Power Relations between Media and Politics in Indonesia

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Abstract. The 2024 General Election in Indonesia has become a central arena for the complex dynamics between media and politics. In-depth qualitative research reveals that the relationship between media and political parties is key to understanding how political information is conveyed to the public. Mass media, both print and electronic, plays a strategic role in shaping public perceptions of political parties, candidates, and campaign issues. Social media, with its two-way interaction and rapid dissemination, strengthens the direct connection between political parties and voters. The media not only serves as a conduit for information but also as a primary platform for political discourse, including comparisons of political parties, assessments of candidates, and analysis of campaign programs. The relationship between media and political parties is characterized by cooperation, competition, and occasional conflict. Political parties actively engage in crafting campaign messages and coordinating media interviews, while social media plays a pivotal role in their communication strategies. This dynamic raises questions about the independence of the media and how political parties leverage it to achieve their political objectives. On one hand, the media acts as a critical watchdog; on the other hand, political parties seek to use the media to amplify campaign messages and shape narratives that align with their interests. In conclusion, the relationship between media and political parties in Indonesia's 2024 General Election forms a complex dynamic. The media plays a strategic role in shaping public opinion, while political parties actively utilize it to achieve their political goals.

Keywords: Political Media Relation, Political Party, Pemilu 2024

Abstrak. Pemilu 2024 di Indonesia menjadi arena utama bagi dinamika kompleks antara media dan politik. Penelitian kualitatif mendalam mengungkapkan bahwa hubungan media dan partai politik menjadi kunci memahami bagaimana informasi politik disampaikan kepada publik. Media massa, baik cetak maupun elektronik, memiliki peran strategis membentuk persepsi publik terhadap partai politik, kandidat, serta isu-isu kampanye. Media sosial, dengan interaksi dua arah dan penyebaran yang cepat, memperkuat hubungan langsung antara partai politik dan pemilih. Media tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai penyampai informasi, tetapi juga menjadi platform utama untuk diskusi politik, termasuk perbandingan partai politik, penilaian terhadap kandidat, dan analisis program kampanye. Relasi antara media dan partai politik ditandai oleh kerja sama, persaingan, dan kadang-kadang konflik. Partai politik secara aktif terlibat dalam penyusunan pesan kampanye dan koordinasi wawancara media, sementara media sosial berperan sebagai elemen kunci dalam strategi komunikasi mereka. Dinamika hubungan ini menimbulkan pertanyaan tentang independensi media dan bagaimana partai politik memanfaatkannya untuk mencapai tujuan politik mereka. Di satu sisi, media berfungsi sebagai pengawas yang kritis; di sisi lain, partai politik berusaha menggunakan media untuk memperkuat pesan kampanye dan membentuk narasi yana sesuai dengan kepentingan mereka. Kesimpulannya, hubungan antara media dan partai politik dalam Pemilu 2024 di Indonesia membentuk dinamika yang kompleks. Media memainkan peran strategis dalam membentuk opini publik, sementara partai politik secara aktif memanfaatkannya untuk mencapai tujuan politik mereka.

Kata Kunci: Relasi Media Politik, Partai Politik, Pemilu 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

As a developing democracy, Indonesia has experienced a notable transformation in the interrelationship between the media and politics. The political media landscape in Indonesia is a reflection of the country's diverse and evolving political dynamics. The media serves as an effective intermediary in the dissemination of information (Emilsyah Nur, 2021). McLuhan and Fiore (1967) asserted that the essence of society is inextricably linked to the media in all eras. They postulated that the media is not merely a reflection, but also a determinant of societal character. In this perspective, the media is not regarded as a discrete entity separate from everyday life; rather, it is a pivotal factor influencing people's attitudes and actions.

2024 The elections represent the culmination of a period of intense scrutiny of the intricate relationships between the media and politics. These elections are not merely a routine political process; they represent the pinnacle of the electoral cycle, where political parties engage in a fierce competition for the support and votes of the electorate. In this context, the media assumes a pivotal role as the primary conduit of information, meticulously detailing and presenting issues that affect the political order (Junaidi, 2018). The context of the 2024 election creates a distinctive environment that shapes the media's approach to engagement. The competition between political parties to secure the support of the electorate gives rise to a high level of intensity in media coverage. The media is not merely a passive observer; rather, it plays an active role in delineating the distinctions between political parties, candidate profiles, and the issues at the core of political debates (Iyengar & McGrady, 2007). The media not only provides information, but also plays a role in shaping political narratives (Juwandi & et al., 2021). In the context of an election, the media has a responsibility to accurately portray the vision and mission of each political party and to describe the issues that are most relevant to society in a careful and accurate manner. In an effort to provide voters with detailed information, the media helps voters to make informed and intelligent decisions.

The significance of grasping the interconnection between the media and political parties extends beyond the realm of theoretical discourse. It has far-reaching implications for individuals' comprehension of politics and their inclination to support it (Robertson, 2015). In the current era, where mass media plays a pivotal role in influencing public opinion, a comprehensive examination of the dynamics between the media and political parties is a crucial necessity. This research was conducted with the objective of exploring and discussing the evolution of the relationship between the media and political parties in the context of the 2024 Indonesian elections in detail.

Literature Review

The existing literature on the relationship between media and politics in Indonesia demonstrates the dynamic developments in the interaction between the two. Works such as those produced by Effendi Ghazali and Wimar Witoelar provide detailed and comprehensive insights into the historical development, transformations and functions of the media in responding to political dynamics in Indonesia. For instance, Effendi Ghazali (2004) emphasises the significance of grasping and cultivating the domain of political communication in Indonesia bolster the democratisation particularly in the context of elections. This body of literature underscores the function of the media as a vital conduit for democratic processes and a conduit for the voices of the people, while elucidating the challenges and controversies encountered by the media in disseminating political information.

In addition to the extensive literature on the relationship between media and politics, there are also a number of theories that examine the relationship between the media and political parties. providing a robust conceptual framework for understanding these dynamics. Theories of agenda setting and framing emphasise the capacity of the media to influence the agendas and perceptions of the general public with regard to specific political issues. Agenda setting theory has its origins in the works of two seminal figures in the field, Walter Lippmann and Bernard Cohen. contributions, namely Lippmann's 1922 book Public Opinion and Cohen's 1963 publication The Press and Foreign Policy, laid the foundation for the development of this theoretical framework. However, this concept was first formally introduced by Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw in 1972. In a survey of voters in North Carolina conducted during the 1968 US presidential election, McCombs and Shaw (2023) found that people's perceptions of the most important issues were strongly influenced by what was reported in the mass media. In other words, the issues that people perceive as crucial often correspond with the focus of the news.

In essence, framing theory can be understood as a method of contextualising an event. Pan and Kosicki distinguish between two approaches to framing. Firstly, there is the sociological approach, which focuses on the manner in which media and public discourse influence the formation of social reality. In this context, framing is regarded as a social process, in which the media and other institutions play a significant role in influencing public perception and interpretation of an issue. The second approach to framing is psychological in nature. This perspective places greater emphasis on individual cognitive processes, specifically how an individual processes and responds to information. In this context, framing is defined as a mental scheme or cognitive structure that guides an individual's understanding and interpretation of information. When individuals receive information that has been framed, they tend to process it in accordance with the existing cognitive framework. This indicates that framing affects how individuals evaluate, recall and make decisions based on the information they receive (Pan & Kosicki, 1993; Sobur, 2022).

Meanwhile, propaganda theory discusses how the media is used as a tool to convey messages with the aim of influencing public opinion, shaping perceptions or manipulating information for specific interests. Media propaganda can take many forms, including overemphasising an issue, framing information in a certain way, or using persuasive language (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2006; Bernays, 1923). In the context of propaganda theory, there are Lazarsfeld (1944) and Merton (1949) who contributed to the explanation of how media can shape public opinion and influence political and

social behaviour, providing the basis for further studies on propaganda and media influence. There is also the theory of the 'propaganda model' which highlights the media operating as a tool of social control (Herman & Chomsky, 1988).

The concept of the 'spiral of silence' offers insight into the ways in which political parties utilise the media to construct narratives and influence public opinion. In light of the above, an attempt can be made to comprehend the manner in which these theories are applicable and evolve within the context of Indonesian politics. The theory was first proposed by Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann in 1974. This theory posits that individuals are inclined to refrain from expressing their views when they perceive them to be unpopular or contrary to the prevailing majority opinion. Such individuals are fearful of becoming a minority and experiencing social isolation, and thus choose to remain silent or align their views with those of the majority (Noelle-Neumann, 1993). While there are other scholars who have extended, critiqued, or applied this theory in the context of communication and media studies, including David Demers (1999), William Eveland (2004), Ernest-Noel Kohfeldt (2005), Carrol Glynn (2004), Matthias R. Hastall (2013), and Wolfgang Donsbach (2004).

A number of empirical studies have been conducted on the relationship between media and elections in Indonesia, providing particular insights into the electoral context. These studies include analyses of media content during the campaign period, the influence of social media in shaping voter opinion, and the dynamics of interaction between political parties and mass media. By understanding this literature, it is hoped that this research can be placed in a broader context and its impact on voter decisions.

2. METHOD

This research adopts an in-depth qualitative approach to explore political media relations in Indonesia, particularly in the context of media and political party relations in the 2024 Indonesian elections (Nurhayati, 2022). Qualitative methods are used to conduct comprehensive analyses of various data sources,

with an emphasis on relevance to the central issue, namely the impact of mass media on political identity formation in Indonesia. The qualitative approach of this research enables an in-depth understanding of the complex dynamics of political media relations in Indonesia. Media and politics in Indonesia have a close relationship, especially in the context of general elections. This research aims to explore a more detailed understanding of the interaction between media and politics.

The qualitative approach allows the researcher to identify patterns, trends and dynamics that quantitative methods may miss. Its focus on relevant literature helps structure systematic analyses with an assessment of relevance to the main issue, which is how mass media influence political identity in Indonesia. Through the use of qualitative methods, this research seeks to uncover complex nuances in mass media narratives, such as the role of online news in mobilising the masses to support a particular candidate or party. By deeply analysing relevant literature, this research aims to provide deeper insights into political media relations in Indonesia, especially in the context of media and political party relations in the 2024 Indonesian elections.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

General elections are a crucial milestone in a country's democratic agenda. The 2024 elections in Indonesia are an important momentum in evaluating and describing the dynamics between the media and political parties. In this context, the role, involvement of political parties with the media, and the dynamics of the relationship between the two become the central focus to understand how political information is presented, compiled, and articulated to the public.

The Role of Media in Elections

The role of the media in the 2024 elections involves a strategic function in shaping people's views on political parties, candidates and campaign issues. The mass media, both print and electronic, serves as the main agent of information delivery to the public and is required to present information independently and neutrally during elections, serving as a social control and mediator in political life. The role of the media is considered equal to the legislative,

executive and judicial institutions to be the mouthpiece of the community towards the socio-political dynamics in a region. Journalism expert Bill Kovach emphasises that journalism and democracy grow together, and democracy will not exist without good political journalism (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; Musfialdy, 2015). In addition, journalism is also seen as a social institution that plays a key role in democracy (Schudson, 2003, & Carrey, 1989).

The media has a strategic role in the 2024 General Election because it plays a role in shaping public perceptions of political parties, candidates and campaign issues. The existence of the media as the main information channel has a major influence on how voters perceive these elements (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Mass media, both in print and electronic form, is a key influence in shaping public perceptions. Through political reporting, analysis and discussion, the media helps shape people's views of political parties, candidates and related issues (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). The New York Times is a clear example of how print newspapers have a major impact on public perception. Through its in-depth coverage, editorials and analyses, the paper shapes people's views on political issues and candidates (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). In the context of politics in Indonesia, TV One may be one of the news channels that play an important role in providing election coverage and detailing political issues. The channel has significant influence among television viewers in Indonesia (Sen & Hill, 2006). Moreover, it is well known how this media has a relationship with the Golkar Party, which of course to some extent tries to create a variety of coverage that presents a good image of the Golkar Party (Murfianti & Nugroho, 2015).

Mass media serves as the main platform for presenting political information. Print and electronic media provide a platform where voters can access news analyses, and views from various sources, forming the basis for their decision-making (Graber & Dunaway, 2017; Swanson & Mancini, 1996; Norris, 2000; Papacharissi, 2011). In addition to presenting information, the media is also the main arena for discussing political issues. These discussions include comparisons between political parties, assessments of candidates, and analyses of

campaign programmes, all of which influence voter perceptions (Entman, 2012; Turkle, 2015; & Norris, 2000). A review of analyses from CCN could be an example of how print media plays its role in this regard. In their analysis, CNN created a political map of the three presidential candidates, namely Prabowo, Ganjar, and Anies ahead of the 2024 presidential election campaign published on the CNN Indonesia website (16 November 2023). There they analysed that Prabowo-Gibran was considered to have an advantage with high electability and support from governing parties. Ganjar-Mahfud gained strong support from PDIP sympathisers and Anies-Cak Imin attracted young voters. Political observers say Prabowo-Gibran controls the political map, while Ganjar-Mahfud and Anies-Cak Imin have their own strategies to capture young voters. This analysis reflects the importance of political parties' strategies in capturing specific voter niches and how the media helps shape political perceptions (CNN Indonesia, 2023).

The media provides a space for political voices. In a democracy, plurality of opinions is recognised, and the media becomes a channel through which various political views can be expressed, giving voters richer insights (Sunstein, 2017). The media do not only function as passive observers, but also as drivers of public opinion. They have the power to shape the direction of national politics through the way they present and comment on political information (Jamieson & Waldman, 2002). A concrete example can be how the media reports the results of surveys or polls related to the popularity of a political leader, and how the public responds. Mass media, both print and electronic, play a role in shaping public perceptions and opinions on various political issues.

Furthermore, the media not only acts as a conveyor of information, but also functions as a moderator of political issues. Moderation here refers to the role of the media in controlling, directing, and giving a balanced proportion to the various political issues presented. The media can select and highlight certain issues to respond to public needs and interests (McQuail, 2010). The media also acts as an interpreter of political issues by presenting news, opinions, and analyses. Through moulded narratives, the

media provide interpretations of political events. This includes providing context, chronologising events, and offering explanations for political implications. These media interpretations can influence the way viewers understand and respond to certain political issues.

The media not only presents facts but also builds certain narratives. This narrative shapes how a political event is understood by the public. The choice of words, framing, and visual presentation in the news affect people's perceptions of political parties, candidates, or certain issues (Entman, 1993). By moderating, interpreting and shaping narratives, the media has a significant influence on the direction of national politics. Public perceptions formed through the media can influence support for political policies, party image, or even influence the outcome of elections (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987).

Moreover, with social media, political parties and candidates have a new platform to interact directly with voters. Social media provides a two-way dialogue space, allowing voters to give direct responses, ask questions or share their views (Chadwick, 2017). Social media also accelerates the dissemination of information. Political parties and candidates can quickly deliver campaign messages, respond to current events, or provide clarifications through platforms such as Twitter, Facebook or Instagram (Towner & Dulio, 2017, Harcourt, 2005). Furthermore, social media allows political parties and candidates to extend the reach of their campaigns. Campaign content can be easily shared, retweeted or shared by voters, creating a domino effect in the spread of political information (Howard & Hussain, 2013). Social media is not only a channel to deliver messages, but also influences the dynamics of campaigns. Political issues can go viral, political movements can be coordinated online, and voters can engage in broad discussions (Bennet & Segerberg, 2012, Castells, 1996).

Relationship between Media and Political Parties in the 2024 Election

The relationship between the media and political parties is very closely linked. Political parties are actively involved in the messaging of their campaigns. They design the messages they want to convey to voters and try to ensure that the message matches the image they want to project (Stromback & Esser, 2009). Political parties are also actively involved in coordinating interviews and media coverage. They seek to gain positive coverage in the media by organising meetings, press conferences and interviews with candidates (Aarlberg, 2011). The Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) was one of the parties that used the media by holding a press conference on 2 September 2023 at the PKS DPP Office, Jakarta. The press conference discussed the political dynamics ahead of the 2024 presidential election. PKS President, Ahmad Syaikhu, led the press conference to convey the direction of PKS support. This event took place at the same time as the declaration of Baswedan-Muhaimin Anies Iskandar presidential and vice presidential candidates in Surabaya. PKS, which is still a member of the Coalition of Change for Unity, is endorsing Anies Baswedan as a presidential candidate. The press conference was a response to political and coalition developments ahead of the 2024 presidential election.

Social media is also an important platform in political parties' communication strategies. They use social media to disseminate information, campaign messages, and interact directly with voters (Gibson, 2014; Pariser, 2011). This model of political campaigning has involved various platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and Tiktok. Examples of strategies involve paid advertising to reach advertising targets, building personal branding through personal accounts, creating interesting content according to the characteristics of each platform, organising live discussions using live features on various platforms, and forming support groups on Facebook. These strategies include using the various features uniqueness of the platforms to achieve the objectives of online political campaigns.

The way the media presents news, the selection of framing, and the prominence of certain issues can shape voters' perceptions of political parties and candidates (Aalberg, 2011). Research by the Centre for Digital Society Fisipol UGM monitored the activities of the five winning parties of the 2019 elections, such as PDI

Perjuangan, Gerindra, PKB, and Nasdem on social media platform X from January 2022 to September 2023, PDI Perjuangan stood out with a total of 30,593 tweets, followed by Gerindra with 17,057. The other parties showed lower activity.

The research found that the main motivation of parties is electoral politics to increase electability and popularity. Party coalitions such as PKB with Nasdem and Gerindra with Golkar show different levels of interaction on social media. The issue of the National Capital City (IKN) in Kalimantan is a strategic issue emphasised by all parties with party figures supporting the development of IKN. However, the issue of climate change is still minimally discussed by political parties, despite being a priority projection of the government until 2060. However, tensions can arise when the interests of the media and political parties intersect, especially around issues of press freedom and how political narratives are carried out (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

Dynamics of Relations between Media and Political Parties

The relationship between the media and political parties can vary to include elements such as co-operation, competition or even conflict. Factors such as political interests, campaign narratives and communication strategies play a key role in determining this dynamic (Norris, 2000). In Indonesia, the most obvious is the cooperation between the media and political parties. This happens because some print media, television are controlled by party officials. On the one hand, in a democratic climate this is of course a normal thing. But on the other hand, it raises suspicions about the inaccuracy of the mass media. The Press Council says some politicians and political parties utilise some mass media as political tools. A survey conducted by the Press Council shows the vulnerability of the media to be used for political purposes, especially in the context presidential and legislative elections. The practice of opinion-mongering through media owned by party leaders results in news that is inaccurate, unbalanced and tends to be exploitative. Another problem is the lack of independence.

The media also act as critical watchdogs that monitor and review the actions of political parties. They have an oversight role in ensuring transparency and accountability in the political process (Curran & Seaton, 2018). Political parties on the other hand seek to utilise the media as a means to amplify their campaign messages. Through press conferences, exclusive interviews, or interactions on social media. Political parties seek to shape the narrative in accordance with their goals (Chadwick & Howard, 2008). One interesting campaign style comes from the National Mandate Party (PAN). PAN is utilising social media with a different communication style ahead of the 2024 elections. This communication style looks fresher, similar to the typical Generation Z joke account. PAN is trying to restore the concept of elections as a democratic party with an atmosphere of excitement. PAN wants to convey the party's programme with visuals and relaxed text. The goal is to make the party's ideas easier for the younger generation to understand.

The dynamics of the relationship between the media and political parties can also be seen through intensive interaction on social media. Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and provide opportunities communicate directly with voters and shape their image. (Tandoc & Lee, 2012). A figure who is considered quite successful in this regard is Ridwan Kamil. Although he failed to be nominated as a presidential candidate. However, Ridwan Kamil's chances of becoming a candidate for Governor of DKI Jakarta or continuing his leadership in West Java are more open. Ridwan Kamil utilises social media to shape his political image. He mostly uses Facebook and Instagram to attract the attention of millennials. Ridwan Kamil is arguably successful in creating significant high awareness from his followers. His posts get thousands to hundreds of thousands of likes, and hundreds to thousands of comments (Gracia, 2020).

4. CONCLUSION

The results show that in the context of the 2024 elections in Indonesia, the relationship between the media and political parties is the main focus for understanding the dynamics of delivering political information to the public.

The role of the media is very strategic, shaping perceptions of political candidates and campaign issues. Mass media, both print and electronic, serve as the main agents of information delivery and social control in political life. The role of the media is not limited to the delivery of information. The media is also the main platform for discussing political issues. These discussions include comparisons between political parties, candidate assessments, and analysis of campaign programmes. Social media, with its two-way dialogue and rapid information dissemination, expands direct interaction between political parties and voters.

The relationship between the media and includes parties co-operation, political competition and sometimes conflict. Political parties are actively involved in crafting campaign messages and coordinating media interviews. Social media has become an important platform in political parties' communication strategies, enabling dissemination of campaign messages and direct interaction with voters. The dynamics of this relationship raise questions about independence of the media and how political parties utilise it to achieve their political goals. While the media acts as a critical guardian and watchdog, political parties seek to utilise the media to amplify campaign messages and shape the narrative in accordance with their goals. In conclusion, the relationship between the media and political parties in Indonesia in the context of the 2024 elections creates a complex dynamic, involving the strategic role of the media in shaping public opinion and the active role of political parties in utilising it to achieve their political goals.

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