

Artists' roles and digital strategies in the 2024 Indonesian presidential election

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Abstract This research explains the roles and strategies of influencer artists who collaborate with presidential and vice-presidential candidate pairs in conducting political campaigns through digital media in the 2024 general elections. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. The data collection technique in this research is a literature study. The finding of this research is that influencer artists supporting Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka are dominant in taking on the icon role in their digital political campaigns. Meanwhile, influencer artists supporting Anies Baswedan-Muhaimin Iskandar and Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud MD are more predominant in the role of messengers. Furthermore, in their digital political campaign strategies, these influencer artists use ways to create creative content, mobilise fanbases incorporated in their social media, conduct giveaways and carry out live streaming routines on their respective digital platforms and other people's channels. Therefore, this study explains that the power of digital media, coupled with a recognised figure in the channel, significantly impacts electoral politics if utilised in a directed and measured manner.

Keywords: artist's influencer; digital political campaigns; Indonesian presidential election

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's presidential and vice-presidential elections were held on 14 February 2024 (KPU RI, 2023b). In the 2024 presidential election, three pairs of candidates are eligible to compete. Candidate pair number one, Anies Baswedan and Muaimin Iskandar, candidate pair number two, Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka, and candidate pair number three, Ganjar Pranowo and Mahfud MD (KPU RI, 2023a). Furthermore, the campaign period for the 2024 elections officially began on 28 November 2023 until 10 February 2024 (Wibawana, 2024).

During the said period, something is interesting about the presidential election campaign, particularly the number of artists and influencers who explicitly showed their support or even became the campaign team of the presidential and vice-presidential candidates. The artists and influencers actively helped campaign for the presidential and vice-presidential candidates they supported through digital media, both social media and other channels. These artists and influencers in fact, already have a large following in the digital world, because their work is related to these activities (Hardiantoro, 2024a). This phenomenon can be understood through the Two-Step Flow of Communication Theory, where influencers act as opinion leaders who transmit political messages to their followers (Weimann, 1982), and also through the lens of celebrity politics, in which celebrities function as political endorsers capable of shaping voter perception and mobilisation (Atkinson & DeWitt, 2016; Street, 2012). Figure 1 shows the data of artists and influencers who support the presidential and vice-presidential candidate pairs for the 2024 elections.

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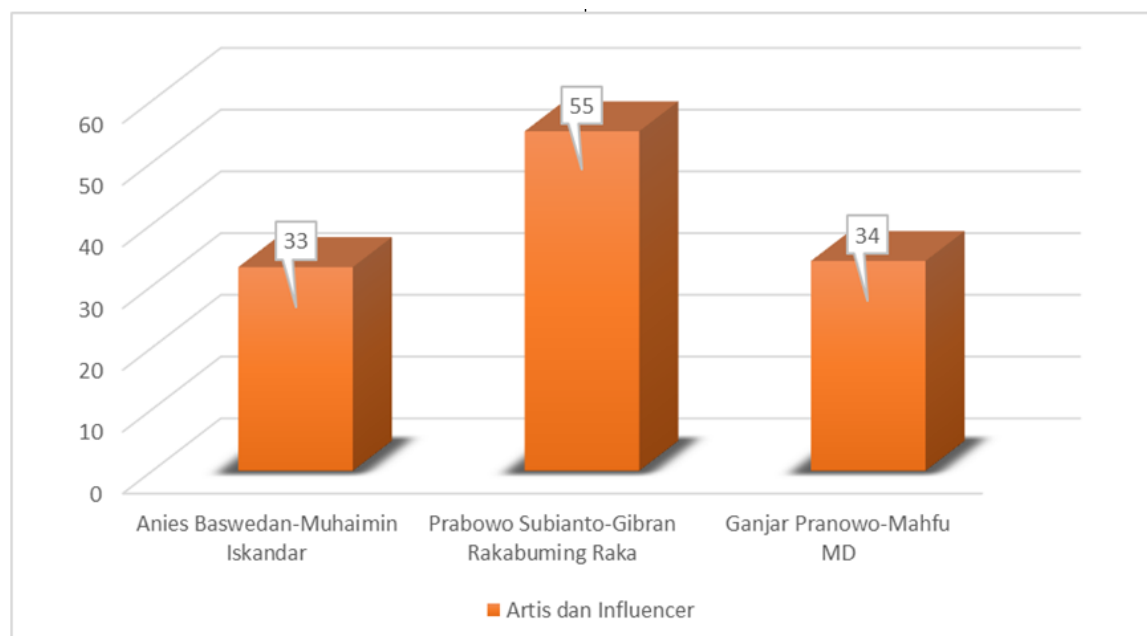


Figure 1. Influencer artists supporting presidential and vice-presidential candidate pairs for the 2024 election
Source: Widyastuti, (2024)

The data in Figure 1 shows that the candidate pairs Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar have supporters from among artists totalling 33 people. Then, supporters of the candidate pair Ganjar Pranowo and Mahfud MD amounted to 34 people. Meanwhile, the candidate pair Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka had more supporters than the other pairs, specifically 55 people (Widyastuti, 2024). The number of artists supporting the candidate pairs significantly helped in the campaign process through their digital channels. This phenomenon is indeed a colour for the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections. Because these artists already have a fan base or followers, the digital media platforms they have, if used for campaign facilities, will increase the popularity of the candidate pairs they support.

Digital campaigns today have a very important role to boost the electability of political pairs (Bossetta, 2018; Chester & Montgomery, 2017; Howard, 2005; Gunther Vanden Eynde & Maddens, 2023). This is because the public at large has used digital technology in their daily lives, so that information related to presidential and vice presidential candidate pairs if disseminated in this channel, will be easily and quickly conveyed to users who are voters in the election (Bimber, 2014; Subekti et al., 2022). Therefore, it is interesting to look deeper into the combination of influencer artists with large digital media capital used for political campaigns of presidential and vice-presidential candidates in the 2024 general elections.

There have been several previous studies worldwide that discuss digital media from various perspectives. Research from Bachini et al., (2022); Bimber, (2014) discussed the role of digital media in political communication. The findings explain that digital media is a tool for personalised and commodified political communication. Then, research from Copeland & Römmele, (2014); Jungherr, (2016); Vanden Eynde & Maddens, (2022); Veneti et al., (2022) explains about digital campaigns. The findings explain that campaigns in Greece use a lot of social media but still have a relatively rudimentary understanding of the capabilities of different platforms and their communication culture. When campaign communication strategies are formed by politicians, they usually choose one platform as a channel for all their content.

Furthermore, research from Buente, (2015); Chan & Sun, (2019); Dimitrova et al., (2014); Dommett & Power, (2024); Trevisan, (2019) discusses the role of digital media in voter participation in elections. This study shows that there is little effect of digital media use on political learning, but the use of some forms of digital media has a considerable influence on political participation. Meanwhile, research from Lev-On, (2013) explains the digital divide in politics. The findings of his research explain that in addition to the access gap, there are other

barriers that prevent the use of the internet as an effective political tool in the Arab- Palestinian sector.

Then, research from Beta & Neyazi (2022), describes the visual political communication strategies of celebrity politicians, specifically how they use their fame and celebrity status to make claims as political candidates and how they turn their fame into political legitimacy through social media. In the process of building their political legitimacy, celebrity politicians use 'affective power'. While conventional politicians may use the same strategies on social media, the online performance style of celebrity politicians is fundamental in how celebrities build and maintain their often- precarious political legitimacy before the public. Three patterns emerge. First, celebrity politicians use photos of themselves surrounded by people to demonstrate their celebrity status and political legitimacy. Second, they highlight their work ethic and commitment to public causes. Third, they use visual markers of loyalty to the presidential candidate to claim their political legitimacy.

Based on the explanation of previous research worldwide, there are several focuses, such as the role of digital media in political communication and campaigns, voter participation, the digital divide and the campaign strategies of celebrity politicians. However, there is no comprehensive research that focuses on discussing the role of influencer artists in digital political campaigns.

Meanwhile, several previous studies on digital campaigns by artists and influencers in Indonesia have highlighted aspects of political image, symbolic legitimacy, and the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in influencing voter participation (Beta & Neyazi, 2022b; Kurniawan et al., 2024). Recent research even notes the increasing role of influencers in the 2024 presidential election, who are utilising various digital platforms to reach voters (Adinda Rizky Amalia et al., 2025; Dharta, 2024a; Nugraha et al., 2025). However, most of these studies still focus on the impact or effect of celebrity endorsements on voter behaviour, rather than on the specific roles and communication strategies that artists and influencers play when directly involved as part of a presidential and vice-presidential candidate's campaign team.

In the Southeast Asia political context, research on the Philippines provides important insights into the orchestration of political influencers, the production of popular content, and the risks of covert campaign (Arugay & Baquisal, 2022; Aznar et al., 2023; Ong & Cabañes, 2018). However, the study focused more on the phenomena of disinformation, regulation, and the use of specific platforms like TikTok, rather than mapping the practical strategies of artists/influencers who directly collaborated with candidates in official campaigns.

In other words, how influencers position themselves, build political narratives, and integrate their digital activities into official campaign strategies remains a relatively unexplored area. Thus, this study aims to explain the roles and strategies of influencer artists who collaborate with presidential and vice-presidential candidates in conducting political campaigns through digital media in the 2024 elections.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses qualitative methods. Qualitative research is an attempt to rationalise and interpret the reality of life based on what the researcher understands (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In qualitative research, there are five approaches that are usually used, namely narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, ethnographic, and case study (Creswell, 2016). Of the five approaches, this research uses a case study approach because it is very relevant to the topic taken. The case study in this research is the Indonesian presidential election in 2024. The reason for using a case study approach in this research is that its focus is on a specific phenomenon: the involvement of artists and influencers in the digital campaigns of presidential and vice-presidential candidates in the 2024 election. According to Creswell (2016), case studies are used when researchers want to understand a bounded system—namely an event, program, process, or individual—in depth within specific spatial and temporal boundaries. The 2024 presidential election is a context with clear boundaries (election period, specific candidates, and the artists and influencers involved), making it suitable for the characteristics of case study research.

The data collection technique in this research is a literature study. Therefore, this research uses data sources obtained through reputable and credible online media such as Kompas.com, CNN Indonesia, Liputan6.com, detiknews.com, Tempo.co and so on. Then, it is elaborated with relevant journal articles. The database used in this study is the period from

November 2023 to February 2024. The reason is that during that period it started the campaign stage with the fact that influencer artists began to openly support and became the candidate's campaign team.

Then, this research uses NVivo 12 plus software in analysing data. The data analysed using NVivo 12 plus is online news from the data source. NVivo 12 plus is an application used to process and analyse qualitative data more effectively and efficiently (Edhlund & McDougall, 2018). The features used in NVivo 12 plus in this study are crosstab query and word frequency. The Crosstab Query feature is used to analyse and identify the role of influencer artists in conducting digital campaigns for 2024 presidential election candidates. Then, the word frequency feature is used to analyse the digital political campaign strategies carried out by these influencer artists. The analysis process uses NVivo 12 Plus. First: news data is collected and downloaded using the ncapture feature in the Chrome extension. Second: the downloaded data is then imported into the NVivo 12 Plus software. Third: nodes and cases are created in NVivo 12 Plus. Fourth: manual coding of the data is performed using the created nodes and cases. Then, analyse using the crosstab query feature. Fifth: use the word frequency feature from the available data. Sixth: the results of the analysis in the form of visualisations are downloaded and included in the manuscript.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The role of influencer artists in digital political campaigns

In the digital era, people's lives cannot be separated from social media. This fact proves that social media has a huge impact on individual lives (Boulianne, 2019). Moreover, a recent phenomenon on social media is the emergence of individuals known as artists and influencers. They are individuals who have great influence and have many followers on social media. The emergence of these artists and influencers opens up new ways to convince, influence, and engage people on social media (Yasar et al., 2024).

An influencer artist is an individual or public figure on social media who has a diverse and significant following and is able to influence the behaviour of their followers through the content they share (Hayat et al., 2021). In today's digital era, the existence of influencer artists has received a lot of attention from the public, especially social media users. They are often considered as trend-setters, especially among the millennial generation. With a large number of followers, they can influence people's views and actions on various topics (Giles & Edwards, 2018). It is in this context that these artist influencers also enter the realm of politics. Many artist influencers have participated in helping candidates participating in elections through social media campaigns.

Influencer artists have the ability to spread ideas and arguments that can influence the way their followers view certain political issues or candidates (Kissas, 2022). These influencer artists are often perceived as part of the general public, so the opinions they convey feel more real and can be trusted by their followers. Thus, cooperation with influencer artists has become a strategy for politicians to increase their influence (Monica et al., 2019).

The support and cooperation of influencer artists for presidential candidates has become a phenomenon in Indonesia. Popular influencer artists have been seen endorsing presidential candidates in various ways, ranging from public campaigns, appearances at political events, to social media posts supporting a particular candidate. This phenomenon also occurred in the 2024 presidential election held on February 14, 2024. The data in figures 2, 3 and 4 show the role of influencer artists in digital political campaigns in the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections.

Political communication and political marketing literature views the role of artists as inseparable from economic, symbolic, and communicative dimensions. These three categories already encompass the main dimensions of artists' contributions: material aspects (fundraising), symbolic (icons), and communicative (messengers).

First, Fundraising (Raising Funds and Material Support). Artists have public appeal that can be leveraged for fundraising events or to increase campaign sales through charity concerts, merchandise sales, and other creative activities. This is logical because artists have a large mass base and extensive economic network, enabling them to bring in financial resources for the candidate. From the perspective of political communication theory, this role aligns with the

concept of resource mobilisation theory McCarthy & Zald, (1977), which emphasises the importance of resources in political movements.

Second, Icons (Political Symbols and Candidate Identity). Artists are often positioned as symbols (icons) that can attach certain values to candidates, such as 'modern', 'popular', or 'down-to-earth'. They serve as political branding tools that present an emotional image and cultural identity that is easily accepted by the public. Theoretically, this aligns with symbolic interactionism theorized by Blumer, (2012) and political marketing Lees-Marshment (2008), which emphasise the importance of symbolic representation in building psychological closeness between candidates and voters.

Third, Messengers (Political Message Carriers). Artists have millions of followers on social media and significant influence in the digital space, making them effective messengers—conveying political messages from candidates to the public. Through posts on Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube, artists can broaden the reach of political communication and shape public opinion. This role aligns with the two-step flow of communication theory, Weimann (1982), where the artist acts as an opinion leader, bridging the political message from the candidate to a broad audience.

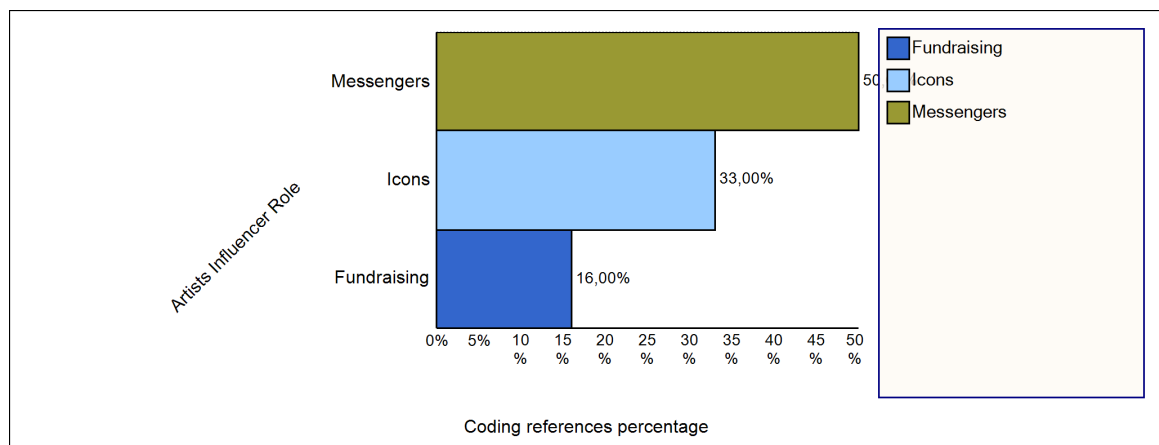


Figure 2. The role of influencer artists in the digital political campaign of Anies Baswedan-Muhaimin Iskandar candidate pair

Source: processed by the author via NVivo 12 plus (2025)

Figure 2 displays data on the role of influencer artists who support the candidate pair Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar. The data shows that the role of messengers is the most dominant with 50.00%. Meanwhile, icons are only 33.00% and fundraising is 16.00%. This shows that the role of influencer artists who support the Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar candidate pairs is more about appearing to the public by carrying messages related to vision and mission, and programs. This candidate pair does carry the tagline of change, so the substance of the vision and mission and program is eagerly awaited by the public. The changes in question are different from the previous government, namely Joko Widodo. This candidate pair considers that in the era of President Joko Widodo many policies were inappropriate and incorrect. In this condition, it is logical that the most dominant role of influencer artists in helping Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar in their digital campaign is more on messengers.

Moreover, the majority of influencer artists who support this candidate pair do have a background that is critical of the Joko Widodo administration. These influencer artists are very vocal in commenting on the policies and direction of Joko Widodo's government, so they have common interests with the candidate pair Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar. Then, some also come from comics, who have also brought stand-up material for the unrest felt in the era of President Joko Widodo's government (Utari, 2024).

A number of comics expressed their support for the Anies-Muhaimin pair. The comics who are members of the United Artists Movement said the Anies-Muhaimin pair was not anti-criticism. The arrival of several comics who supported Anies-Muhaimin was welcomed directly by vice presidential candidate (vice presidential candidate) number 1 Muhaimin Iskandar at his residence in the Widya Chandra Complex, Jakarta, Tuesday afternoon, 23 January 2024. The

comics present, such as David Nurbianto and Sammy 'Notaslimboy' said the comics artists supported Anies-Muhaimin because they were open and not anti-criticism (Febriari, 2024).

Furthermore, these influencer artists also often post on their personal social media about things that become messages of change from the candidate pairs they support so that they can be spread in the community. Another form of conveying this message is that these influencer artists also actively appear on podcasts, as well as on YouTube that discuss presidential and vice-presidential candidate pairs to represent in an effort to explain the vision and mission and programs offered by Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar.

In the contestation of the 2024 presidential election, the Anies Baswedan-Muhaimin Iskand (AMIN) presidential and vice-presidential candidate pair is a pair that is predicted to be the antithesis of President Joko Widodo's (Jokowi) regime. This is reflected in the slogan to the name of this pair's coalition: change. The word change makes the AMIN pair's position stronger as an 'opposition' to the current government. In AMIN's vision, mission and program entitled 'Indonesia Fair and Prosperous for All Indonesia', Anies and Muhaimin say that change is a necessity. Not to mention, the condition of the country, according to both of them, has not yet presented prosperity. In fact, the founding fathers of the nation have made Indonesia one nation, one homeland, one The Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, and one homeland. He pointed out that Java-centricity is still rooted in Indonesia. He said that people in Java generally get their basic needs easily and at more affordable prices compared to people outside Java, especially in coastal areas, islands and inland areas. In addition, he highlighted that those who live in the archipelago must migrate to get a quality education due to the fact that 9 out of 10 of Indonesia's best campuses are in Java (Hikmatiar, 2023). This condition can be explained through the core-periphery theory, where Java functions as the economic core with better infrastructure and market access, resulting in cheaper goods and easier distribution, while peripheral regions outside Java face higher costs and limited access (Bloch, 2017; Brenner, 2012).

In other sectors, Indonesia is blessed with a beautiful, friendly and rich nature. Food, oil and gas, palm oil, coal, minerals, marine products, and a series of other natural products fascinate the world. However, according to Anies and Muhaimin, the benefits are not felt equally. Furthermore, he revealed that the quality of life in villages is almost always worse than in cities and the relationship between cities and villages tends to be exploitative. He mentioned that the agricultural and marine sectors, which are very important and employ around 30% of the local workforce, are a node of poverty. Even MSMEs and cooperatives, which are supposed to be the motor of community welfare, are unable to play a role because they have not been played (Hikmatiar, 2023).

From the beginning, Anies-Muhaimin positioning was quite clear: change. This positioning is easily derived in the vision and mission, as well as their opinions in the plan to build the country, as well as to counter the current government programs. The pair's seriousness in building a brand, especially among millennials and Gen Z, is strengthened by involving young people in scientific discussions with casual packaging, such as the 'Desak Anies' program. The 'Desak Anies' program is a forum for a democratic party that aims to accommodate aspirations while providing solutions to the public, especially those who are dissatisfied with the current government. This program is held openly in different locations. A consistent program will attract mainstream media and social media to convey messages. This seriousness in working with young people even received support from K-pop fans who grew organically through the Twitter account @aniesbubble. It's just that visually, the brand identity of the Anies-Muhaimin pair does not yet have special characteristics or characters like the Prabowo-Gibran pair. For example, uniforms or special designs in advertising posters (Bahruddin, 2024).

The data in Figure 3 shows that there were three roles of influencer artists in the digital political campaign for Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka, namely messengers, icons and fundraising. Of the three, the role of icons was the most dominant with 53.00%, followed by messengers with 30.00% and fundraising with 15.00%. This data displays the finding that influencer artists have a central role in digital political campaigns by becoming icons attached to the candidate pair. This is because it is related to the image that the candidate pair wants to create for the public. More than that, these influencer artists are not only icons, but also

messengers of the candidate pairs to the public. The message in question is the program and vision and mission offered by the candidate pair.

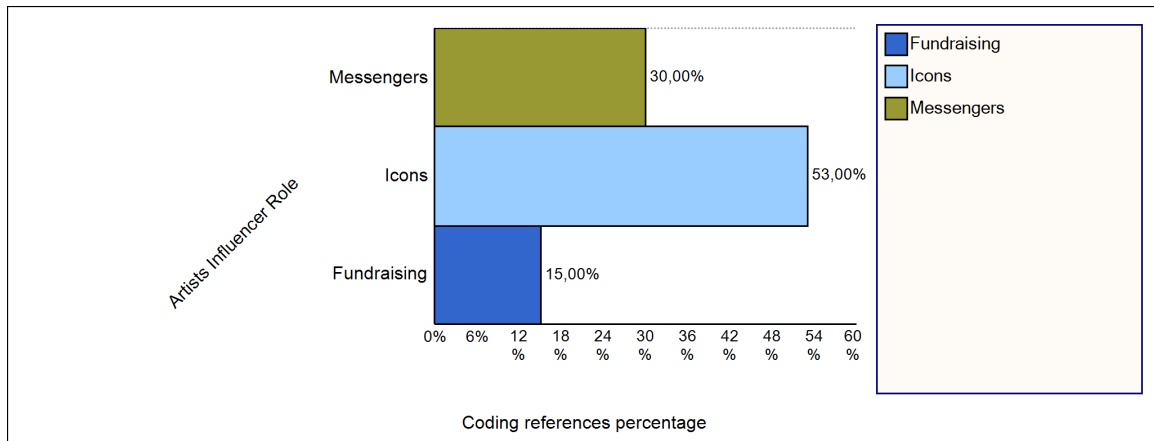


Figure 3. The role of influencer artists in the digital political campaign of Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka candidate pair

Source: processed by the author via NVivo 12 plus (2025)

It is also interesting that it turns out that these influencer artists have a fundraising role in the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections. This role is carried out with a position that has a large fan base, so they carry out fundraising movements to support presidential and vice-presidential candidate pairs. This is an effort of struggle and support made by influencer artists to the presidential and vice-presidential candidate pairs by contributing to funding. Although this role is not so dominant compared to the other two roles. The candidate pair Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka did indeed in the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections collaborate with many influential artists who have big names and many fans such as Rafi Ahmad, Nagita Slavina and so on. It is natural that the third most dominant role is as an icon, because the influencer artist during the campaign period promoted this candidate pair more by showing his presence at the events organised.

According to Deputy Commander of the National Campaign Team (TKN) for Young Voters (Fanta) Kawendra Lukistian, the row of celebrities is said to have a good impact on the 2024 one-round presidential election. "Appreciation for fellow influencers who have agreed to join hands in the struggle for advanced Indonesia. We at TKN are increasingly optimistic about a one-round presidential election, especially with the extraordinary strength of influencer friends," (Hardiantoro, 2024b). In fact, some of these Indonesian artists are also included in the Prabowo-Gibran National Campaign Team (TKN). An example is Sigit Purnomo Said aka Pasha Ungu. Pasha Ungu was elected as the commander of young voters for Prabowo-Gibran (Asih, 2024).

The presidential and vice-presidential candidate pair Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka narrates and positions as a symbol of sustainability. Political observer and Director of Survey and Polling Indonesia Igor Dirgantara stated that, compared to other candidates in the 2024 presidential election, the duo promoted by the Advanced Indonesia Coalition (KIM) is committed to continuing the programs and policies of President Joko Widodo's government (Merdeka.com, 2023). The Prabowo-Gibran team has consistently designed branding since the beginning. This can be seen from the way they utilize the youth slang that is trending in the community, namely 'gemoy'. This term was then used as branding material for the Prabowo-Gibran pair who used the positioning of 'continuing' the Jokowi government (Bahruddin, 2024).

Prabowo, who has a haunted impression, is erased with the term gemoy, which has a funny and adorable meaning in a positive context. Meanwhile, the target audience of this pair is young people. With the positioning 'continue', the Prabowo-Gibran team uses the tagline 'Indonesia advance'. The visual branding used is tailored to the target audience, namely young people, such as images made from AI (artificial intelligence) technology with chubby faces and the use of the term 'gemoy'. This target relates to the number of young voters who dominate the 2024 elections, which is approximately 113 million or 56.45% of the total voters. The Prabowo-

Gibran pair's brand identity is also evident in the consistent use of light blue uniforms. This uniform is not only worn by them but also by their supporters, especially when conducting presidential-vice-presidential debates. Consistency in the application of visual branding, including uniforms, is one of the keys to building a brand so that it is easily recognised by the target audience (Bahrudin, 2024).

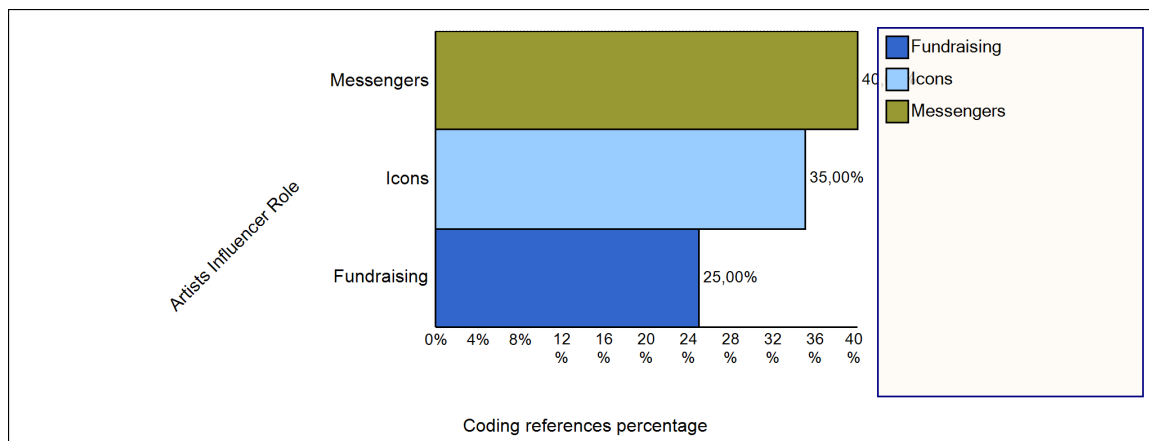


Figure 4. The role of influencer artists in the digital political campaign of candidate pair Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud MD
 Source: processed by the author via NVivo 12 plus (2025)

Figure 4 displays data on the role of influencer artists who support the candidate pair Ganjar Pranowo and Mahfud MD. The data shows that the most dominant role is related to messengers at 40.00%. Then, icons have a figure of 35% and fundraising at 25.00%. This shows that the specific role played by influencer artists who support this candidate pair is delivering messages, because some of them also participate in the election contest by becoming legislative candidates. So, most of the opportunities on social media are more about conveying the vision, mission and programs offered by the candidate pair they support and at the same time promoting themselves,

The Indonesian Artists Association (GSI) is one of the volunteer groups supporting the Ganjar-Mahfud candidate pair. GSI was launched at the Gelora Delta Stadium in Sidoarjo, August 20, 2023. GSI is dominated by a number of well-known figures. They come from various professions, such as singers, artists, comedians, and actors. In addition to GSI, there is also Rumah Kreasi Insan Nusantara Extravaganjar (Rumah KITA XVG) which voiced its support on August 28, 2023. A number of other artists also gave their choice for candidate pair number 3. In fact, some of them have entered the list of legislative candidates for political parties supporting Ganjar-Mahfud. For example, Once Mekel (PDIP), Anang Hermansyah (PDIP), Tamara Geraldine (PDIPⁱ), Denny Cagur (PDIP). Then Vicky Prasetyo (Perindoⁱⁱ), Aldi Taher (Perindo), and Usnan Batubara alias Ucok Baba, who advanced through United Development Party (PPPⁱⁱⁱ) (Abdurohman, 2025).

Spokesperson for the Ganjar-Mahfud MD National Winning Team (TPN), Chico Hakim, admitted that their candidate pair did receive official support from a number of influencers and celebrities. They are public figures who are familiar to entertainment lovers in the country. Chico explained that support from celebrities in the arts and influencers in political campaigns is not a strange thing. In fact, he said, this is done in all countries that adhere to a democratic system. According to him, the support of celebrities, influencers, and art activists who have a fan base will make it easier to help introduce the presidential and vice-presidential candidates. Both in terms of figures, track records, and the visions and missions they bring (Nur, 2023).

However, the concept of political branding carried out by Prabowo-Gibran and Anis-Muhaimin was not followed by Ganjar-Mahfud. The pair supported by the PDIP, United Development Party (PPP), Perindo Party, and People's Conscience Party (Hanura) seemed confused in building a brand. The positioning of 'fast movement' or 'sat set' is still hesitant to be displayed in branding elements. This team is trying to cram a lot of information to attract the public. This strategy makes it easy for people to forget. In branding, there must be a clear positioning to show the public where this pair wants to go. There are many different taglines in

each Ganjar-Mahfud branding such as 'Indonesia Progress', 'Move Fast', 'Ganjar the People's President', 'Indonesia Superior', to 'Indonesia Better'. Inconsistency in the application of branding will distance it from the brand identity of the presidential and vice-presidential candidate pair, thus confusing the public (Bahruddin, 2024).

This pair is indeed not easy to determine what positioning is. This is because if they continue Jokowi's program, they will collide with the Prabowo-Gibran pair, who have consistently continued Jokowi's program from the start. On the other hand, if they use changes, there have been Anies who has consistently opposed the Jokowi government. So, the best way is consistency in building the "fast movement" positioning which has not been worked on properly so far. Consistency in the application of branding is very important to create an image in society. Consistency will create trust between the brand and the consumer. This means that in the branding process, the brand identity must not change in order to form a strong image or character in society. This consistency includes conveying messages, both verbally and visually, which are displayed in every media used (Bahruddin, 2024).

Influencer artist strategies in conducting digital political campaigns

Influencer artists on social media have a big influence on public opinion. Because they have many followers and get strong support from their follower base. Influencers play an important role in shaping public opinion because they often spread information, express personal opinions, or promote candidates to their followers. Influencers are sometimes considered to have greater power than conventional media to influence people's decisions. Many variables contribute to this. Through direct messages, live broadcasts, and comments, influencers often establish close and dynamic relationships with their followers. As a result of this relationship, followers will be more likely to accept and trust the opinions or recommendations given because they feel more familiar and trusted. Influencers also usually have a strong reputation, unique personality, and deep industry expertise (Yasar et al., 2024).

Influencer artists build an audience that has similar interests, and followers often see them as authorities or experts in a particular field. Therefore, when influencers convey political messages, followers tend to pay attention and consider those views. Their followers tend to be more influenced because they are considered a trusted and competent source. In addition, influencers have the ability to popularise issues and attract the attention of the wider community. The viral potential of influencer artists is greatly influenced by the algorithms and features of social media platforms. Social media algorithms generally prioritize content that gets a lot of interaction, such as likes, comments, and shares. When influencers post content about issues that interest their followers, the content tends to appear in other users' feeds, increasing the exposure of the issue (Yasar et al., 2024).

Influencer artists with a large number of followers on social media and high popularity have great potential to influence public opinion and voter attitudes, with a wide reach on social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter (now X), and YouTube. Influencer artists can quickly and effectively convey political messages to their followers (Sastro et al., 2023). Posts, videos, or stories shared by influencer artists often get a lot of attention from their followers, which can then influence the way they view or respond to certain political issues. In addition, high popularity also provides power to influence public opinion. People tend to pay extra attention to the opinions or support conveyed by influencer artists they admire (Dharta, 2024b).

At this time, when modern democracy or contemporary politics are considered too dominated by market interests, influencers can be a new source of power for society in representing the political attitudes of society. With the power to build opinions and influence the attitudes of their large followers, influencers as part of civil society will play a role in realizing an ideal political order together with the government and private sector. In carrying out their role as civil society, influencers can be liaisons for communication between the government and the community to re-word government programs and government agendas so that they are more easily accepted and understood. Influencers can also be a balancers or aligners of power together with the opposition in strengthening the role of checks and balances (Anitasari, 2020).

The social influence conveyed by influencers and artists is now configured as an important property to influence the dynamics of political communication. Intentional or unintentional communication can result in changes in the attitudes, beliefs, intentions, motivations, or behaviour of others. The importance of media and communication methods in

the process of political democracy can be credited to the conceptualisation of public space. Public space as a network of communication of information and perspectives relevant to citizens, where issues of public concern become the subject of informed discussion and independent political debate (Carvalho et al., 2017).



Figure 5. Digital political campaign strategy
Source: processed by the author via NVivo 12 plus (2025)

Table 1. Word frequency list

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)
Creative content	15	12	010
Fanbasemobilization	19	6	005
Giveaway	8	5	004
Live streaming	8	4	004
Mediatisasi	11	4	003
Celebrity	9	4	003
2024	4	3	002
Scramble	7	3	002
Candidate Pair	6	3	002
Influence	8	3	002
Message	5	3	002
Politics	7	3	002
Readability	11	3	002
Representation	12	3	002
Influencer	10	2	002
Image	5	1	001

Source: NVivo 12 plus with word frequency feature (2025)

Figure 5 and Table 1 show data on the strategies used by influencer artists in digital political campaigns in the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections. The four dominant words that form the digital political campaign strategies of influencer artists are creating creative content, mobilising fanbases, giveaways and live streaming. Creating this creative content is usually in the form of short videos that contain messages that indicate support for the candidate pair. These short videos are uploaded on their respective social media channels such as Instagram reels, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube, which are known to have large followers. Interestingly, these influencer artists also utilise the fanbases that are included in their social media to be mobilised to support the candidate pair that they also support. Meanwhile, giveaways are also carried out by influencer artists to attract public interest. This giveaway is usually in the form of giving gifts, either goods or money. Furthermore, the live streaming

strategy is also carried out by usually chatting directly with the candidate pair on the influencer artist's social media channels. This aims to make the candidate pair, and the influencer artist feel close to the public. The discussion topics are not too heavy, so that they can be easily digested by the public.

These four strategies are also wrapped in the image that has been attached to the presidential and vice-presidential candidate pairs such as Prabowo Subianto's gemoy, Ganjar Pranowo's three-finger salute and Anies Baswedan's slepet. Influencer artists with large numbers of followers on platforms such as Instagram and TikTok are used to spread campaign messages. They produce interesting content that suits their audience, such as short videos, infographics, and personal stories that are relevant to the presidential and vice presidential candidate programs (Pamungkas, 2024).

Presidential candidates and their campaigns leverage influencers to reach demographics that may be difficult to reach through traditional channels. By partnering with influencers who have audiences that are predominantly young voters, presidential candidates can increase their appeal to this key demographic. This strategy also conveys the impression that the presidential candidate understands and is inclusive of the diverse views and lifestyles of the public. Influencers, in the context of social media, refer to individuals who have a significant influence over their audience on platforms such as Instagram, Twitter (now X), YouTube, or TikTok. They build and maintain a strong following by providing engaging and relevant content, often related to lifestyle, fashion, beauty, or other specific topics. The power of influencers lies in their ability to influence the opinions and behaviours of their followers, whether in terms of lifestyle or purchasing decisions (Pamungkas, 2024). It is important to note that the use of influencers in political communication does not only include endorsements or direct support but also involves deeper collaboration. Influencers are often involved in the creation of creative content that creates a positive narrative around the presidential candidate, providing a more personal and friendly view of the candidate. This aims to reduce the impression of political formality and create an emotional bond between candidates and potential voters (Pamungkas, 2024).

Researcher at the National Research and Innovation Agency in the field of Political Communication, Nina Andriana, said that since the official campaign period began, the successful teams of each candidate have competed to shape their image through social media content. According to the Meta Ad Library report, in the period from September to December 2023, Prabowo Subianto's official Facebook account and his volunteer accounts spent up to IDR 2.27 billion (equivalent to SGD 176.641,87) to advertise via Meta. Meanwhile, Anies Baswedan's supporting accounts spent IDR 1.05 billion, and Ganjar Pranowo's supporting volunteers spent IDR 847 million. Digital Culture and Communication Expert from the University of Indonesia, Firman Kurniawan, estimates that seven out of 10 social media posts that appear on the general public's radar contain political elements. "Because his funds are strong and his productivity in creating content is high, he continues to pour out into the social media world. "If that happens, for these first-time voters, perceptions will be formed based on the largest amount of content," said Firman (Bbcnews.com, 2023).

Firman Kurniawan (Cultural and Digital Communication Expert from the Universitas Indonesia), said that in this year's election, social media has become one of the most crucial means of campaigning. This is due to the large percentage of young voters, namely Millennials and Gen Z, who dominate more than 50% of the votes. "So, the public will feel the difference in content themes on social media and public spaces. There will be more material or content that supports candidates," said Firman. He explained that algorithms in social media make it easy for campaign teams to produce content that can be tailored to the profile of the audience they are targeting, based on age, geographic location and gender. "I will be trapped in an echo chamber; this [content] will be massive in terms of quantity. Out of 10 to 15 uploads produced and distributed by a particular candidate, I can be exposed to between seven and 12," he said (Bbcnews.com, 2023).

Based on the Hootsuite We Are Social 2023 report, an institution that presents data and trends needed to understand the internet, social media and e-commerce behaviour, Indonesia's internet penetration is quite large. As many as 64.4% of Indonesians use the internet, or the equivalent of 212 million people. Meanwhile, 77% of Indonesian internet users or the equivalent of 167 million people, are social media users. Firman said that more and more people in non-

urban areas are starting to switch to using social media and the internet. "There seems to be quite massive internet activity, especially indicated by Google search. They are looking for products, especially they are looking for information about candidates and political parties," he said (Bbcnews.com, 2023).

Thus, when a candidate has large funds and strong resources to produce high amounts of content, the candidate can easily dominate the social media landscape of users. "What must be avoided is the dominance of content from one party. This is not a matter of popularity, but his content will continue to appear," he said. Even if a candidate does not produce much official content, according to Firman, social media can easily provide an initiative for his supporters to spread their own content to support the candidate. "Sometimes the voluntary participation of these supporters is often excessive. "In the 2019 Election, *Cebong* (tadpole) and *Kampret*" (Small bat) occurred, this was because supporters outside the Campaign Team took the initiative to create content, even looking for the bad sides of [other] candidates," said Firman (Bbcnews.com, 2023).

Researcher at the BRIN Political Research Centre in the field of Political Communication, Nina Andriana, said that social media can be used by campaign teams to show only the positive sides of candidates while hiding the bad sides that they don't want the public to know. "The gimmicks created on social media can cover up, I originally wanted to be positive that TPN would be smarter to be part of a political educator, but I saw that they really saw that this was the most appropriate," she said. Nina is worried that in the campaign team's efforts to attract Gen Z votes, they will tend to only show the funny, light or 'cheeky' side of the candidate. In fact, most Gen Z get their information from social media content. They will take any opportunity to make their candidate win, and the biggest vote is Gen Z (Bbcnews.com, 2023).

How to approach it? With light things, these political gimmicks, the important thing is for them to remember, "she said. She warned the campaign team to remain responsible for developing young voters' understanding of their candidates. Because society is also getting smarter and more critical in responding to the political atmosphere. "During the campaign period, don't rely on gimmicks, remember that people are starting to get smarter and they want to know what these candidates will do in real terms," said Nina (Bbcnews.com, 2023). Meanwhile, according to the Spokesperson for the Prabowo-Gibran Young Voters National Campaign Team (Fanta), Dedek Prayudi, denied that they were trying to close the eyes of the younger generation. Dedek emphasised that the Prabowo-Gibran campaign team was trying to attract the interest of the younger generation in a relaxed way. "Politics must be conveyed with gestures and methods that are considered different. That includes sensation and that's not bad. That sensation invites people to be happy", he said.

Likewise, according to Anies Baswedan's Spokesperson, Angga Putra Fidrian, said that his team never tried to change Anies' personality so that people could feel closer to him. "We want Mr. Anies to remain authentic, to be himself with the character of a lecturer, an intellectual. Cak Imin or Gus Imin with the character of a fun and smart santri child. That's what we want to encourage," said Angga. Furthermore, the Executive Director of Information Communication & Spokesperson for the Ganjar-Mahfud TPN, Yostinus Tomi Aryanto, said that the team is currently focusing on presenting the vision and mission of Ganjar-Mahfud in a way that is easy to understand, more concise and easier for the public to grasp. "If it is conveyed too lightly, of course it will lose its substance, and vice versa, don't convey things that are already difficult in an overly complicated way. "But communication always has a side that we think can be successful or not, that is certainly our evaluation," he said (Bbcnews.com, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study explains that today's influencer artists are profitable figures for political candidates. Influencer artists who have very large capital in cyberspace are a strong reason for political candidates to invite cooperation and provide important roles in political campaigns. If used carefully and strategically, the influence of digital media combined with the reputation of a person well-known in the channel can have a big impact on election politics. The appearance of the candidate's image that is spread massively by influencer artists on their digital media channels provides attention and wide distribution in society as a form of increasing popularity. In the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice-presidential election, influencer artists

who support the candidate pair Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka are dominant in taking on the role of icons in their digital political campaigns. Meanwhile, influencer artists who support the candidate pair Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar and the candidate pair Ganjar Pranowo and Mahfud MD are more dominant in the role of message deliverers. Furthermore, these influencer artists in their digital political campaign strategy use creative content creation, mobilise fanbases that are members of their social media, conduct giveaways and carry out live streaming routines on their respective digital platforms and other people's channels.

This research expands understanding of digital political communication by emphasising that influencer artists are not merely supporting actors, but also strategic agents in the campaign process. This research shows that artists and influencers can shift traditional political communication patterns toward a more personalised, interactive, and visually driven direction. From an electoral study perspective, this research suggests that the shift in campaign strategy from offline to digital cannot be separated from the phenomenon of artists as political influencers. This research enriches the literature on electoral politics in Indonesia by emphasising that the success of digital campaigns is determined by a combination of artists' reputation, digital capital, and content creativity.

More than that, this study has limitations, namely that it only focuses qualitatively on the role and strategy of influencer artists in their digital political campaigns. However, it has not yet included the focus of its quantitative impact on the electability of candidates in the general election. Therefore, recommendations for further research can focus on this discussion.

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ENDNOTE

ⁱ PDIP (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan*- Indonesian Democratic Party Struggle), is a centre to centre-left, secular-nationalist political party in Indonesia. Since 2014, it has been the ruling and largest party in the House of Representatives (DPR), having won 110 seats in the latest election. The party is led by Megawati Sukarnoputri, who served as the president of Indonesia from 2001 to 2004. PDI-P believe the separation of religion and the state. It rejects regional regulations (perda) based on religion (such as Sharia-based perda), except for the Aceh region. PDI-P endorses gender equality and women's rights. It rejects a three-term extension for President Jokowi. The party also proclaims itself as the party of the "ordinary people".

ⁱⁱ Perindo (*Persatuan Indonesia* - Indonesian Unity) is a political party in Indonesia. The party was founded on 8 October 2014 and declared on 7 February 2015 by media tycoon Hary Tanoesoedibjo, owner of the MNC Group and business partner of current US President Donald Trump.

ⁱⁱⁱ PPP (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* - United Development Party) is a one of the Islamist political party in Indonesia. At the time of its declaration on 1973, this party was the result of a merger of four religious parties, namely the Nahdlatul Ulama Party (NU), the Islamic Education Movement (PERTI), the Indonesian Islamic Union Party (PSII), and the Indonesian Muslims' Party (PARMUSI). The merger of the four religious parties was aimed at simplifying the party system in Indonesia in facing the first general election during the New Order in 1973. Because the party's distinctive logo was associated with Islamic religious politics, the PPP was popularly known as the Ka'bah Party. The party's vision is to bring about a nation that is just, prosperous, moral and democratic and that upholds the law, respects human rights and holds in high esteem the dignity of mankind and social justice based on the values of Islam. The party believes that religion (Islam) has an important role to play as a moral guidance and inspiration in the life of the nation. It is committed to improving the quality of democracy in Indonesia and respects freedom of expression, opinion and organisation, the realisation of good governance and the endeavour to preserve the unitary Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution.

^{iv} "Cebong" and "kampret" are pejorative terms that emerged during the 2014 Presidential Election to refer to opposing political supporters, namely supporters of Joko Widodo ("Cebong") and supporters of Prabowo Subianto ("Kampret"). The term "cebong" comes from Jokowi's fondness for keeping frogs when he was mayor of Solo, while "kampret" was originally used as an insult that was later adopted to refer to Prabowo supporters. This phenomenon reflects political polarisation and the degradation of language in political communication in Indonesia.