



## Revealing the Dominant Sentiments and Actors in the Discussion Network on Discourse in KPU Youtube Comments on the 2024 Indonesia Presidential Election Debate

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### ABSTRACT

This study analyzes communication patterns in the 2024 election debates through YouTube comments using network analysis and sentiment analysis. A total of 17,009 comments were collected using Netlytic and analyzed with Gephi and Orange Data Mining. The findings reveal that discourse dominance in the network is influenced by the candidates' backgrounds. Anies-Amin received support through narratives of intelligence and change but also faced criticism regarding policy implementation. Prabowo-Gibran was portrayed as a strong candidate ensuring continuity with Jokowi's programs but was criticized for political ambition and the food estate project. Ganjar-Mahfud was perceived as closely tied to party interests but gained support for efforts in legal reform. Sentiment analysis identified dominant emotional categories: pride, hope, and pessimism, highlighting the polarization of public opinion towards the candidates

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The 2024 Presidential Election is a crucial moment for Indonesia in selecting a leader who will govern for the next five years. This election features three competing candidate pairs: Anies Baswedan-Muhaimin Iskandar, Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka, and Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud MD. As part of the election process, the General Election Commission (KPU) organizes presidential and vice-presidential debates, providing a platform for the public to assess the candidates' capabilities, vision, and mission. (Fajriyah, 2023)

To reach a wider audience, KPU utilizes various media, including television, radio, and social media, with YouTube being a primary platform due to its popularity in Indonesia. According to Databox reports, YouTube is the second most visited site after Google, with Indonesia ranking fourth globally with 139 million active users. With such extensive reach, YouTube serves as a strategic choice for KPU to broadcast the debates live. (Annur, 2024)

The debates on YouTube attract netizens, who frequently use the comment section to express opinions, show support, or engage in discussions and conflicts regarding the candidates. Such conflicts, both online and offline, are inevitable, sometimes even leading to real-world consequences, as reported by Viva.co.id. (Hasanah et al., 2021)

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Additionally, a textual analysis approach is applied to examine language use and sentence structures in comments. (Eriyanto, 2003) This analysis enables researchers to understand how individuals and groups communicate and interact in digital spaces, especially in political discussions related to the election. By not only studying sentiment and communication networks generally but also focusing on how netizens' comments target each candidate pair, this study aims to provide insights into the dynamics of political discussions and conflicts in digital spaces during the 2024 election. The research is expected to uncover patterns of communication among candidate supporters and the role of social media in shaping public perception.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### a. Social Network Analysis (Philip Leifield)

According to Philip Leifield in Eriyanto's book titled "Communication Network Analysis," the use of communication networks is an integration of Method, Theory, and Data Analysis Techniques. When used as a Theory, Communication Network Theory examines how the structure and patterns of communication within a network influence the flow of information and interactions among individuals or groups. This theory is applied in analysis by considering the following measures: (Eriyanto, 2022)

- Degree Centrality, The level of an actor's popularity within the network.
- Closeness Centrality, Represents how close an actor (node) is to all other actors within the network.
- Betweenness Centrality, The actor's position as an intermediary between other actors in a network.
- Eigenvector Centrality, The importance of an individual based on their connections with other influential actors..

### b. Sentiment Analysis Concept

Sentiment analysis is a technique in Natural Language Processing (NLP) used to identify, understand, and categorize a person's opinions or feelings expressed in a text, such as comments, reviews, or social media posts, into sentiment categories: positive, negative, or neutral. The methods used in sentiment analysis can be lexicon-based, by comparing words in the text to a predefined list of words categorized by sentiment, or machine learning-based, which trains a model using sentiment-labeled datasets to recognize patterns and classify text automatically. In analyzing comments from the 2024 election debate, this technique is employed to understand public responses to presidential and vice-presidential candidates, group opinions based on sentiment, and assess the level of political polarization. The main advantage of sentiment analysis lies in its ability to analyze public opinion on a large scale quickly and efficiently, allowing for a systematic identification of sentiment patterns to support decision-making and provide a more accurate picture of public perception regarding an issue or figure. (Safitri et al., 2021)

### c. Critical Discourse Theory (Micahel Foucault)

Michel Foucault, a French philosopher known for his critical discourse theory, explains that discourse is not merely a collection of words or texts but a reflection of how knowledge, power, and truth are constructed within society. He emphasizes that discourse shapes the way people think and understand social phenomena, as every discourse contains power relations that dictate who has the right to speak and how a topic is perceived. According to Foucault, power is not solely concentrated in the hands of the government or formal institutions but is dispersed across various aspects of life, including language, social norms, and knowledge systems. For example, in politics, the media and influential figures can shape public perception of candidates. Furthermore, he asserts that truth is not a fixed entity but is formed by dominant discourses, making it crucial to analyze who controls information and how public opinion

is influenced. In the context of the 2024 election debates, Foucault's theory helps explain that political discussions on social media are not merely spontaneous public opinions but are also shaped by dominant actors—such as the media, political supporters, and digital platform algorithms—that determine which discourses gain visibility and influence public perceptions of the candidates.. (Kunandar, 2021)

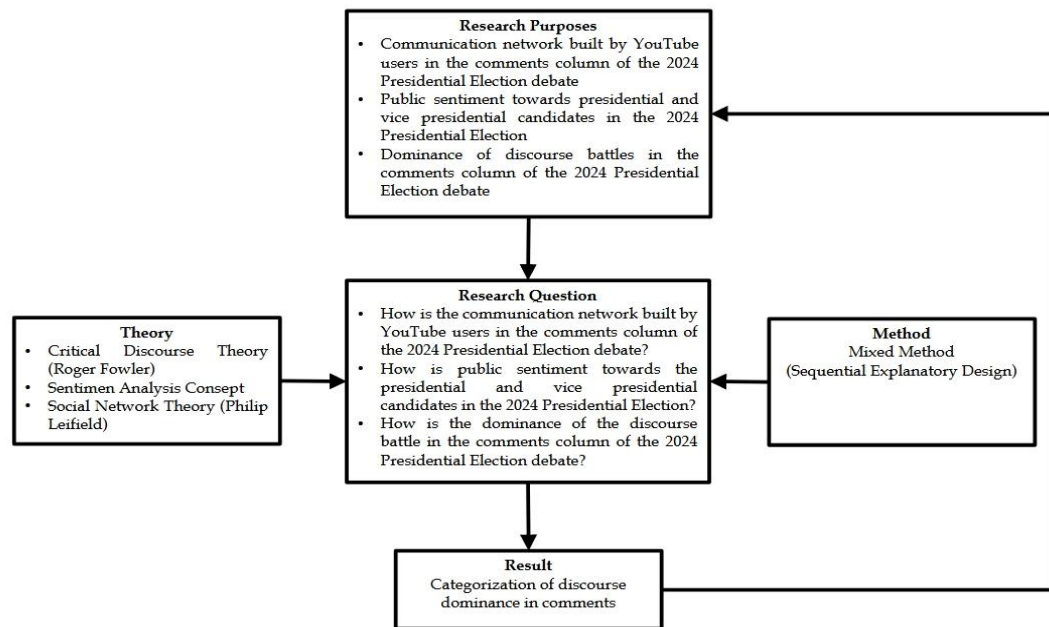


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods approach using a Sequential Explanatory Design. In this method, quantitative data is first collected and analyzed to provide an initial overview, followed by qualitative data collection and analysis to deepen the findings from the previous stage.(Sugiyono, 2023) This approach is based on the postpositivist paradigm, allowing researchers to integrate objective data analysis with more in-depth and contextual interpretation. (Sarmini et al., 2023) Sampling in this study was conducted using a small group approach, utilizing the Netlytic website to crawl data from comments on YouTube debates, from the first to the fourth debate. A total of 17,009 comments were successfully collected. This research is exploratory, meaning it aims to explore and understand communication patterns that may not have been fully identified previously.

For data analysis, the researcher applied a whole network analysis approach at the actor level using Gephi. The primary focus of this analysis is to measure the centrality of each actor in the network, identifying which actors play important or strategic roles in the network's relationships. (Eriyanto, 2019, 2022) Additionally, the network analysis is complemented by sentiment

analysis using Orange Data Mining to classify opinions as positive, neutral, or negative. The sentiment categorization model is based on a lexicon approach, utilizing an Indonesian sentiment dictionary containing positive and negative words. The model works by identifying word categorization within sentences, determining whether a word belongs to the positive or negative lexicon.(Chauhan et al., 2020) Furthermore, word combinations within sentences are analyzed to determine the percentage of words that fall into positive, neutral, or negative categories. To identify frequently occurring word combinations in sentence formation, the study employs Non-Negative Matrix Factorization (NMF) using Orange Data Mining.(Zamiraylova & Mitrofanova, 2019) . The combination of network analysis and sentiment analysis provides a comprehensive perspective in analyzing comments from the 2024 election debates streamed on the Indonesian Election Commission (KPU) YouTube channel. This approach not only examines the communication network structure but also captures the emotional dynamics and evolving perceptions within the discourse.



Table 1. Degree Results on Network

Degree Centrality	Result
FRHN-is4xw	56
Pinkvib3sonly	49
Kikivaganza	40

From the findings on the dominance of actor popularity in the conversations within the comments, three actors were identified with the account names *FRHN-is4xw*, *Pinkvib3sonly*, and *Kikivaganza*. The research discovered that the account *FRHN-is4xw* posted comments expressing support for Anies-Amin, praising the performance of the candidate pair. This support was further backed by comments criticizing the performance of Prabowo during his tenure as Minister of Defense.

The researcher's findings on the *Pinkvib3sonly* account revealed comments supporting the Ganjar-Mahfud pair, particularly regarding Mahfud MD, who was praised for his courage in expressing arguments about the asset forfeiture law. The pro-support argument was also backed by comments that criticized other presidential candidates, such as Anies, who was deemed unrealistic in his statement about creating 40 cities similar to Jakarta within 5 years. Additionally, there were criticisms of Prabowo's tenure as Minister of Defense, with allegations of potential corruption in the defense procurement of military equipment.

The findings from the *Kikivaganza* account showed comments supporting Prabowo, claiming that he would continue the work of Jokowi. This was also supported by other comments stating that Anies was a presidential candidate who was only skilled in argumentation, while Ganjar's performance in government was seen as heavily influenced by Megawati Soekarnoputri, the party chairwoman under which he was affiliated.

Table 2. Betweenness Results on Networks

Betweenness Centrality	Result
Diary_nay7617	1471
Pinkvib3sonly	1388
Nonameya5552	1386,5

From the findings on the dominance of actor proximity in conversations within the comments, three actors were identified with the account names *Diary\_nay7617*, *Pinkvib3sonly*, and *Nonameya5552*. The researcher compiled the findings from the *Diary\_nay7617* account, which expressed support for the Prabowo-Gibran pair by providing a background of Gibran and the arguments he presented during the debate. This was further supported by comments about Prabowo, who was considered suitable for his previous position as Minister of Defense, particularly because he refrained from disclosing military data during the debate, which was seen as classified state information. The account also expressed skepticism toward Vice Presidential candidate Mahfud MD, criticizing his lack of ethics in judging Gibran during the debate.



The comments made by the *Pinkvib3sonly* account were consistent with the explanation provided in the Degree Result section (See explanation in Degree Result). The next finding, from the *Nonameya5552* account, revealed comments expressing empathy towards the two presidential candidates, Ganjar and Prabowo. The portrayal of Ganjar in the comments described him as a calm figure when delivering his material, appearing courteous and authoritative while presenting arguments during the debate. Meanwhile, the portrayal of Prabowo in the comments expressed sympathy for him being attacked during the debate. It also highlighted Prabowo's calm demeanor in responding to the argumentative attacks during the debate.

Table 3. Closeness Results on Network

Closeness Centrality	Result
Muflihrz4074	1
Ameerahmad1648	1
Masterkungfu1927	1

From the findings on the dominance of actors acting as central connectors between other actors in conversations within the comments, three actors were identified with the account names *Muflihrz4074*, *Ameerahmad1648*, and *Masterkungfu1927*. The researcher compiled the findings from the *Muflihrz4074* account, where a supportive comment for Anies Baswedan was found, portraying him as a figure capable of mediating societal issues, especially during his tenure as Governor of Jakarta. Anies' ideas and proposals during the debate were seen as realistic, substantial, and an improvement on previous policies. This was supported by a skeptical comment toward Prabowo regarding his idea of providing free nutritious food, which was considered potentially corrupt during its implementation, as well as a critique of the failed food estate program during his tenure as Minister of Defense. These comments were similarly found on the *Masterkungfu1927* account.

The findings from the *Ameerahmad1648* account revealed supportive comments for Anies Baswedan, praising his proposals during the debate as more substantial compared to other presidential candidates. Skeptical comments were also found regarding Prabowo Subianto, who was depicted as too old to become President.

Table 4. Eigenvector Results on Network

Eigenvector Centralization	Result
Muflihrz4074	1
Candody-ym4ot	0,6723
Priaarius	0,6345

From the findings on the dominance of important actors that impact other actors within the network in the conversation in the comments, three actors were identified with the account names *Muflihrz4074*, *Candody-ym4ot*, and *Priaarius*. The explanation for the comments made by the *Muflihrz4074* account



is the same as the explanation provided in the Closeness Result section (See explanation in Closeness Result).

Furthermore, based on the gathered comments, the researcher found that the *Candody-ym4ot* account expressed skepticism toward Anies, describing him as a presidential candidate skilled at deceiving the public. Meanwhile, the *Priaarius* account made a comment expressing caution regarding buzzers, who were seen as potentially causing disruption and spreading unverified news.

#### b. Analisis Opini Sentiment

To view the overall opinion of the comments, the researcher used sentiment analysis to analyze and categorize the comments from the Presidential and Vice Presidential Debate held by the Indonesian Election Commission (KPU). In this case, the researcher categorized the comments into Positive, Neutral, and Negative sentiments. The percentage results can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Percentage of Sentiment

Description	Result
Neutral	47%
Positive	36%
Negative	17%

Next, from the results of the sentiment categorization, the researcher compiled the most frequently appearing words in a sentence. The results of these words were visualized using a WordCloud (the WordCloud Figure is shown in Figure 3). Words that frequently appear in sentences written in the comment section are displayed with larger sizes. Conversely, words that are rarely used to form sentences are represented with smaller sizes.



Figure 3. Wordcloud of Comments

From the results of the WordCloud, the researcher used topic modeling to identify word combinations that are frequently used to form sentences. Based on the topic modeling analysis conducted on the collected comments, 10 models of word combinations were identified as frequently appearing in the comments.

Tabel 6. Topic Modeling of Frequently Occurring Keyword Combinations in Comments

Topic	Topic Keyword
Topic 1	Order, Number, Vote, Candidate, Election, Debate, Rights, Choose, Law, President
Topic 2	Vice President, Response, Debate, Theme, Responding, Panelist, Gibran, Mahfud, Muhaimin, Envelope
Topic 3	Presidential Candidate, Response, Panelist, Responding, Theme, Debate, Ganjar, Anies, Prabowo, Envelope
Topic 4	Pair, Vice President, Pragib, Program, Work, Intelligent, Amin, Time, Choosing, Completing
Topic 5	Indonesia, People, Leader, Country, Progress, Nation, Hopefully, Choosing, Person, Best
Topic 6	Anies, Debate, Jakarta, DKI, Ganjar, Name, Monument, House
Topic 7	Anies, Baswedan, Ganjar, Person, Intelligent, Jakarta, Prabowo, The, He, Change
Topic 8	Prabowo, Gibran, Forward, Bro, Ganjar, Gaspoll, Indonesia, Mas, Data, Jokowi
Topic 9	President, Candidate, Vice, Election, Anies, Hopefully, RI, Subianto, Allah, Ganjar
Topic 10	Amin, Hopefully, Win, Leader, Change, Choose, Pair, In, All

## DISCUSSION

### **a. The Dominance of Discourse in the Network is Influenced by the Background of the Candidates**

On the network map, the dominance of actors who introduce discourse in the comments is revealed through the analysis conducted by the researcher. These actors not only present ideas but also steer discussions, shape opinions, and determine what is considered important. Like a conductor in an orchestra, the key actors namely, the accounts that dominate the conversation in the comments (account names and the discourse they shape are explained in the Communication Network Results) play a central role in shaping overall public opinion. In this context, the researcher identifies the core discourse introduced by dominant actors regarding presidential candidates.

This aligns with Michel Foucault's critical discourse theory, which highlights the relationship between power and discourse. In this case, power is exercised by key network actors in society through language and practices. The dominance of certain actors in shaping discourse directs the audience to comply with or follow the expectations set by these actors. (Kunandar, 2021) The researcher categorizes the discourse based on how each presidential candidate pair in the 2024 election – Anies-Amin, Prabowo-Gibran, and Ganjar-Mahfud – is portrayed.

Based on the research findings on the discourse surrounding the Anies-Amin pair in the comments, several dominant narratives emerge from supporting accounts. One key criticism is directed at Prabowo Subianto, who is deemed too old to serve as president, with his age (over 70 years) cited as a reason to doubt his capabilities. Meanwhile, Anies Baswedan is portrayed as a more competent figure with superior intellectual capacity. A notable debate centers around Anies' proposal to build 40 cities like Jakarta, which many consider unrealistic. Additionally, his leadership style as Governor of Jakarta was criticized for being more argumentative than results-oriented. However, his supporters defend him, stating that the evictions carried out during his tenure were more acceptable to affected residents than those under previous governors, who were seen as more forceful. The researcher also identifies narratives portraying Anies as a presidential candidate with Middle Eastern ancestry, which is suspected to be an identity politics strategy linked to his support for the 212 movement. His running mate, Muhaimin Iskandar (Cak Imin), is mainly discussed in religious contexts, with some comments arguing that he is only relevant in religious discussions while lacking sufficient competence in other areas.

Similarly, for the Prabowo-Gibran pair, the researcher finds extensive discourse portraying Prabowo as a military figure with a strong, authoritarian branding. He is often depicted as an iron-fisted candidate. Comments frequently highlight his emotional nature, noting that he tends to be reactive and easily angered when responding to questions from other candidates. This criticism is reinforced by the claim that his debate proposals lack clear implementation plans. The narrative gained further traction when Ganjar Pranowo posed sharp questions about the performance of the Ministry of

Defense, which seemingly put Prabowo on the defensive. Additionally, discussions about Prabowo's repeated candidacy emerge, with some comments pointing out that this is his third attempt at the presidency, reflecting his strong political ambition. Others criticize his debating skills, arguing that he struggles to articulate his views convincingly. His food estate program also faces significant criticism, with many considering it a failure that wasted public funds without yielding tangible benefits.

Skepticism toward Vice Presidential Candidate Gibran Rakabuming Raka also emerges in the discourse promoted by dominant actors. Gibran, as Prabowo's running mate, receives mixed reactions. Some believe he struggles to control his emotions during debates, while others praise his intelligence, particularly in addressing questions about the development of the new capital city (IKN), a policy attributed to his father, President Jokowi. However, Gibran's candidacy itself remains controversial, with many comments suggesting that the Prabowo-Gibran ticket violated election regulations. Some narratives even allege that the pair used hackers to support their nomination.

In the discourse promoted by dominant actors in the network, Ganjar Pranowo, as a PDIP cadre, faces scrutiny regarding his economic policies and the potential privatization of state assets. Several comments depict him as a candidate who might sell off state assets, following in the footsteps of PDIP Chairperson Megawati Soekarnoputri during her presidency. Critics argue that party interests would take precedence over national interests and that Ganjar, as a "party loyalist," would be bound by Megawati's directives, limiting his political independence. Meanwhile, Mahfud MD, Ganjar's running mate, is highlighted for his legal expertise and role as Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs under Jokowi. His support for asset seizure laws is seen as a significant step toward combating corruption and reforming Indonesia's legal system. This strengthens the narrative of support for the Ganjar-Mahfud pair, particularly among those seeking legal and governance reforms. However, debates over Ganjar's independence from party influence remain a key issue among both supporters and critics.

The results of the discourse analysis presented by dominant actors also serve to complement the findings of previous research conducted by Rifqi Santosa and Aulia Rahmawati, which stated that Anies Baswedan builds his political image as a leader with strong performance achievements in his previous position. Additionally, Ganjar Pranowo is portrayed in public opinion as a figure who prioritizes the people in his policymaking. (Santosa & Rahmawati, 2023). Furthermore, the research conducted by Rahmadi et al. shows the significance of the presidential candidates' backgrounds in shaping public opinion. In particular, the challenges faced include disinformation, polarization, and political pressure, which easily spread on social media. (Rahmadi et al., 2024). Furthermore, the analysis intersects with the theory of commodification. Based on Vincent Mosco's theory of commodification, there is an effort to commodify the debate—specifically, the delivery of vision and mission statements by each candidate during the debate. This aligns with the fundamental assumption of the theory, namely the commodification of labor in

relation to the audience. The goal is to shape audience responses, whether in the form of liking or disliking, commenting, or even sharing messages or information. (Ichsan et al., 2023)

**b. The Strong Influence of Jokowi's Image in Shapping Discussions on Presidential Candidates**

In the public discourse surrounding the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential debates, President Jokowi remains a dominant figure in societal discussions. One prevailing narrative suggests that Jokowi is responsible for various demonstrations that have taken place. Protests against his administration's policies peaked when his son, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, entered the race as Prabowo's running mate. Many comments claim that this candidacy was not a coincidence but rather something orchestrated by Jokowi. This speculation was further fueled by the introduction of a new regulation allowing Gibran to run, which happened to be drafted by his own uncle.

Additionally, there is a portrayal of Anies Baswedan as determined to rectify policies perceived as failures under Prabowo's tenure as Minister of Defense. This issue is particularly intriguing because Prabowo's policies themselves were a continuation of programs initiated by Jokowi. This narrative shapes the perception that the current administration's policies still have many shortcomings that need to be addressed, and Anies is seen as a figure capable of implementing those changes.

On the other hand, there is also a discourse suggesting that Jokowi's programs will be continued by Prabowo. Supporters of the Prabowo-Gibran ticket believe that Prabowo is the most suitable candidate to ensure the continuity of Jokowi's development agenda and policies. This has created a divide in public perception, with some viewing it as positive continuity, while others see it as political dynasticism and an attempt to maintain power.

The dominance of discussions about Jokowi in the 2024 election indicates that his influence on public opinion remains strong. His policies, whether controversial or considered successful, shape public skepticism toward the programs proposed by the presidential candidates. Many voters are still weighing whether the policies offered by certain candidates will truly bring change or merely serve as an extension of the current administration

The strong image of Jokowi in the final period before the end of his presidency was also analyzed in a study conducted by Daniel Susilo. The study found that Jokowi embodies three dominant concepts of personal branding, as defined by Peter Montoya: the Law of Specialization, the Law of Distinctiveness, and the Law of Personality. (Susilo, 2024). The strong image of Jokowi on public opinion is also explained in a study conducted by Widodo and Hidayat, which highlights a significant decline in trust towards the PDIP party, the party that supported Jokowi during his presidency. However, towards the end of his term, there was internal conflict between the PDIP party and Jokowi, which led to the decrease in trust towards the party. (Widodo & Hidayat, 2024). The strong image of Jokowi in society is also believed to be the result of political efforts involving the mobilization of buzzers in public spaces or social media to influence public perception. (Ambun, 2024)

### **c. Emotion Categories in Comment**

In another theory, this dominance analysis also intersects with Social Judgement Theory, developed by Muzafer Sherif, which states that people essentially evaluate a message based on a reference point or benchmark. In social perception, the reference point is internal and based on past experiences; additionally, a person's acceptance and rejection range is influenced by the variable of ego involvement (Suciati, 2017). In this study, the concept of ego involvement is assessed by the researcher based on the categorization of comments. The results from the categorization of the discourse expressed by actors within the dominant network show that not only opinions are at play, but also emotions that are represented in positive and negative sentiments, along with findings from topic modeling to identify frequently occurring words. Each comment acts like a spark, some supporting, some rejecting, and others exacerbating the situation, forming a categorization of discourse. Positive discourse includes pride, hope, enthusiasm, and appreciation, while negative discourse encompasses pessimism and skepticism.

The analysis of the discourse of pride reflects the supporters' pride in their chosen presidential candidates. Each supporter expresses their support by highlighting the strengths of their candidate, whether in terms of experience, ideas, or leadership track record. This pride is manifested in praises for the courage, intelligence, and vision offered by the presidential candidates. For example, Anies Baswedan's supporters are proud of his perceived intelligence, strong arguments, and his promise of change. Meanwhile, Prabowo Subianto's supporters appreciate his decisiveness, experience, and ability to continue the previous government's development programs. On the other hand, Ganjar Pranowo's supporters praise his down-to-earth nature, communicative skills, and integrity in implementing policies. Positive emotions such as hope and optimism dominate the conversation, with many comments expressing confidence that their chosen candidate is the best for Indonesia. However, this pride is often accompanied by a critical stance towards other candidates, so the positive sentiment towards one candidate is often paired with criticism or sarcasm aimed at others. (Pride)

The analysis of the discourse of hope reflects the expectations for the elected leader, with a desire for the next president to bring positive changes to the people, particularly in the areas of the economy, welfare, and development. This hope reflects the optimism, as well as concerns, of the people regarding Indonesia's future. One major hope is for the Free Nutritious Meals (MBG) program, introduced by the Prabowo-Gibran pair, which is seen as a solution to improve nutrition, especially for schoolchildren, address stunting issues, and enhance the quality of the younger generation. Moreover, job creation is a key issue, with many comments expressing the hope that the elected president will create more job opportunities, particularly for young people and informal workers, considering the high unemployment rate and economic uncertainty. Rural development is also a concern, with hopes for policies that favor remote areas, including improving infrastructure, access to education, and economic opportunities in villages, so that welfare is not only concentrated in large cities.

Teachers' welfare is also a widely voiced hope, with the desire for the elected president to pay more attention to the fate of educators in terms of salary, benefits, and work status, so that education becomes a top priority to improve the quality of human resources in Indonesia. These hopes demonstrate that the people want real change in various aspects of life, with leaders who not only make promises but are also capable of implementing programs that have a direct impact on the welfare of the people. (Hope)

The analysis of the discourse of enthusiasm shows clear enthusiasm from supporters of their chosen presidential candidates, with many of them showing full support through praise for the candidate's vision and mission, as well as belief that their candidate is the best one to lead Indonesia. This enthusiasm is also reflected in calls for others to join in the support, sharing the candidate's achievements, and defending their candidate from criticism or attacks. Additionally, appreciation for the vice-presidential candidates also plays a significant role in public discourse, with many supporters considering their chosen vice-presidential candidate the right person to accompany the president in running the government, praising their intelligence, courage, or experience in debates and campaigns. On the other hand, there is also appreciation for the current president, Jokowi, especially from those who feel that his leadership has brought positive changes to Indonesia, expressing gratitude for the policies he has implemented and hope that the next president will continue or improve those programs. Although there are critiques of some policies, most comments with appreciative sentiment show respect for the leadership that has taken place and hope that the development initiated will be continued by the next leader. (Appreciation and Enthusiasm)

The analysis of the discourse of pessimism shows a dominant pessimistic sentiment about the presidential candidates' ability to eradicate corruption, with many doubting any significant changes given the strong political interests within the government system. The promise to fight corruption is seen as mere campaign rhetoric without any guarantee of real implementation. The candidate pair of number 2 (Prabowo-Gibran) and number 3 (Ganjar-Mahfud) also receive negative attention due to their previous roles as ministers in Jokowi's government, with many pessimistic that they will bring new policies that differ from the old ones, which were considered unsatisfactory. On the other hand, the number 1 pair (Anies-Muhaimin) faces challenges from the image of Muhaimin Iskandar (Cak Imin), who is seen as an electoral burden for Anies, with concerns that his political background may undermine voters' trust. Overall, the pessimism in this public discourse reflects the skepticism of the people regarding the effectiveness of the candidates' leadership, particularly in terms of eradicating corruption and their commitment to real change. (Pessimism)

The analysis of discourse on the comments in the presidential and vice-presidential debates of the 2024 election shows strong skepticism from the public toward the candidates, reflecting doubts about their capacity, integrity, and transparency. The candidate pair number 2 is criticized for arguments that are considered shallow and for the nomination of their vice-presidential



candidate, which is linked to alleged abuse of power, while their program, and the program of the number 3 pair, are seen as lacking originality because they resemble the policies of the number 1 pair. Prabowo is perceived as an emotional figure, raising concerns about the potential for authoritarian leadership, while the number 1 pair faces criticism for their inability to present strong arguments and programs that are seen as unrealistic. Additionally, identity politics has come under scrutiny, especially related to Anies Baswedan and the 212 group, which is seen as potentially deepening social polarization. Mahfud MD is also criticized for his debating ethics, as well as the alleged exploitation of human rights issues by the number 3 pair for political purposes. Meanwhile, the "Jokowi Effect" is still perceived as influential, with Prabowo, Mahfud MD, and Gibran seen as not fully independent from the shadow of the previous administration. Overall, these comments reflect the public's expectations for leaders who are transparent, have integrity, and are truly capable of bringing real change to the nation. (Skepticism)

The analysis of emotional discourse in this study intersects with the findings of an analysis conducted by John T. Jost and colleagues, which mentions that social media platforms facilitate the exchange of emotional and motivational content to support and oppose protest activities, including messages that emphasize anger, social identification, group efficacy, and concerns about justice, equality, and deprivation, as well as explicit ideological themes. (Jost et al., 2018). In addition, the expressions of support for each candidate intersect with the findings of a study conducted by Christiany Judith, which explains that the impact of emphasizing debates is crucial in setting the agenda and shaping public opinion. (Juditha, 2019) In this case, according to the research findings, the delivery of arguments during the debate has a strong impact on emotions and conversations.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION**

The communication network analysis in the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential debates reveals the dominance of certain actors in shaping discourse and public opinion. Dominant actors in the communication network not only steer the flow of discussion but also shape perceptions of the candidates, reflecting power relations as explained in Michel Foucault's critical discourse theory. The research findings show that each pair of candidates is portrayed differently in public discussions, reflecting the polarization of public opinion.

The portrayal of the candidate pairs shows that Anies-Amin is more associated with narratives of intellectualism and Anies' leadership capacity, but also faces criticism related to the unrealism of their program and identity politics linked to Anies' background. Meanwhile, Prabowo-Gibran is depicted with different characteristics, with Prabowo being known as a firm but emotional military figure, and his food estate project is criticized as a failure, while Gibran faces scrutiny over alleged violations in his candidacy and his ties to dynastic politics. Ganjar-Mahfud, on the other hand, is linked to economic policies that are seen as potentially leading to the privatization of state assets,

while Mahfud is praised for his legal integrity, although his independence from party influence is seen as limited.

Additionally, the dominant image of President Jokowi in the 2024 election discourse is evident. Gibran's candidacy as vice president strengthens perceptions of dynastic politics, while Prabowo is seen as a successor to Jokowi's policies. On the other hand, Anies is positioned as a figure wanting to correct policies considered failures. Emotions in public discourse also play a significant role in shaping perceptions of the candidates. Positive sentiment is seen in support for each candidate based on pride, hope, and appreciation for the programs they offer. High enthusiasm is reflected in candidate promotions and calls to vote. However, negative sentiment is also dominant, with political polarization reinforcing pessimism and skepticism, particularly regarding promises to eradicate corruption and the effectiveness of the policies offered. Criticism is also directed at the political backgrounds and experience of each candidate.

Overall, this analysis shows that the discourse in the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential debates is heavily influenced by dominant actors in the communication network, who shape public opinion through narratives that reflect both support and criticism of each candidate. Opinion polarization, the connection to Jokowi's image, and the influence of emotions in public discussion are key factors that shape the political dynamics of this election. Based on the results of this study, it is important to conduct further research using data from the discourse in the comments to analyze the branding of each presidential and vice-presidential candidate during the election.

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