based on a hobby which in momentum suited the persona of candidate pair 01. The existence of parody content on this hobby slowly sparked a condition of growing political awareness. Indirectly, the owners and followers of Aniesbubble will learn more about candidate pair 01, including the vision and mission of creating content.

Finally, the account is oriented not only on parody content but also on building a movement for voluntary political participation through parody. The impact of this account touches the real world, such as the birth of voluntary movements to support candidate pair 01, such as making billboards, placing advertisements, food trucks, and even festivals. This has implications for gathering mass mobilization to spread the attention of candidate pair 01 to the voting process. At this point, the aniesbubble account has succeeded in becoming what Millbrath calls a factor in fostering active community participation. The aniesbubble phenomenon has succeeded in providing empirical evidence that social media is now an important aspect in building the community's political participation movement, especially Generation Z as first-time voters.

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CONCLUSION

Political participation is defined as the involvement of individuals or groups in political activities, by taking part in the process of circulating power and directly or indirectly influencing public policy. These political activities include voting in elections, attending public meetings, becoming a member of a party or interest group, contacting government officials or members of parliament, and so on. In general, the typology of participation as an activity is divided into 3 parts, namely (Rahman, 2007): 1) Active participation, namely participation that is oriented towards input and output processes. 2) Passive participation, namely participation that is output-oriented only, in the sense of only obeying government regulations, accepting and implementing every government decision. 3) The white group (abstention) or the apathetic group, because they consider the existing political system to be deviating from what they aspire to. In the context of modern political participation, social media has become an important platform for mobilizing support and disseminating information. Social media plays an important role in marketing the vision, mission and persona of each candidate pair to attract the attention of voters, especially first-time voters, who spend almost all their time on social media. In this case, social media provides a platform for political parties and candidates to communicate directly with voters. This allows for more personalized and interactive delivery of political messages. Political campaigns on social media can mobilize voters and increase political participation (Wolley and Howard, 2016). Interestingly, voter mobilization is not only carried out by political parties or candidate participants but there is also a voluntary participation movement on social media carried out by the public to gain political support for certain candidates. Based on the analysis in this research, we found an explanation of how the phenomenon of voluntary public support occurs by utilizing social media to build networks and communities with the same political preferences.

Most importantly, in this paper, we review the factors underlying the emergence of voluntary political participation as conceptualized by McClosky. Meanwhile, the support model initiated by Aniesbubble is very popular and relevant to Generation Z who are more frequently involved with the digital world. This model has significant advantages because indirectly the support model applied can influence support for first-time voters. In this way, it can encourage massive political participation from the public in the 2024 presidential election. The @aniesbubble account, which was initially created as a parody, can attract the attention of many people, especially Gen Z, who have the same hobbies and preferences as studying the vision, mission and ideas put forward by the candidate pairs. 01 with unique and relevant content packaging. This account has succeeded in encouraging active participation from its audience to take part in outreach, propaganda and projects such as making billboards, placing advertisements, food trucks, and even festivals to support candidate pair 01 in the 2024 Indonesian presidential election contest.

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