

#Nazarpemilu: promoting faith-based populist political communication in Indonesian presidential election 2024

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Abstract

We promise to our God the victory of the presidential candidate we support, that is the essence of #nazarpemilu. Promoting of populist political communication that occurred on the social media platform X during the 2024 Indonesian presidential election campaign. The hashtag is a fascinating trend as it combines elements of religion and the election, and it did not originate from the elites but rather from the supporters. Using a content analysis approach this study aims to explore the role of #Nazarpemilu in shaping faith-based populist political communication during the 2024 Indonesian presidential election campaign on the social media platform X.. We found first, #Nazarpemilu contains various hopes and promises from supporters to their God for the victory of the presidential candidate they support. Second, the involvement of some political actors in the hashtag affiliated with parties with Islamic ideologies. Third, some identified messages contain strategies to persuade other users to vote for the supported presidential candidate and strategies to push the movement into the offline realm. Fourth, this hashtag has an exposure effect on other users. Fifth, this hashtag is also tainted by the activities of pro-Prabowo-Gibran candidate pair buzzer activities countering the hashtag with a reversed narrative. Base on this findings that populist content shared by users that appeals to faith-based in the form of hashtags can play an effective role in spreading populist political communication on the social media platform X and have implications for voters mobilization.

Keywords: *faith-based populism, political communication, presidential election, social media*

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Introduction

In the perspective of communication, populism is viewed not just as a specific political identity or trait of political actors, but more as a communication signs with two key aspects: populism as content, which involves the public communication of populist ideologies like people-centric centrism and anti-elitism, and populism as style, which focuses on the way messages are delivered, characterized by distinct populist features (de Vreese et al., 2018). Discussing populist communication in the post-truth era is undoubtedly related to social media. Social media has four key characteristics that make it highly effective for populist communication: direct access to the audience without the filter of journalism, a strong connection with the community, unlimited opportunities for personalization, and the ability to target specific groups (Ernst et al., 2017).

Media acts as a driving force behind messages crafted to directly influence citizens' emotions, which can quickly spread by harnessing the viral power of social networks, regardless of the ideological nature of the content (Abuín Vences & García

Rosales, 2023). Even populist activities on social media create closed meeting spaces as they receive retweets (Jacobs & Spierings, 2019). The effectiveness of populist communication strategies on social media shows that, while populist appeals may represent only a small portion of the content on these platforms, they are significantly more effective in generating user engagement compared to traditional mobilization efforts or support from politicians and news media (Doroshenko, 2022).

The effectiveness is widely utilized by political leaders and political parties to employ populist political communication during election periods. There are two main approaches to understanding populist political communication. The first involves identifying populist political actors and exploring the factors that explain their emergence and influence, along with their communication strategies, tactics, and styles. The second approach focuses on defining the key characteristics of populist political communication and examining how different political actors adopt populist strategies, tactics, styles, and rhetoric (Aalberg et al., 2016).

Previous studies by scholars on populist political communication in social media have covered various aspects, including the communication strategies of populist political leaders and populist parties. For instance, Bracciale's research examined the characteristics of populist political communication styles of Italian major political leaders on Twitter. The study found that populist style is increasingly disconnected from the traditional right/left political divide, instead representing a blend of diverse individual elements of the leaders' communication styles (Bracciale & Martella, 2017). Unlike Bracciale, who focused on Twitter, Zulianello analyzed populist communication on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to study the use of populist political communication by Western and Latin American leaders during national election campaigns. He found that political leaders were more active on Facebook than Instagram or Twitter, as Facebook allowed for more direct public interaction. Moreover, significant differences in populist communication usage between countries were attributed to factors such as political culture, media systems, and social media usage levels (Zulianello et al., 2018). While populist political communication typically occurs during election periods, Liu explored this period during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study revealed that the populist communication style in leaders' tweets served as a valuable political tool for crisis management (Liu et al., 2023).

Further, studies on populist communication by political parties have also been explored by previous scholars. For instance, Widmann analyzed emotional appeals in politics and populist communication on Twitter, finding that populist parties in European countries, populist parties tended to use more negative emotional appeals, such as anger, fear, disgust, and sadness, while employing fewer positive emotional appeals like joy, enthusiasm, pride, and hope, compared to mainstream parties (Widmann, 2021). Thomeczek similarly discovered that populist parties in most European countries were more active on Facebook than non-populist parties (Thomeczek, 2023). In contrast, Magin and colleagues analyzed the use of populist communication by Norwegian political parties during the 2021 national election campaign, examining their activity across three social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. They found that populist communication was more prevalent on Facebook than on Instagram, and least common on Twitter (Magin et al., 2024). Kalsnes conducted a study on the strategic use of social media by the Swedish Democrats and the Progress Party. The study found that both populist parties largely implemented their social media strategies as planned, with the Swedish Democrats

more closely following the populist communication logic in their Facebook posts (Kalsnes, 2019).

From these previous studies, the researcher observes two gaps in the literature. First, no research has specifically addressed the development of populist political on Twitter, in the form of hashtags or movements. Second, there has been no examination of populist political communication related to religion. Therefore, we are interested in filling these gaps by exploring what is happening in Indonesia.

In a country such as Indonesia, which has the world's largest muslim majority, populism is also characterized by religious identity politics (Herianto & Wijanarko, 2022). Faith-based populism in Indonesia can be seen from two perspectives. Populism is seen both as a response to social inequality in both national and global contexts, and as a potential threat to the future of democratic consolidation in Indonesia. Its exclusive, anti-multicultural, and anti-pluralistic tendencies could lead to the creation of a majority tyranny that undermines the rights of minorities (Susanto, 2019). Some previous studies have discussed populism and elections in Indonesia, such as the strong correlation between Islam and politics in the results of the two previous Indonesian presidential elections in 2014 and 2019 (Salim, 2022). Widian (Widian, 2023) found in the 2019 presidential election that faith-based identity was emphasized as a populist element indicating a political movement closely related to power competition and voting behavior, (Zainuddin et al., 2023) stated in their study that the involvement of religious elements in politics is motivated by several reasons, including pragmatic politics, cultural politics, and ideology, (Yustisia & Hakim, 2023) highlighted that religion also plays a role in shaping political choices, even though this role is indirect, (Yilmaz, 2021) discovered that appeals to religion not only shape populist ideologies but also help mobilize people against other groups or countries by generating feelings of ownership, love, passion, fear, anger, and hatred, ultimately shaping the performance of populism.

Previous scholars have also examined populist activities on social media, such as (Santoso et al., 2020) who found that in the 2019 Indonesian presidential election, political discourse and populist discourse were constructed through remarkable coverage on social media and reinforced by online news. Additionally, the discursive dissemination of key concepts on social media takes a political direction through the role of hashtags. Hashtags establish limitations on certain groups of people and reinforce the positions of specific discursive exchanges. Furthermore, (Yilmaz & Barton, 2021) discovered that in Indonesia, online populist activities adopt elements from three types of populism: religious, chauvinistic, and technocratic

. All three borrow from and influence each other. And recently, we found that #Nazarpemilu appeared during the presidential campaign period on Twitter in Indonesia. In our opinion, this hashtag represents a form of populist political communication that is suitable for filling the gaps in previous studies. #Nazarpemilu emerged on January 6, 2024, one day before the third presidential candidate debate. This hashtag represents a novel phenomenon, deviating from the usual promises made by candidates to voters in a presidential election. In contrast, supporters of this movement make pledges to their gods for the desired candidate.

Based on the background above, This study aims to explore the role of #Nazarpemilu in shaping populist political communication during the 2024 Indonesian presidential election campaign on the social media platform X. The research question posed is: how does user-generated populist content through #Nazarpemilu contribute to the dissemination of populist political communication? This study is expected to

provide new insights by demonstrating that populist content in the form of hashtags can contribute to the spread of populist political communication. Additionally, it suggests that the use of faith-based rhetoric in populist political communication does not always have a negative impact but can also convey positive values if used appropriately.

Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative research method with a content analysis approach. Content analysis is a broad term that refers to various strategies used to analyze text. It is a systematic method of coding and categorizing textual information to examine large volumes of data in a non-intrusive way. This approach helps identify trends and patterns in word usage, their frequency, relationships, as well as the structures and discourses of communication (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The content analysis used in this research is qualitative with an inductive approach, namely a procedure for finding concepts, themes or models based on the analyst's or researcher's interpretation through detailed reading of the text and context. Inductive analysis has the advantage of condensing large amounts of diverse raw data into a summary format, establishing clear relationships between research objectives and summary findings, and ensuring transparency to justify these relationships in line with research objectives (Rumata, 2017).

This study uses two data collection methods, namely data collected manually and data taken using API with the help of Orange software. Manual sources were obtained by collecting posts from users who were involved in the #Nazarpemilu conversation on platform X and received more than 1000 likes. We use the command in the search column as follows: #Nazarpemilu_faves:1000. We chose posts that were liked a lot because "Like" is used to show appreciation for a post (X Help Centre, 2024). We collected tweets when #Nazarpemilu became a trending topic, namely on January 6-7 2024, and we got 132 tweets from that process.

Next, our second data collection method uses an API with the help of Orange software to collect tweets from users who used #Nazarpemilu on January 9 2024. We did this to check whether this hashtag was polluted by bot or buzzer activity. However, due to access limitations, we can only access 500 tweets. Next, we cleaned the tweet data, focusing on messages containing hope and promises and removing tweets that only contained comments related to #Nazarpemilu. From this process we got 217 clean tweet data that was ready for analysis.

Results and Discussion

#Nazarpemilu; creating and trending a faith-based populist campaign

Populist communication operates through four key components: ideology (content), actors (senders), style (form), and strategy (objectives). Its ideology emphasizes themes like prioritizing "the people," opposing elites, and excluding perceived "others." Additionally, populism often hinges on the presence of charismatic and authoritative leaders who play essential or supportive roles. In terms of style, it involves how political messages are conveyed, marked by simplification (reducing complexity), emotionalization (evoking emotions like anger, fear, or resentment), and negativity (highlighting crises, threats, or injustices). Finally, as a strategy, populism entails how actors employ it to pursue objectives such as gaining power, legitimacy,

and public support or using it to "acquire and exercise authority" (Kalsnes, 2019). As a strategy, populist communication is associated with the role of the media in its dissemination. The media plays a crucial role in facilitating populist communication and influencing public perceptions of populist leaders or movements.

To understand the role of media in spreading populist political communication, researchers have identified three perspectives: media as a conduit for populism (populism through media), media as a creator of populist content (populism by media), and user-driven populism on media platforms (user-mediated populism). The first perspective examines how media serve as a platform for populist actors to disseminate their messages. The second explores whether media outlets themselves can act as populist entities by adopting strategies and styles akin to those of populist actors. This view focuses on how media organizations integrate populist elements into their content and approach. The third perspective highlights content created by users on media platforms, encompassing forms of citizen journalism and self-presentation by political actors, such as posts on party websites or social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook (Wirth et al., 2016).

From these three perspectives, we analyze #Nazarpemilu from the perspective of user-generated populist content, with a focus on content generated by users, in this case supporters of presidential and vice-presidential candidates. The hashtag #Nazarpemilu went viral, surpassing 309 thousand posts, starting in the evening and continuing until the next day. As found by (Penney, 2016), Content that evokes positive emotions is more likely to go viral than negative content. Messages that trigger high-activation emotions, such as admiration on the positive side or anger and anxiety on the negative side, are especially likely to spread widely. In contrast, content that elicits low-activation or calming emotions, such as sadness, tends to have a lower likelihood of going viral.

The first creator of #Nazarpemilu was a supporter of presidential candidates Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar named @imrenagi, with a tweet that read like this: "If Prabowo Gibran loses, I will create a free intensive bootcamp discussing certain software instrumentation for 10 people every weekend for a month. #Nazarpemilu" as shown in **Figure 1** below.

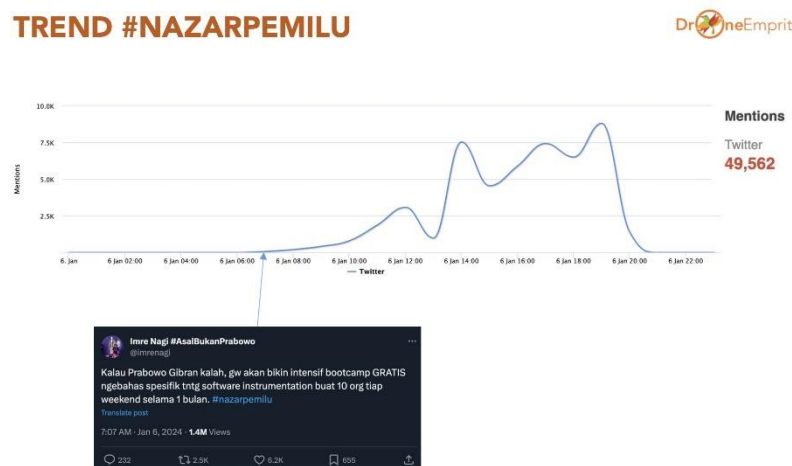


Figure 1. First Creator of #Nazarpemilu
Source: (Drone Emprit, 2024)

In general, the narrative of populism begins with elites and is followed by the public, but a different scenario occurs with this hashtag; it is the community or supporters who initiate it. This aligns with the perspective of (Blassnig, 2021) that In the online environment, citizens can take on more active roles by acting as initiators, creating and sharing populist messages; as gatekeepers, controlling the flow and visibility of such content; or as interpreters, shaping its meaning and influence within their networks.

#Nazarpemilu consists of two words, namely "nazar" and "election". "Nazar" refers to what a person hopes and promises to God and if their hope is fulfilled then the promise that has been made must be kept and "nazar" or oath is a very powerful speech act that fulfills the three elements of speech acts (locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary). First, a locutionary speech act is a grammatically correct utterance (written or spoken), and every sentence that is incorrect or ungrammatical actually does not have a locutionary speech act. Second, an illocutionary speech act is the speaker's intention to do something; without this intention, there will be pragmatic failure. Third, perlocutionary speech acts are the listener's or reader's response to the speech act; If there is no reaction or response, then it is not actually a speech act. Oaths have enormous power because we have seen that an oath cannot be ignored or ignored; it must be fulfilled. Don't forget that a vow will not be fulfilled unless it is expressed in a certain structure (locutionary speech act) with the intention of fulfilling the vow. If Allah grants what someone asks for, then he will keep his oath (Saad & Jubran, 2019).

On the other hand, the word "election" which is an abbreviation of the word general election, indicates the moment of the ongoing presidential election. Therefore, #Nazarpemilu is a hashtag that contains the hopes and promises made by supporters of presidential and vice presidential candidates to God for the victory of the candidates they support in the elections. We begin the results of this research by first explaining what is expected and promised by the supporters.

Supporters' Hopes and Promises to God

On the first section, we start by showing what supporters expect, as seen in **Figure 2** below.

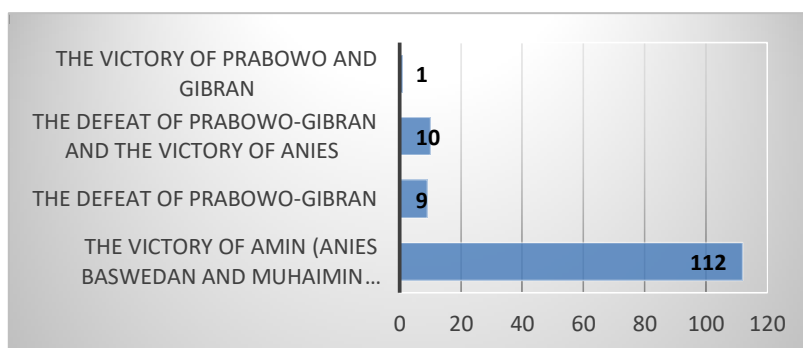


Figure 2. The hopes of the supporters

Source: Author's (2024)

The graph above shows that the expected result of supporters who use this hashtag is the victory of the candidate pair Amin or Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar as president and vice president, with a total of 112 tweets. Followed by hope for Prabowo-Gibran's defeat and Anies' victory (10 tweets), next is hope for Prabowo-Gibran's defeat (9 tweets), and the lowest is hope for Prabowo-Gibran's victory (1 tweet). It should be noted that the candidates for president and vice president of

Indonesia in the 2024 elections are three pairs of candidates, namely Anies Baswedan-Muhaimin Iskandar, Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabumingraka, and Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud MD.

Although the initial narrative uploaded by the first user expressed hope for Prabowo's defeat, the results indicate that more users chose to use a narrative solely hoping for Anies' victory without involving the word "Prabowo" in their posts do not mention the other candidate pairs, namely Ganjar-Mahfud. Furthermore, in line with the concept of vows, if there is hope then something is promised. The following can be seen in **Figure 3**, the supporting promises if their hopes come true.

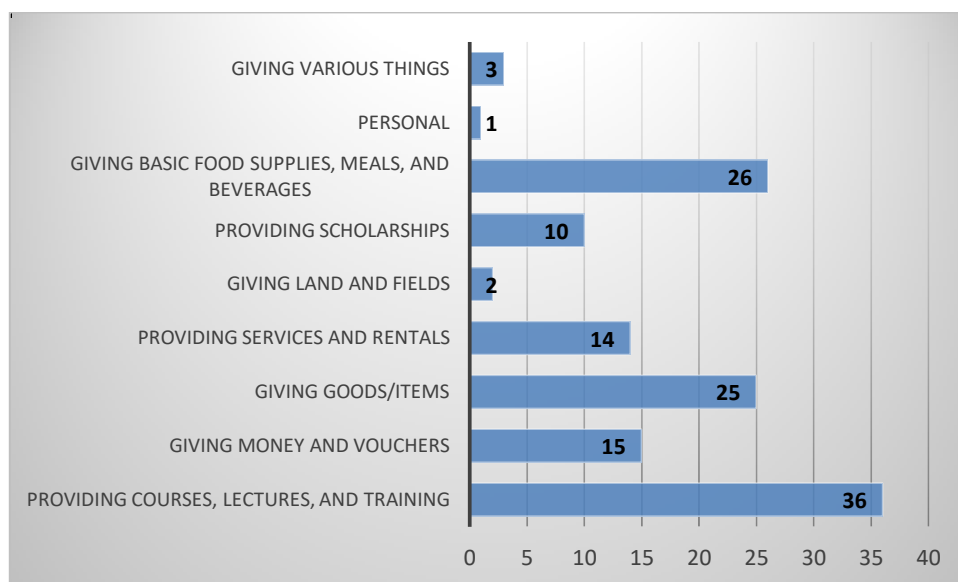


Figure 3. The promises of supporters if their hopes come true
Source: Author's (2024)

Figure 3 above shows that various promises were made by supporters such as providing courses, lectures and training (36 tweets). Various courses and training, such as design classes, health lectures, Al-Quran reading classes, and even market research training for small and medium businesses. Providing basic food assistance, snacks and drinks (26 tweets), such as providing free lunches for one of the Islamic boarding schools for a week or distributing harvests. Giving goods (25 tweets), including watches, books, perfume and charcoal briquettes. Giving money and vouchers (15 tweets), starting from giving cash of 2.5 million rupiah to giving electricity vouchers for mosques and prayer rooms. Providing services and rentals (14 tweets), such as offering free online motorbike taxi rides every Friday and waiving rental fees for students. Providing scholarships (10 tweets), including scholarships for children in eastern Indonesia and increasing school quota capacity to offer free education for underprivileged children. Giving various things (3 tweets), such as not only fasting or haircuts, supporters also give free stickers and food boxes. Gifts of land and fields (2 tweets), and finally, personal (1 tweet), regarding supporters who will cycle non-stop for 306 km, breaking their own record.

From the two results above, related to what was expected and promised, it can be seen that although this hashtag started from supporters of presidential candidate Anies Baswedan-Muhaimin Iskandar, it was also used by supporters of other candidates, namely Prabowo and Gibran. What is promised mainly revolves around providing various knowledge through classes, courses, and training, as well as meeting basic needs. Both of these are crucial problems faced by Indonesia.

Involvement of political actors in #Nazarpemilu

This hashtag movement was not only followed by supporters, but also members and political elite parties supporting the presidential and vice presidential candidates, Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar, who are also legislative candidates for the People's Representative Council in the 2024 elections. From the 132 posts that were liked a lot and retweeted by Twitter users, we found two actors involved in the #Nazarpemilu conversation. They are Mardani Ali Sera and Indra Kusumah. Evidence of their involvement in using #Nazarpemilu can be seen in **Figure 4** and **Figure 5** below. Mardani stated in his Tweet: "Bismillah. Mudah2an rakyat diberikan kelancaran dan kemenangan. Jika AMIN menang: 1. Saya akan bagi2 buku saya gratis 2. Tasyakuran bersama anak yatim potong kambing dibebberapa tempat. #nazarpemilu menjadi #gerakanperubahan yg dilakukan elemen rakyat utk melawan fitnah, hoax dan ketidakadilan potensial kecurangan pemilu". Indra Kusumah stated in his tweet: "I'm joining #Nazarpemilu. If AMIN wins, I will: 1. Hold a soft skills training session for at least 88 people, FOR FREE. 2. Share 8 books that I've written, FOR FREE. 3. Provide therapy for 8 people with phobias, FOR FREE".

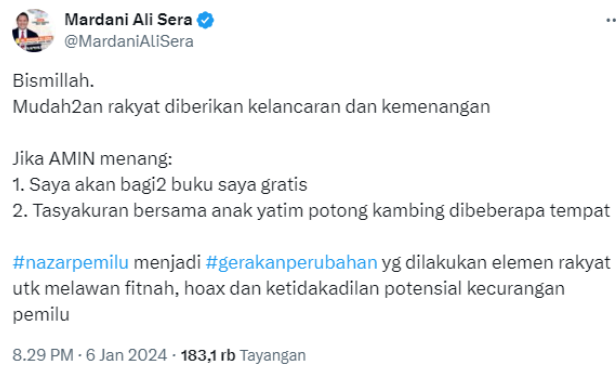


Figure 4. Tweet post of Mardani Ali Sera as a political actor from the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)

Source: Twitter (X), 2024



Figure 5. Tweet post of Indra Kusumah as a political actor from the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)

Source : Twitter (X), 2024

The Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) is a political party in Indonesia with an Islamic religious ideology. PKS is one of the parties supporting presidential and vice presidential candidates, Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar. The two actors above, apart from being legislative candidates, also have an important role in the party and Anies-Muhaimin's victory. They served as national spokespersons for volunteers for change, Anies for president, and served as Chair of the Technology, Industry and Environment Sector of the PKS DPP who previously also participated in Anies' winning team in the 2017 DKI Jakarta gubernatorial election.

This finding is in line with what (Widian, 2023) found in the previous election, that the strategic environment faced by populist actors in the 2019 Indonesian election influenced their decision to choose Islam as a tool for mass mobilization. In addition, (Ernst et al., 2017) also noted that social media provides freedom for populist actors to articulate their ideology and spread their messages, as mentioned (Reinemann et al., 2016), from populist or non-populist politicians and media can produce various results, including perceptions of the reality regarding the condition of the country, positive or negative emotions, relevant messages aspects of social identity, attitudes, and behavioral consequences.

Furthermore, the conveyed by the actors stating that #Nazarpemilu is a #change movement carried out by the people to combat slander and hoaxes shows that these statements are key populist messages with the dimension of demanding people's sovereignty. This dimension falls into the category where actors argue to give more power to the people in the context of certain issues, one of which is related to elections (Ernst et al., 2019) and this is in line with what was expressed by (DeHanas & Shterin, 2018) that religion often plays a significant role in populist styles, offering a rich reservoir of cultural resources for populist politics. Populist leaders strategically use faith-based symbols, expressions, metaphors, and ideas to strengthen or evoke feelings of identity, distinction, and entitlement. These elements are creatively and selectively employed to rally "the people," fostering vigilance and resistance against perceived "elites" and "outsiders".

Influencing messages

Furthermore, we also analyzed the messages in the posts which also provided evidence that this hashtag was part of a political strategy. As seen in one user's post as seen in **Figure 6** below:



Figure 6. One of the tweets from a supporter showing a strategy
Source : Twitter (X), 2024

Prima stated in his tweet: "If Anies-Imin wins, I will offer free career consultation for 10 people. This is available to all voters (including 02.03 voters). If you vote for AMIN, you can also get extra interview training. You can choose to practice interviews

in English, Japanese, or Korean". The phrase "If you choose Amin, you will get additional interview practice" is a form of communication strategy used by Amin supporters to invite readers to vote for the presidential candidate Anies-Muhaimin. The strategy to influence voters is not only carried out in the form of text but also in the form of photos, as seen in **Figure 7** below.



Figure 7. Photos uploaded by supporters to influence readers to make #Nazarpemilu become offline movement
 Source: Twitter (X),2024

The figure above shows that supporters hope that this hashtag will not only occur online but can also expand into an offline movement by uploading a photo showing a banner installed in front of someone's house and writing hopes and promises and followed by #Nazarpemilu in their post. The banner reads, "If the 01 candidate pair wins, they will donate @1 million to the two nearest orphanages #Nazarpemilu". Both the strategy through the narrative conveyed and the photos are in line with what (Duncombe, 2019) found in his study regarding emotional dynamics on Twitter, that online discussions have real political consequences in the real world. Twitter's influence is not limited to online social media platforms but extends through mass media interactions with its emotional discourse. Photos, videos, and memes have the potential to evoke strong emotions in the Twitterverse, which in turn impacts political engagement in the real world.

The exposure or impact of #Nazarpemilu to other users

We also found tweets posted by users that depict the exposure from this hashtag. This can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Various forms of tweets affected by #Nazarpemilu

No.	Tweets
1.	I want to make a vow too , if Amin wins. 1. I will provide free market research training for 10 SMEs (basic market research, creating surveys, consumer interviews). 2. I will fully mentor 2 students who are writing a thesis on marketing
2.	I'll join (I'm surprised, this hashtag suddenly appeared... I actually made a vow a long time ago before today). But it's okay, I'll join too, hehe. If Amin wins, I want to cover the Tahfidz school fees for 5 orphaned children. #Nazarpemilu
3.	Joining the trend . If Amin wins, I, Nyai, want to share 20 chili sauces, 20 widow's soup for netizens, and a tumpeng rice for orphaned children

No.	Tweets
4.	<i>I want to join too.</i> If Amin wins, I want to buy books (freely chosen) for 2 people
5.	Suddenly, <i>it's trending</i> to make election vows. Alright, <i>I'll join too.</i> Special edition for K-pop fans because I want to make a vow that if Amin wins, I will give away some of my merchandise (albums/PCs/other merch). Bismillah, let's go...(accompanied by a picture with the caption the picture is just proof that I have a store)
6.	<i>I feel like joining</i> #Nazarpemilu hehe. If #amin wins, I'll help someone to memorize the Quran for one year, once a week, up to 30 minutes per session, learning new verses/recitation freely. Requirements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Online/come to the house. 2. Female. 3. Good Quranic recitation (evaluated through voice notes). 4. Weekend. But my friends on Twitter are few. Please help to make it viral, okay?
7.	<i>Count me in, just like @riowindras.</i> If Amin wins, I will distribute 100 kg of Crystal guavas, 20 kg each for 5 people. Preferably those on Java Island for easy delivery, and it will arrive overnight via intercity bus

Source: Twitter (X), 2024

The word "join" at the beginning of a user's tweet indicates that #Nazarpemilu has an impact on other users. This could happen because of two things, namely because #Nazarpemilu became a trending topic, and also because of exposure from the circle of friends. This finding is in line with what (Dawson, 2020) found; at the macro level, hashtags serve to index, categorize, and facilitate the search for specific topics. On the micro level, for individual users, they act as inline metadata for labeling topics but also play a broader role. Hashtags help establish connections with imagined audiences, express values or attitudes, invite interactions, and offer meta-commentary on the tweet's language and content.

This finding also aligns with (Hameleers, 2019), stating that online populist communication in a diverse and fragmented social media landscape significantly impacts voters, particularly when they are predisposed to align with the content and trust the sources delivering the message. Additionally, (Hameleers et al., 2018) suggest that Political communication has the greatest impact when it aligns with individuals' preexisting beliefs, though the freedom to choose reinforcing content does not necessarily increase its persuasiveness. This dynamic follows a two-step model of selection and persuasion based on attitudinal congruence. In the first step, individuals actively choose media content that reinforces their current understanding of reality. In the second step, only those whose priorities align with the content are positively influenced, deepening their alignment with the populist perspective.

Furthermore, (Margiansyah, 2019) asserts that the power of Islamic populism significantly intervenes in grassroots choices and political currents. The alignment of perceptions and narratives to the grassroots creates a situation of "suspension of difference," fostering solidarity and a Muslim vision across class levels in confronting shared enemies and resulting in societal dichotomies.

Additionally, this exposure could also be due to the effects of the filter bubble and echo chamber, as found by (Wulandari et al., 2021) that the filter bubble and echo chamber have been proven to influence the online scope of users, affecting users in terms of behavior both positively and negatively.

The involvement of buzzers in the conversation with #Nazarpemilu.

Next, to see if this hashtag is tainted by buzzers, we also analyzed our second set of data consisting of 217 tweets. The results we obtained show that this hashtag is also interfered with by buzzers supporting the presidential candidate pair Prabowo and Gibran as a form of resistance against the #Nazarpemilu that hopes for Prabowo and Gibran's defeat. The findings we discovered can be seen in **Figure 8** below:



Figure 8. Buzzers accounts and their tweets on #Nazarpemilu

Source: Author's (2024)

Based on the data we have, we detected accounts of buzzers (as shown in Figure 8 above) indicated by unusually high tweet frequency activity. On average, the buzzers have an unusual tweet posting frequency, around 19-20 times as shown in **Figure 9** below.



Figure 9. Buzzer tweet frequency on #Nazarpemilu

Source: Author's (2024)

Based on the content analysis we conducted on their profiles, we found that these buzzers appear to be supporters of the Prabowo-Gibran candidate pair and have a role in attacking other candidate pairs. The characteristics of the Buzzers are clearly visible in their accounts, as can be seen in **Figure 10** below. It is evident that they have nearly the same number of posts, ranging from 600 to 603 posts, identical profile pictures, and the same account creation date, which can be observed in the "joined" information on their profiles, all indicating November 2023. Additionally, they only follow and are followed by 1-3 accounts.

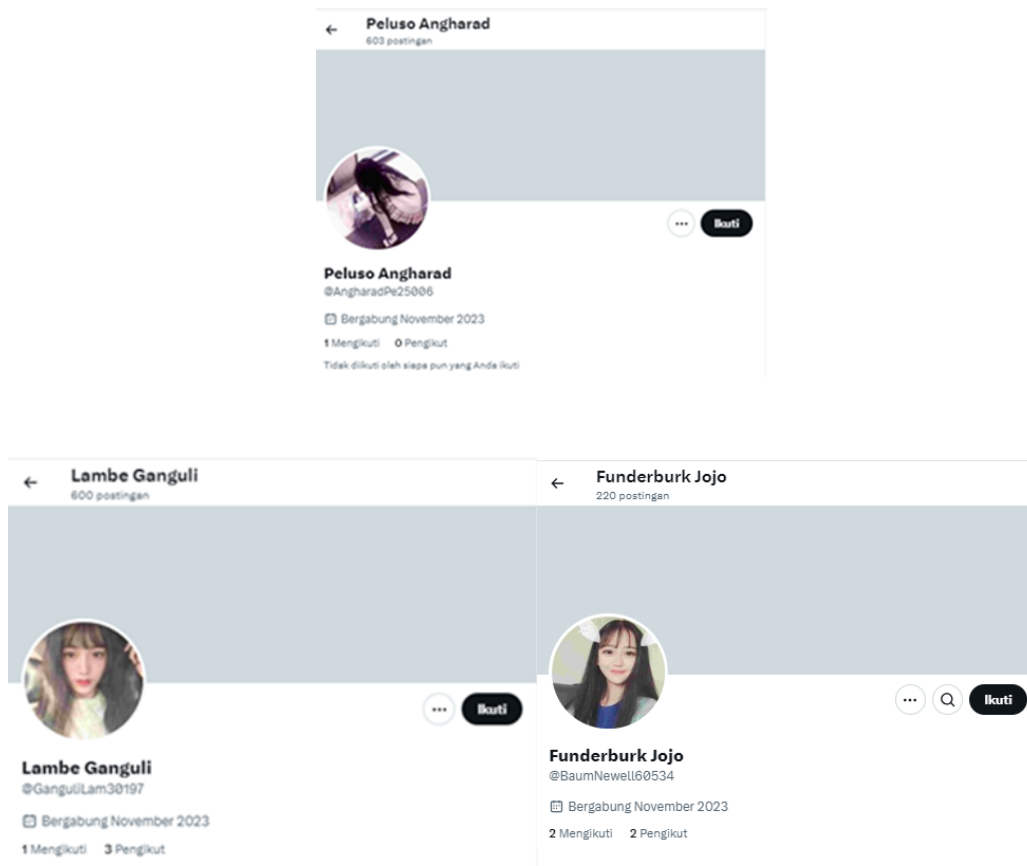


Figure 10. Profile of buzzers
Source: Twitter (X), 2024

This finding is in line with what was conveyed by (Ibrahim et al., 2016) that buzzer on Twitter (X) typically generates high tweet and retweet frequencies because these accounts actively post tweets to mobilize the opinions of other users. They usually are users with relatively short account creation dates, indicating that these accounts are created specifically for certain events, such as presidential elections. Buzzers have two categories. The first group consists of computer bots, automated programs designed to perform specific actions based on predefined triggers. The second group, known as buzzers, includes paid individuals or dedicated enthusiasts who actively engage by posting tweets frequently and responding swiftly to related discussions.

Conclusion

This study emphasizes several key points regarding the role of #Nazarpemilu as user-generated populist content in the dissemination of faith-based populist political communication during the 2024 Indonesian presidential election campaign on the social media platform X.

First, #Nazarpemilu is a hashtag containing hopes and promises to God conveyed by supporters if their hopes are realized. They hope for the victory of the presidential candidate they support, namely the presidential candidate pair Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar. Second, this hashtag involves political actors from the Islamic ideological political party, namely PKS. As seen in other countries, populist movements are often associated with right-wing parties. Third, this hashtag provides evidence that the messages used not only contain hopes and promises but also encourage other voters to choose the candidate supported by the message owner. Additionally, we found photos that could evoke users' emotions to turn this movement into an offline movement. Fourth, this hashtag impacts other users to also participate in making vows. Fifth, this hashtag is also used by political buzzers supporting opposing candidates to counter it with a contrasting narrative.

Based on these findings, we conclude that populist content shared by users that appeals to religion in the form of hashtags can play an effective role in spreading populist political communication on the social media platform X. These findings support what Yilmaz and Baron (Yilmaz & Barton, 2021) stated that online political activities in Indonesia adopt elements from three types of populism—religious, chauvinistic, and technocratic—the #Nazarpemilu hashtag represents an example of online political activity using the religious type and Yilmaz (Yilmaz, 2021) also mentioned that appeals to religion not only shape populist ideology but also help mobilize society to oppose other groups by evoking feelings of love, passion, hate, and more. In the context of the #Nazarpemilu hashtag, the call to make vows involves promises tied to the needs of voters or users, where the promise-makers are not limited by socioeconomic status—both the rich and the economically disadvantaged make promises according to their abilities. These aspects successfully ignite enthusiasm among users to engage with this hashtag and mobilize voters.

The study has a limitation in terms of small data due to limited access to the X platform. Therefore, future studies are expected to examine other hashtags carrying faith-based symbols with larger datasets, not limited to a single platform like X but also from other major social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.

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