

Twitter in the 2020 Sleman Regent and Deputy Regent Election Campaign During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Elections during the Covid-19 pandemic are new in the history of modern politics. There are several adjustments in the implementation of elections, and one of them is the campaign stage. The campaign during the Covid-19 pandemic has severely restricted in-person meetings and prioritized the use of social media. This study aims to elaborate on the use of Twitter in the implementation of the campaign in the 2020 Sleman Regent and Deputy Regent Election. The unit of analysis in this study is the Twitter accounts of the candidates registered by the campaign team to the General Election Commission (KPU) of Sleman Regency and analyzed using qualitative analysis methods. From the Nvivo 12 Plus research software. Firstly, the findings from this study show that the touch power of campaigns using Twitter is wider than using conventional campaigns with direct face-to-face interaction. Second, the campaign using Twitter is a very effective form of a campaign to prevent the transmission of Covid-19. Third, Twitter campaigns can break the formal and rigid impression of the candidates for regent and deputy regent. Fourth, campaigns using social media are part of the candidates' compliance with regulations regarding existing campaigns.

Keywords: Campaign, Covid-19, Twitter.

1. INTRODUCTION

The prerequisite for a democratic state is the existence of general elections to form a democratic government. Therefore, general elections are routine for a country that claims to be democratic [1]. Consolidation of democracy is one of the facilities to increase the commitment of all members of the community to the rules of the democratic game, which is not only a political process that exists at the procedural level of political institutions, but also at the citizen level [2]. In the Indonesian context, the ongoing democratic process is influenced by several factors, such as political culture, actor behavior, and political forces ([3], [4]

easy information for the community, the tendency to integrate information in life [5]. People's tendency to information is one of the main factors for the development and evolution of civilization for the need for fast and accurate information [6]. Following the development of social media, non-profit, government, and non-governmental organizations worldwide have been working hard to identify how social media platforms can be used as effective tools for strategic communication in times of crisis [3]. The ease of obtaining information and communicating, especially in public services, is one example of the development of technology and communication as a pattern of activity needed by the community [7].

The presence of technology in life has provided

Social media used as a political communication

strategy is a relatively new thing and has become a hot phenomenon. Along with the development of internet-based information technology [8], the role of online social media is increasingly important as a factor that can positively affect political participation [9]. It is becoming clear that tools online play an important role in shaping public opinion and setting the political agenda [10]. Politicians, citizens, and journalists are increasingly adopting new social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Youtube to support their political goals, be it to engage with other stakeholders in the political public sphere [11](DAŞLI, 2019), campaign, disseminate or retrieve information, or contribute to critical rational debates.

Mastering public communication is one of the keys to winning the competition in politics, and currently, one of the most effective channels is social media [12]. In Indonesia, social media as a political communication tool was most prevalent during the 2014 Presidential Election of the Republic of Indonesia. Variants of social media that are developing and are in great demand by people are Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Youtube, and other social media platforms [12]. Thus, social media as a means of communication has a role in bringing its users to participate actively by contributing and giving feedback openly [13], both to share information and to respond online in a fast time.

The ability of political information borderless in the formation of political images is easier to do, including branding of political candidates/parties due to the current political communication process [14]. Political branding uses strategic methods of consumer branding to build a political image[15]. An example of branding in contemporary political communication is what Barack Obama did in the United States Presidential Election in 2007 [16].

It can be seen that to achieve the expected outcome; it is very important to know who the audience is and what is considered important and not important [17]. In other words, it is necessary to explore the culture of the audience to be persuaded. Political actors began to use the services buzzers of professional politicians to approach the community through campaign messages on social media. This role becomes dangerous if it is used to shape public perceptions and views of certain political candidates, even to create and spread news hoaxes and hate speech between political opponents who will then cause divisions in society [18].

The problem is that political actors in Indonesia are still not aware that communicating on social media requires its ability. Certainly, the ability here is not only the technical ability but mentality [19]. The presence of social media requires political actors to adapt. However, these political actors often have difficulty in this adaptation phase. There are several things related to old mentalities, as mentioned above, and these are generally experienced by organizations that use social media [18](Loisa, 2020).

The success of branding through social media is determined by managing social media up-to-date and always maintaining consistent communication by using a conversational structure that is developing in the community [15]. Maintaining social media management that is always up to date and serving the public provides the information is not easy. Consistency is the keyword that all parties need to understand [19]. In addition, politicians also face other challenges related to the use of social media as an effort to form branding, namely displaying a person under public expectations.

The campaign is a program designed to support the people's party with the title general election. The campaign is a place to promote and introduce oneself and convey ideas and ideas in the form of a vision and mission [20]. In general, a campaign is a form of communication to introduce, promote, or publish several things that aim to win public trust [15][21]. In today's digital era, campaigns on social media are considered to be more effective in winning the hearts of voters, especially millennial voters, who are mostly social media users.

Indonesia has recently held simultaneous regional head elections in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, everything related to regional head elections must comply with health protocols and campaigns as a means to introduce themselves and propose the vision and mission that is brought. Various strategies were taken to win the people's hearts in the regional head election, with a social media approach to reach a wider community. In this case, the election of the regional head of Sleman Regency in the DI Yogyakarta Province is also carried out by utilizing various platforms, including Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and others. In this study, to see how they use Twitter during the campaign period during the COVID-19 pandemic, and then to see the extent and role of Twitter for campaigning in the Election of Regent and Deputy Regent of Sleman.

2. BASIC THEORY

Campaigns are the primary mechanism for delivering information. Campaigns must be open and honest. Given the dearth of attention paid to campaigns in democratic theory, especially given their central importance in the democratic experience of most citizens. campaigns Online conducted in democracies around the world. This work answers questions about whether and how campaigns use digital media and have revealed which candidates are most likely to use campaign facilities or features online in certain different circumstances. The potential impact of online campaigns on vote sharing and the relationship between attending to political information found online and various forms of participation in campaigns and elections among individuals.

Recent developments in social media campaigns are closely related to these characteristics, and it is not difficult to find examples of personalization, anti-elitism, or populism in political communication on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. However, the term 'digital age' also overshadows current trends in political communication. The authors would suggest that, from the 2010s onwards, a fourth phase emerged: the 'social media era,' which represents a new shift in the balance of power between politicians and editorial media. As a direct channel to voters, social media returns us to the 'golden age of the party,' as defined by Blumler and Kavanagh (1999), except this time, parties have been replaced by campaigns [22].

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The approach used in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach that describes the phenomenon of campaigning using social media with the Twitter platform in the 2020 Sleman Regent and Deputy Regent Election. Descriptive analysis in this study uses NVivo 12 plus software. Sources of data for this research include website, Twitter, documents from KPU Sleman Regency. The data was obtained using the Ncapture feature on the Nvivo 12 plus, where the N capture feature is a web browser extension developed to capture web content in the form of the website content, social media, and other document content such as scientific articles and documents from the Sleman Regency KPU. Nvivo 12 plus analysis uses Chart analysis, Word cloud, Cluster analysis, and Chart analysis features. Cluster analysis is used to visualize and collect data/words that have similarities and differences.

This study looks at the similarities and differences in tweets from organizational groups. Chart analysis is used for charts to study, process data in research, and analyses answers in the form of N captures; Meanwhile, Word cloud analysis lists words or concepts that often appear in the research file to visualize and collect data/words that have similarities and differences.

This study aims to look at Twitter as one of the campaigns in preventing the spread of Covid-19. This study will answer the main question: How is the campaign using Twitter from all pairs of candidates for Regent and Deputy Regent?

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Campaign in the election is crucial. The campaign is used to introduce the candidate pairs for the Regent and Deputy Regent of Sleman to socialize the vision, mission, and program. However, the 2020 Sleman Regent and Deputy Regent Elections were faced with the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, it requires candidates to adapt to the Covid-19 pandemic to minimize direct and face-to-face campaigns. Campaigns using social media are regulated in KPU regulations. On the other hand, the candidates have a moral responsibility to help reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19 in the campaign.

All candidate pairs register social media accounts with the Sleman Regency KPU (Election Commission). Several social media accounts are registered with various platforms. Moreover, only the Kustini Sri Purnomo – Danang Maharsa couple use all social media platforms. On the other hand, only the Kustini Sri Purnomo - Danang Maharsa couple use social media with the Twitter platform, while the other two candidate pairs do not use Twitter to campaign on social media.

Candidate	Twitter	Facebook	Instagram
Number 1 Danang Wicaksana - Agus Choliq	X	V	V
Number 2 Sri Muslimatun - Amin Purnama	X	V	V
Number 3 Kustini Sri Purnomo - Danang Maharsa	V	V	V

Figure 1. Social Media Campaign

Source: Sleman Regency KPU Document

Similar to Facebook, Twitter gives a distinct impression to politicians. Twitter provides an opportunity for its users to write all kinds of events in the medium of 140 words, called tweets. Tweets can be announced through third-party applications, such as Facebook, email, and websites. Two kinds of relationships are created on Twitter. First, the

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