



Social Media Construction of Political Hegemony: Analysis of the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Candidates Debate First Round

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Abstract. This research aims to analyze the construction of social media in the context of political hegemony during the first round of the 2024 Indonesian presidential debate. Employing a social media analysis approach, this study explores how social media serves as a crucial platform in shaping and directing public opinion and how viral narratives can influence political dynamics and polarization in society. The findings reveal that social media plays a significant role as the primary platform creating a polarization of public opinion, dividing users into pro and contra groups regarding the presidential candidates. Dominant narratives are often triggered by controversial speeches or responses, sparking emotional and intense discussions among social media users. This research also highlights the importance of contextual understanding and the sustainability of facts in addressing challenges posed by distorted perceptions in the digital world. Small groups with extreme views play a crucial role in creating an echo chamber, where their perspectives are reinforced and influence wider conversations. Panelists and debate moderators also have a significant impact on shaping perceptions of presidential Candidates performances. This study provides in-depth insights into the complex dynamics of social media in the political context, opening the door to a better understanding of its influence on public opinion and social political dynamics.

Keywords: Social Media; Political Hegemony; Presidential Candidates Debate; Indonesia 2024

1. Introduction

Social media has become a primary stage for facilitating political dialogue and shaping public opinion. In the year 2024, Indonesia will conduct a presidential election, a crucial moment that sparks public interest in the political process (NURDIN et al., 2023). In this context, the presidential Candidates debate emerges as a highly anticipated form of public interaction, with social media playing a central role in delivering, constructing, and modifying political information. This research delves into the analysis of social media's construction of political hegemony, focusing on the first-round presidential Candidates

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debate in Indonesia in 2024. This phenomenon creates a dynamic information landscape, where social media users are not only consumers but also producers of political information. Thus, a profound understanding of how social media influences public perceptions of candidates and political issues is essential to comprehend the dynamics of contemporary politics.

In the rapidly evolving landscape of information and communication technology, social media has emerged as the predominant platform for netizens to access and disseminate political information. The transformative impact of digital communication technologies has ushered in an era where individuals, commonly referred to as netizens, actively engage with and contribute to the political discourse through various social media platforms (Idris et al., 2023). This paradigm shift in communication dynamics has significant implications for the formation of political opinions, the dissemination of information, and the overall democratic process.

The intricate tapestry of social media, characterized by a diverse array of opinions and user groups, contributes to a complex and dynamic information landscape. This complexity is further accentuated by the intensity of competition and the proliferation of diverse political narratives within the digital realm (Hidayah & Kweldju, 2022). Unlike traditional media, social media platforms offer a decentralized space where individuals, regardless of their socio-political affiliations, can participate in shaping public discourse. This democratization of information dissemination, while empowering, also poses challenges in terms of information reliability, manipulation, and the potential formation of echo chambers. Against this backdrop, the Indonesian presidential election scheduled for 2024 emerges as a focal point for understanding the role of social media in shaping political hegemony. Political hegemony, in this context, refers to the dominance or control of political narratives, ideas, and discourse within the digital sphere. The examination of social media dynamics during the first-round presidential Candidates debate in 2024 provides a unique opportunity to unravel the intricate interplay between online interactions, sentiment trends, and the framing of political discourse.

The research methodology involves a comprehensive analysis of online interactions occurring on various social media platforms during the presidential debate. This includes the examination of user-generated content, reactions, comments, and the overall sentiment expressed in response to the Candidates discourse (Istiqoh et al., 2022). Additionally, the study delves into the framing techniques employed by social media in presenting and interpreting political information. Understanding how social media constructs, amplifies, or challenges political narratives is crucial for gaining profound insights into the modern political dynamics of Indonesia. One of the central objectives of this research is to contribute to academic literature by advancing our understanding of the multifaceted relationship between social media and political hegemony. By dissecting the intricate mechanisms through which social media influences the democratic political process, the study aims to provide theoretical frameworks and analytical tools that can be applied in diverse socio-political contexts. This academic contribution extends beyond the specific case of the Indonesian presidential election, offering insights applicable to the broader global discourse on the intersection of technology, media, and politics.

Beyond its academic significance, the research also holds practical implications for comprehending the influence of social media on the democratic political process. The findings are expected to offer actionable insights for policymakers, political strategists,



and communication professionals seeking to navigate the evolving landscape of digital politics. As social media continues to play a central role in shaping public opinion, understanding its impact becomes imperative for fostering a more informed and engaged citizenry. The democratic process thrives on the diversity of voices and the free exchange of ideas. However, the dynamic nature of social media introduces challenges that necessitate careful consideration. The potential for the manipulation of information, the formation of online echo chambers, and the amplification of certain narratives over others underscore the importance of critically examining social media's role in shaping political hegemony.

The research on the construction of political hegemony through social media during the first-round presidential Candidates debate in Indonesia in 2024 is poised to contribute significantly to understanding of contemporary political dynamics. By navigating the intricate landscape of online interactions, sentiment trends, and framing techniques, the study aims to unravel the complexities of political discourse in the digital age. As social media continues to evolve, its role in shaping political narratives and influencing public opinion will undoubtedly remain a critical area of exploration for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners alike (Mohd Noor et al., 2021).

The study explores the unique dynamics in which social media plays a role in shaping public opinion and influencing political dynamics during the crucial moments of a presidential election. By delving into this phenomenon, the research can offer new insights into how social media contributes to the construction of political hegemony during presidential debates, contributing to a deeper understanding of the interplay between social media and politics. In the context of the 2024 presidential election, where social media increasingly becomes the primary platform for the exchange of political information, a profound understanding of social media's construction of political hegemony can provide valuable insights to stakeholders, including candidates, political parties, and the general public. Moreover, the research findings can assist in formulating more effective communication strategies that are responsive to the dynamics of social media in the political process, supporting efforts to build a more inclusive understanding and open information in the political realm in Indonesia. Therefore, this research holds significant importance in the context of political and social media understanding at the national level.

2. Methods

This research will investigate the construction of political hegemony through social media analysis during the first-round presidential debate in Indonesia in 2024. To achieve this objective, data collection methods will involve searching on major social media platforms, such as Twitter, and online news using predefined keywords. These keywords encompass variations of the Candidates names, such as Anies, gabener, goodbener, aniesbaswedan, capres 01, capres 1, paslon 01, paslon 1 for Anies; Prabowo, Prabraro, praboro, PrabowoSubianto, capres 02, capres 2, paslon 02, paslon 2 for Prabowo; and Ganjar, ganjarpranowo, capres 03, capres 3, paslon 03, paslon 3 for Ganjar. The details can be further observed in the following table:



Table 1 Methods

No	Indonesian Presidential Candidate	Keywords	Source
1	01 – Anies Baswedan	Anies, gabener, goodbener, aniesbaswedan, capres 01, capres 1, paslon 01, paslon 1	Twitter and Online News
2	02 – Prabowo Subianto	Prabowo, Prabroro, praboro, PrabowoSubianto, capres 02, capres 2, paslon 02, paslon 2	Twitter and Online News
3	03 – Ganjar Pranowo	Ganjar, ganjarpranowo, capres 03, capres 3, paslon 03, paslon 3	Twitter and Online News

The research population includes all posts related to the debate, while the sample will be limited to posts using keywords related to the three candidates. Data analysis will involve a quantitative approach to calculate the frequency of keyword usage and analyze posting patterns over time, as well as a qualitative approach to understand the rhetoric and narratives employed. Furthermore, this research will pay attention to research ethics, including the privacy of social media users and data integrity (Mustofa et al., 2022). The conclusions drawn from this study are expected to provide a profound understanding of how social media plays a role in shaping political hegemony during the 2024 Indonesian presidential debate, with relevant implications for public understanding.

3. Results and Discussion

This debate served as a testing ground for rhetoric, policy knowledge, and the ability to withstand the heat of political competition. Anies Baswedan emerged as the winner of the debate on the night of December 12, 2023, not only due to his arguments but also his presentation. From start to finish, Anies Baswedan's strategic approach during the presidential debate on December 12, 2023, showcased his intent to position himself as a formidable contender for the highest office. His consistent and targeted attacks on Prabowo not only marked a departure from traditional political discourse but also signaled a calculated effort to assert his candidacy as a serious alternative to the existing political order.

One of the focal points of Anies's offensive strategy was his strong stance on the state of democracy in Indonesia. By addressing the declining public trust in political parties, Anies tapped into a pervasive sentiment among voters disillusioned with the political establishment. This strategic move allowed him to align himself with the concerns of the electorate and present his candidacy as a response to the perceived shortcomings of the current political landscape. Anies's advocacy for issues such as freedom of expression and electoral transparency further underscored his commitment to democratic values. By championing these principles, he not only sought to resonate with a diverse spectrum of voters but also positioned himself as a candidate who prioritizes the fundamental tenets



of a robust and participatory democracy. This strategic alignment with democratic ideals aimed to distinguish Anies as a candidate deeply rooted in principles that resonate with the electorate.

A notable aspect of Anies's offensive strategy was his critique of Prabowo, particularly focusing on Prabowo's decision to join Jokowi's cabinet (Dewi, 2020). This move was not merely an observation but a calculated effort to undermine Prabowo's image as an anti-establishment politician. By questioning Prabowo's alignment with the existing political order, Anies strategically portrayed himself as a true outsider challenging the status quo. This narrative played into the broader public sentiment favoring candidates who positioned themselves as agents of change and reform.

The decision to join the cabinet of a political rival became a significant vulnerability for Prabowo, and Anies adeptly exploited this opening. Anies's critiques aimed at highlighting what he portrayed as an inconsistency in Prabowo's political narrative. By emphasizing Prabowo's association with the very establishment he had positioned himself against in previous political endeavors, Anies sought to erode the credibility of Prabowo's anti-establishment image.

The effectiveness of Anies's strategy can be further explored by delving into the nuances of his communication style during the debate. Did Anies manage to strike a balance between critique and the presentation of his own policy proposals? Analyzing the tone, rhetoric, and framing of his arguments provides insights into how well he navigated the fine line between constructive criticism and political posturing. Additionally, Anies's critiques may have resonated differently with various segments of the electorate. Understanding the demographic and ideological factors that influenced the reception of Anies's message is crucial in assessing the broader impact of his strategy. Did he succeed in capturing the attention and support of specific voter demographics, or did his approach face resistance from certain quarters?

An exploration of the aftermath of the debate, including public reactions, media coverage, and shifts in polling data, can offer valuable insights into the lasting impact of Anies's offensive strategy. Did his performance translate into increased public support, or did it trigger counter-narratives that mitigated the potential gains? Analyzing the post-debate landscape provides a comprehensive view of the dynamic interplay between debate performances and electoral outcomes. Anies Baswedan's consistent attacks on Prabowo during the presidential debate reflected a strategic effort to position himself as a serious contender for the presidency. By addressing key issues related to democracy, freedom of expression, and electoral transparency, Anies aimed to resonate with diverse voter sentiments. His calculated critique of Prabowo's association with the political establishment underscored a broader narrative of challenging the status quo. A deeper exploration of Anies's communication style, the reception of his message among different voter segments, and the post-debate landscape can enhance our understanding of the effectiveness and implications of his offensive strategy in the broader context of Indonesian politics.

In the arena of political debates, the dynamics of candidate performances can often shape public perceptions and influence electoral outcomes. The debate under scrutiny, which took place on December 12, 2023, unfolded as a crucial moment in the Indonesian political landscape, revealing intriguing facets of the three main contenders: Prabowo, Anies Baswedan, and Ganjar Pranowo. This analysis will delve into the nuanced details of Prabowo's defensive stance, Ganjar Pranowo's adept recovery, and the contentious issue



surrounding the Constitutional Court's decision, offering a comprehensive exploration of the strategic moves and their potential implications.

Prabowo's defensive position throughout the debate raised questions about his ability to navigate challenging issues effectively. Notably, his decision to select Jokowi's son as the vice-presidential candidate was a pivotal moment that drew both attention and criticism. This move, seemingly unexpected and unconventional, invited scrutiny from both opponents and the public. Prabowo's responses, characterized by occasional anger and defensiveness, failed to assuage concerns about his temperament. This aspect is particularly critical in shaping public perceptions, as voters often look for a leader who can maintain composure and effectively address challenges. The choice of a vice-presidential candidate is a strategic decision that can significantly impact a campaign (Abbas et al., 2021). In Prabowo's case, this decision not only brought him under the spotlight but also provided an opportunity for his opponents to question the rationale behind such a selection. An exploration of Prabowo's justifications and communication strategy during the debate becomes imperative to understand how he intended to shape the narrative around this crucial decision. Did he succeed in turning the narrative in his favor, or did his responses further fuel skepticism among voters?

Ganjar Pranowo's performance, on the other hand, presented a contrasting picture. Despite initially appearing off-topic, he quickly regained composure and effectively addressed questions about critical issues such as unemployment and the Kartu Tani program. This ability to pivot back to relevant topics showcased not only his command over policy matters but also his adeptness in steering the narrative in a direction that aligned with his campaign's messaging. Furthermore, Ganjar's support for projects like the IKN (Ibu Kota Negara) revealed a strategic alignment with Jokowi's initiatives (Husain et al., 2020). While supporting ongoing projects may be a common political strategy to secure a broad voter base, it's essential to explore how Ganjar managed to balance this alignment with the need to present a distinct vision for improvement. Did he successfully communicate his commitment to progress while also acknowledging and building upon existing initiatives? Analyzing Ganjar's nuanced approach to policy discussions can provide insights into his positioning within the political spectrum and his potential appeal to diverse voter segments.

The debate also brought to the fore a controversial issue involving the Constitutional Court's decision to allow Gibran Rakabuming to run for vice president. Prabowo's struggle to address this issue satisfactorily underscored the complexity of navigating legal intricacies within the public sphere. His emphasis on the intelligence of the people appeared as a rhetorical device to deflect criticism without directly engaging with the substance of the allegations against him. This raises intriguing questions about the effectiveness of such rhetorical strategies in the face of legal controversies and the extent to which they resonate with the electorate.

Exploring Prabowo's responses in greater detail necessitates an examination of the broader context surrounding the Constitutional Court's decision and its potential implications for the electoral landscape. Did Prabowo's communication strategy succeed in mitigating concerns, or did it inadvertently amplify doubts about his candidacy? Analyzing the interplay between legal intricacies, public perception, and political communication during the debate can provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by candidates when navigating complex legal issues in the public domain. The intricate dynamics of the debate, including Prabowo's defensive stance, Ganjar Pranowo's adept recovery, and the contentious legal issue, offer a rich tapestry for analysis. Understanding



the strategic decisions, communication approaches, and the nuanced interplay between candidates and the issues at hand is essential for comprehending the broader implications of this pivotal moment in Indonesian politics. As the nation moves closer to the 2024 presidential election, the lessons drawn from this debate can inform discussions on effective political communication, strategic positioning, and the complexities inherent in addressing legal controversies within the public sphere.

This debate transcended individual personalities; it reflected the political and social dynamics occurring in Indonesia. Highlighting tensions between progressive governance and traditional interests, it also showcased the changing nature of political communication in Indonesia. Anies Baswedan emerged as a serious challenger, Prabowo was in a defensive position, and Ganjar Pranowo demonstrated adaptability. In formulating campaign strategies, candidates need to align their visions with evolving voter expectations, and Prabowo must refine his narrative to gain voter trust. This debate marks the beginning of a crucial electoral cycle for Indonesia's democratic process. Candidates bear the responsibility to articulate their platforms and embody leadership in line with the expectations of the Indonesian people. This election not only determines the next president but also reflects the nation's readiness to step into a future defined by informed choices and robust political discourse.

3.1. Content Analysis of the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Candidates Debate

The first-round presidential debate for the 2024 Indonesian presidential election took place on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, involving candidates Anies Baswedan, Prabowo Subianto, and Ganjar Pranowo at the Election Commission (KPU). The debate lasted approximately 150 minutes, and each candidate had the opportunity to present their visions and respond to questions posed by panelists. Ganjar Pranowo, the third-numbered presidential candidate, emphasized the historical significance of his candidacy alongside vice-presidential candidate Mahfud MD, citing their humble backgrounds. He underscored the importance of the government setting an anti-corruption example, demonstrating integrity, and providing efficient public services.

Prabowo Subianto, the second-numbered presidential candidate, pledged to continue the ongoing development with his running mate, Gibran Rakabuming Raka. Prabowo focused on poverty alleviation and anti-corruption efforts in his closing statement. Anies Baswedan, the first-numbered presidential candidate, emphasized the eradication of corruption, ensuring the government delivers the best services, and upholding ethical standards in his closing remarks. During the question-and-answer session between Prabowo and Ganjar, Prabowo acknowledged being frequently targeted with human rights violation issues every five years, while Ganjar criticized Prabowo's perceived lack of firmness in responding to human rights issues. Anies, in a question about the construction of the National Capital Region (IKN), criticized the policy, highlighting issues in DKI Jakarta. Prabowo responded to Anies's question about the Constitutional Court's decision on presidential and vice-presidential candidate requirements, stating that he is not afraid of not holding a position.

Prabowo and Anies engaged in a discussion about democracy, with Prabowo criticizing Anies for being overly critical of democracy. Prabowo mentioned that Anies became the Governor of Jakarta because he was endorsed by the opposition, suggesting that Anies wouldn't have become governor if Jokowi were a dictator. In a question from Prabowo to Ganjar about fertilizer policies in Central Java, Prabowo implied that farmers



complained about the agricultural card issued by Ganjar, making it difficult for them to obtain fertilizer. Ganjar responded with a retort, reminding Prabowo that he was once the chairman of the Indonesian Farmers Association (HKTI). Regarding human rights issues in Papua, Prabowo acknowledged the complexity due to separatist movements and foreign intervention. He proposed strengthening law enforcement and emphasized the ideological and geopolitical complexity in Papua. Anies's question to Prabowo and Ganjar about Papua led to an agreement that dialogue and justice are key to resolving issues in Papua. However, Prabowo emphasized that the problem in Papua is not as straightforward as imagined, involving complex geopolitical and ideological factors.

Each presidential candidate also presented their vision and mission statements (Zhou & Qin, 2020). Ganjar Pranowo promised to combat corruption without rhetoric, while Prabowo Subianto expressed his determination to seriously combat corruption, improve government services, and protect all societal groups. Anies Baswedan, in his first reading of the vision and mission, highlighted the need to restore legal principles in the state order. The debate commenced with the national anthem and election jingle, opened by KPU Chairman Hasyim Asy'ari. The moderator introduced 11 panelists, mostly academics from various state universities in Indonesia, who posed questions for the first debate. The debate featured three candidate pairs: Anies Baswedan-Muhaimin Iskandar, Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka, and Ganjar Prabowo-Mahfud MD. The panelists provided in-depth questions to the presidential candidates, covering various aspects such as law, politics, and human rights.

3.2. *Conversation in Social Media*

During the analysis period of the first-round presidential Candidates debate in Indonesia 2024, there were significant differences in the number of conversations generated by each candidate on social media platforms. Anies Baswedan emerged with the highest number of conversations, reaching a figure of 48 thousand, indicating a high level of interest and interaction from the public regarding his participation in the debate. Prabowo Subianto ranked second with 40 thousand conversations, signaling that his presence also garnered significant attention from netizens. Meanwhile, Ganjar Pranowo recorded 21 thousand conversations, which, although lower compared to Anies and Prabowo, still reflected the positive impact of his participation in the debate. The analysis of the number of conversations can indicate the extent to which the three candidates succeeded in capturing attention and sparking discussions among the public through social media during the debate period. Thus, the high number of conversations for Anies and Prabowo may reflect effective communication strategies or controversies that they successfully generated, while the lower number for Ganjar may suggest potential for further development in reaching voters through social media platforms. For a clearer view, refer to the figure below:



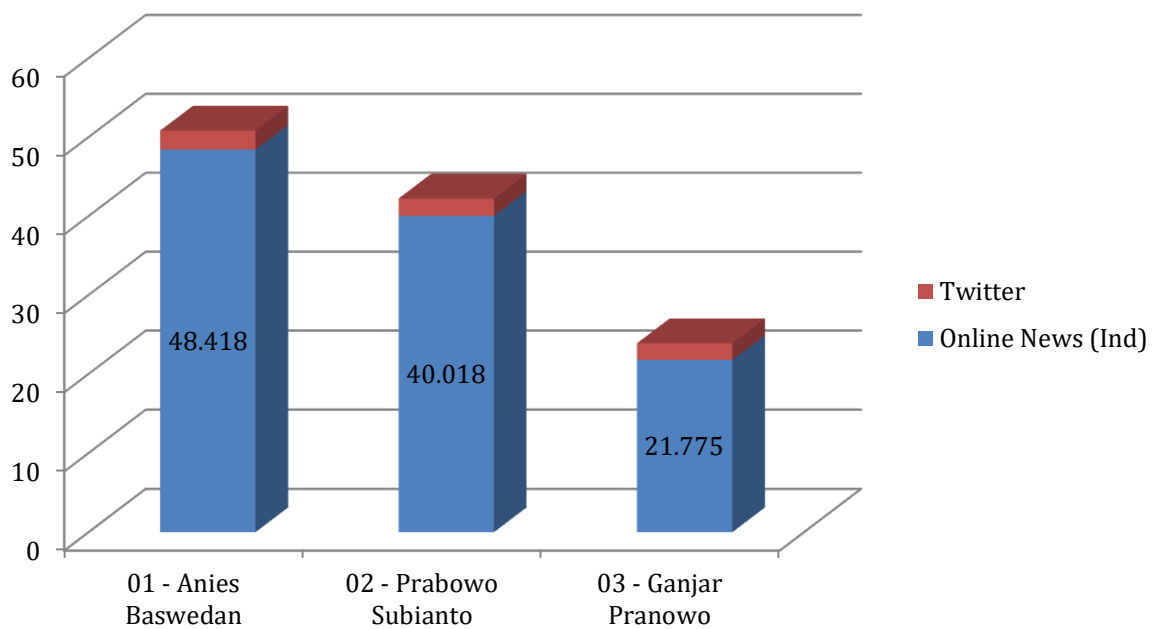


Figure 1 Total Mentions by Media Types (2023-12-12 to 2023-12-12)

The analysis of the number of conversations during the first-round presidential Candidates debate in Indonesia 2024 provides valuable insights into the dynamics of public engagement and interest in the political discourse surrounding the event. Among the candidates, Anies Baswedan emerged as a focal point, peaking in attention with a remarkable 48 thousand recorded conversations. Anies Baswedan's elevated level of attention can be attributed to a combination of factors, each contributing to his prominence during and after the debate. Firstly, Anies' popularity as a former governor of Jakarta places him in a unique position within the political landscape. As a well-known figure with a track record in governance, he possesses an established public profile that naturally draws attention (Anggini & Putra, 2022). The recognition and familiarity that Anies enjoys among the electorate could have acted as a catalyst, sparking interest in his participation in the debate.

Secondly, Anies Baswedan's ability to present arguments and perspectives persuasively during the debate likely played a pivotal role in capturing the audience's attention. His communication skills, honed through his experience in public service and governance, may have resonated effectively with the diverse viewership, further amplifying his visibility. Anies' capacity to articulate his views convincingly might have contributed to the significant number of conversations generated around him. Furthermore, the phenomenon can also be explained by the implementation of Anies Baswedan's communication strategy during the debate. Successful political communication involves not only conveying messages clearly but also strategically managing the narrative to evoke specific responses. Anies' team may have orchestrated a communication plan that resonated with the audience, generating active responses in the form of discussions, endorsements, and, inevitably, controversy. This strategy could have strategically positioned Anies as a central figure in the post-debate discourse, contributing to the high number of conversations surrounding him.

The active response from the public, comprising both support and controversy, indicates a dynamic engagement with Anies Baswedan's presence in the debate. Positive responses, such as endorsements and expressions of agreement, showcase the effectiveness of his messaging and the alignment of his views with certain segments of the audience. On the other hand, controversy, while challenging, can also be viewed as a measure of the impact of his statements, sparking discussions and debates across various online platforms.

In the broader context of political communication, the 48 thousand conversations serve as a quantitative metric for assessing the reach and resonance of Anies Baswedan's messages. The digital landscape, especially social media, has become a crucial arena for shaping public opinion, and the sheer volume of conversations indicates a significant influence on the online discourse. The peak in attention and the substantial number of conversations surrounding Anies Baswedan during the first-round presidential Candidates debate in Indonesia 2024 can be attributed to a combination of his pre-existing popularity, effective communication skills, and a well-executed communication strategy. This phenomenon not only reflects the intricacies of political communication but also underscores the importance of understanding the dynamics of public engagement in the digital age.

The analysis of the number of conversations during the first-round presidential Candidates debate in Indonesia in 2024 reveals that Prabowo Subianto secured a substantial 40 thousand conversations, underscoring significant public interest in his involvement. This noteworthy position in the conversation metrics positions Prabowo as a prominent candidate, and several factors contribute to his ability to capture the attention of voters through various issues raised during the debate. Prabowo Subianto's success in generating 40 thousand conversations can be understood within the context of his established political stature and the strategic elements of his communication during the debate. Firstly, Prabowo's standing as a prominent candidate and a familiar figure in Indonesian politics plays a pivotal role in attracting public attention. As a seasoned politician and former military general, he brings with him a wealth of experience and a pre-existing profile that naturally draws interest from a wide spectrum of the electorate.

Secondly, Prabowo's ability to capture the voters' attention during the debate can be attributed to his strong rhetoric and the effective communication of his ideas. A candidate's capacity to articulate their positions persuasively is critical in engaging the audience, and Prabowo's experience in public speaking and political discourse likely contributed to his success in creating public interest. His rhetorical skills might have resonated with segments of the audience, leading to active discussions and conversations surrounding his contributions to the debate (Hanevi et al., 2023). Furthermore, the inclusion of controversial issues or topics that elicit strong reactions from the public could have played a role in Prabowo's success in generating conversations. Controversial subjects often spark intense debates and discussions, drawing more attention to the candidate who introduces them. Prabowo's strategic use of certain issues might have ignited conversations not only among his supporters but also among those with opposing views, creating a dynamic and engaging digital discourse.

Additionally, factors influencing public perception of Prabowo, such as his political stance, policy proposals, and responses to opponents' arguments, all contribute to the overall impact of his participation in the debate. Voters are likely to engage more actively when they perceive a candidate as addressing their concerns or presenting compelling solutions to prevailing issues. Prabowo's success in creating public interest can be linked



to how well he resonated with the electorate on these fronts. In the broader context of political communication, the 40 thousand conversations surrounding Prabowo Subianto highlight the significant impact he had on shaping the digital discourse during the debate. As social media continues to play a pivotal role in influencing public opinion, the volume of conversations serves as a quantitative indicator of Prabowo's effectiveness in capturing and retaining the public's attention. Prabowo Subianto's success in reaching 40 thousand conversations during the first-round presidential Candidates debate in Indonesia in 2024 can be attributed to his established political standing, strong rhetorical skills, strategic use of controversial issues, and alignment with the concerns and expectations of the electorate. This phenomenon underscores the multifaceted nature of political communication and the intricate dynamics of engaging with the public in the digital age.

In the analysis of the number of conversations during the first-round presidential Candidates debate in Indonesia in 2024, Ganjar Pranowo emerged with 21 thousand conversations, securing the third position. While this figure is relatively lower compared to Anies and Prabowo, it still signifies a substantial level of public interest and attention directed toward Ganjar's participation in the debate (Iskandarsyah Siregar, Salsabila, 2021). As the governor of Central Java, Ganjar faces challenges in competing with the well-established national popularity of Anies and Prabowo. However, this data also presents a significant opportunity for Ganjar to enhance his visibility, actively engage in online conversations, and establish a more profound connection with voters. Ganjar Pranowo's position as the third-highest in the conversation metrics suggests that, despite facing the challenge of national prominence, he has succeeded in capturing the attention of a substantial portion of the online audience. The figure of 21 thousand conversations reflects a genuine interest in Ganjar's contributions during the debate and indicates that he has managed to create an impact on the digital discourse surrounding the presidential election.

One of the contributing factors to Ganjar's success in generating 21 thousand conversations could be attributed to his role as the governor of Central Java. Regional leaders often possess a dedicated local following, and Ganjar's engagement with voters in Central Java may have resonated positively, contributing to the conversations. Localized issues and policies discussed during the debate that directly affect the people in Central Java could have sparked discussions and interactions among residents and Ganjar's supporters. Furthermore, Ganjar Pranowo can leverage the data indicating 21 thousand conversations as an opportunity for enhancing his visibility on the national stage. While Anies and Prabowo have established themselves as prominent figures with widespread recognition, Ganjar can strategically utilize online platforms to bridge the gap and expand his influence beyond Central Java. Actively engaging in online conversations, sharing his policy proposals, and addressing national issues can contribute to Ganjar's broader appeal and help him connect with voters on a national scale.

Additionally, the figure of 21 thousand conversations serves as a valuable feedback mechanism for Ganjar to gauge public sentiments, identify areas of strength, and address potential concerns. Analyzing the nature of these conversations, whether they are predominantly positive, critical, or neutral, can provide insights into the effectiveness of Ganjar's communication strategy and help him refine his approach in subsequent engagements. In the context of the evolving landscape of political communication, the digital sphere plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions and influencing voter behavior. Ganjar Pranowo's 21 thousand conversations indicate a notable engagement level that can be strategically harnessed to amplify his presence, communicate his vision,



and build connections with a diverse national audience. Ganjar Pranowo's position with 21 thousand conversations during the first-round presidential Candidates debate reflects a commendable level of interest and attention from the public. While facing the challenge of competing with nationally renowned candidates, Ganjar can use this data as an opportunity to enhance his visibility on the national stage, actively engage in online conversations, and strategically position himself as a viable and influential candidate in the broader political landscape of Indonesia.

Overall, the analysis of the number of conversations provides an overview of how well the three candidates were able to interact with the public through social media during the debate period. The high number of conversations for Anies and Prabowo may indicate their success in sparking interest and debates among netizens, while for Ganjar, it can be seen as a call to more actively engage to expand his impact in online political conversations.

3.3. Share of Voices

In the analysis of the share of voices during the first-round presidential Candidates debate in Indonesia 2024, it was found that Anies Baswedan dominated the conversations with a percentage of 44%, indicating a substantial influence among netizens. The share of voices reflects the extent to which a candidate can capture attention, garner support, or elicit responses from the public on social media platforms. Refer to the following image for more details:

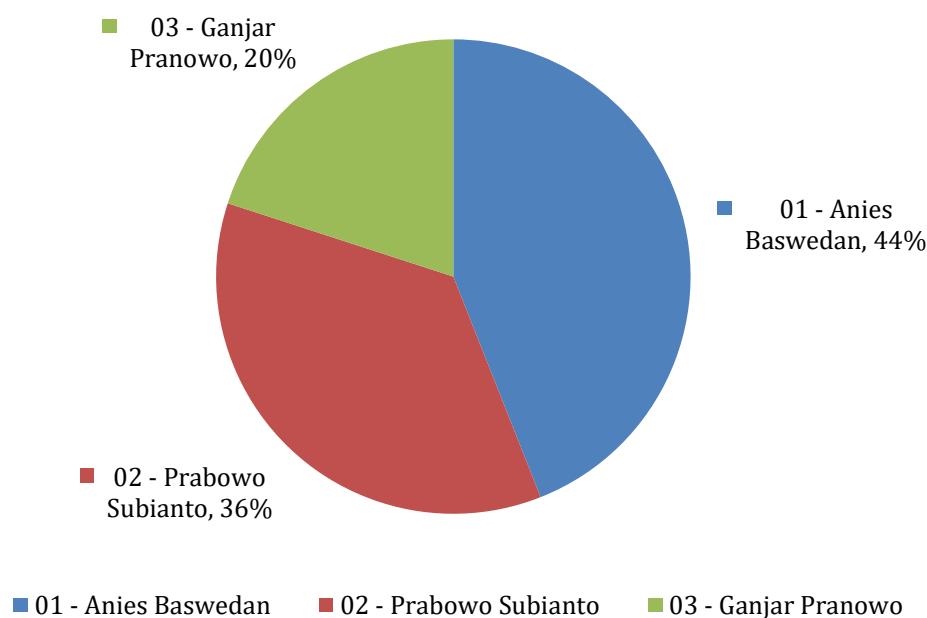


Figure 2 Share of Voices in All Media Types (2023-12-12 to 2023-12-12)

Anies Baswedan's remarkable achievement in doubling the share of voices compared to Prabowo Subianto, who held the second-highest share, speaks volumes about the impact of his presence in the online discourse. Anies's success in securing a 44% share of voices during the analysis of the first-round presidential Candidates debate in Indonesia 2024 can be attributed to a multifaceted set of factors that underline his standing in public perception. First and foremost, Anies's popularity, stemming from his tenure as the



former governor of Jakarta, played a pivotal role. His past leadership experience and visibility on a national stage provided him with a recognizable persona, making him a significant figure in Indonesian politics. The positive associations with his previous role likely contributed to the heightened attention and engagement from the audience during the debate. Furthermore, Anies's ability to present his views and arguments effectively during the debate added another layer to his share of voices. Articulate communication, persuasive rhetoric, and a compelling narrative are crucial elements in capturing the audience's attention (Bajari et al., 2021). Anies's proficiency in conveying his ideas might have resonated well with viewers, leading to increased discussion and interactions on social media platforms. The existence of a strong and active fan base could be another influential factor in Anies's high share of voices. Fans who actively engage in discussions, share content, and amplify Anies's messages contribute significantly to the overall online conversation. This dynamic fan base not only boosts visibility but also fosters a sense of community around Anies, creating a ripple effect that extends the reach of his political discourse.

Anies may have implemented a strategic and effective communication plan tailored for the digital landscape. Crafting messages that resonate with the online audience, strategically timing content releases, and utilizing various social media platforms are all components of a successful digital communication strategy. Anies's ability to generate interest and participation may be indicative of a well-thought-out approach to engaging with the electorate through online channels. Anies Baswedan's dominance in the share of voices can be attributed to a combination of factors – his pre-existing popularity, leadership experience, effective communication skills, a dedicated fan base, and a well-executed digital communication strategy. This comprehensive approach not only secured his position as a significant participant in the debate but also propelled him to the forefront of online political discussions during this critical period in Indonesian politics.

Prabowo Subianto's retention of the second position with a 36% share of voices underscores his enduring impact in online discussions, affirming his status as a candidate who commands attention and substantial support across social media platforms. While Anies Baswedan took the lead in the share of voices, Prabowo's sustained influence signals his ability to maintain a significant presence in the digital political landscape. A primary factor contributing to Prabowo's substantial share of voices is likely the existence of a large and devoted fan base. This support network actively engages in discussions, amplifies Prabowo's messages, and contributes to the overall online conversation. The strength of this fan base is a testament to Prabowo's enduring popularity and his ability to connect with a diverse audience (Fidyati & Rajandran, 2020). Prabowo's extensive political experience is another crucial element shaping his share of voices. As a seasoned political figure, Prabowo brings a wealth of knowledge and a track record that resonates with certain segments of the electorate. His credibility and familiarity in the political arena contribute to the ongoing discussions about his candidacy, attracting attention and engagement from a broad spectrum of social media users.

Moreover, Prabowo's knack for addressing controversial or pressing issues may have played a role in sustaining his share of voices. Leveraging topics that spark debate, elicit strong reactions, or resonate with the concerns of the public can be an effective strategy to maintain relevance and prominence in online discussions. Prabowo's ability to draw attention to key issues may have contributed to the ongoing conversation around his candidacy. However, the analysis also highlights that Anies Baswedan managed to surpass Prabowo in creating buzz and online discussions. This could be attributed to Anies's



unique strengths in communication, effective messaging during the debate, or the specific issues he chose to emphasize. It indicates that, during the analyzed period, Anies successfully garnered a higher level of attention and engagement compared to Prabowo, potentially influencing the overall narrative surrounding the candidates.

Prabowo Subianto's sustained 36% share of voices signifies his enduring relevance and impact in online political discussions. The interplay of a dedicated fan base, extensive political experience, and the strategic handling of key issues contributes to his continued prominence. While Anies Baswedan may have surpassed him in share of voices during this specific analysis, Prabowo's consistent standing reflects his ability to navigate and thrive in the dynamic digital landscape of contemporary politics. Ganjar Pranowo's third position with a 20% share of voices reflects a noteworthy impact in the realm of online conversations during the first-round presidential Candidates debate in Indonesia 2024. While his percentage is lower than that of Anies Baswedan and Prabowo Subianto, it is crucial to recognize the positive influence and engagement he has managed to generate.

As the governor of Central Java, Ganjar faces the challenge of competing with candidates who have already established nationwide popularity, such as Anies and Prabowo. Despite this, his share of voices indicates that there is genuine interest in his participation in the debate, and he has succeeded in capturing a portion of the online discourse. To enhance his visibility and further amplify his impact, Ganjar can employ a more active communication strategy on social media (Isnaini et al., 2020). This entails not only increasing the frequency of his posts but also actively engaging with his audience. Responding to comments, participating in relevant discussions, and sharing content that resonates with voters can contribute to a more dynamic and interactive online presence.

Expanding his reach beyond Central Java and connecting with a broader national audience is a strategic approach for Ganjar. This can involve addressing issues that have a broader appeal and relevance, showcasing his policy positions, and actively participating in conversations on national-level topics. By doing so, Ganjar can broaden his support base and increase his share of voices in the digital political discourse. Leveraging multimedia content, such as videos, live streams, or interactive sessions, can further enhance Ganjar's online presence. These formats not only capture attention more effectively but also allow for a more personal and direct connection with the audience. While Ganjar Pranowo's 20% share of voices places him in the third position, it signifies a meaningful impact in online conversations. To build on this momentum, a proactive and strategic approach to social media communication, coupled with efforts to connect with a wider audience, can enhance Ganjar's presence and influence in the evolving landscape of digital political discourse.

In the context of the share of voices, the comparison between the three candidates creates an interesting dynamic in online political discussions. Anies's high share of voices highlights his appeal and impact, while Prabowo remains a major force in the conversation. Ganjar, despite being in the third position, still has opportunities to expand his influence by actively engaging and interacting with voters online. Overall, the analysis of the share of voices provides an overview of the extent to which candidates can control and influence the political narrative in the digital space. Moving forward, careful communication strategies, more active interaction with voters, and appropriate responses to emerging issues on social media could be key to increasing the share of voices and strengthening each candidate's position during the campaign.

3.4. Sentiment Analysis



Sentiment analysis serves as a powerful tool to gauge the public's reactions and perceptions during significant events, such as the first-round presidential Candidates debate in Indonesia 2024. It involves the systematic examination of sentiments expressed in various forms, such as comments, responses, and interactions on social media platforms, focusing on the key figures of the debate – Anies Baswedan, Prabowo Subianto, and Ganjar Pranowo. The data presented in the sentiment analysis offers valuable insights into the overall tone and reception each candidate received from the public. It becomes evident that both Anies and Ganjar garnered a comparable level of positive sentiment, each registering at 64%. This suggests that these candidates successfully resonated with a significant portion of the audience, generating positive reactions and support. On the contrary, Prabowo received a lower percentage of positive sentiment, standing at 48%. This difference may stem from various factors, including the content and delivery of his arguments, public perception of his political stance, or specific issues addressed during the debate. Understanding these nuances is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of public sentiment and its implications for each candidate.

Examining negative sentiment, Prabowo recorded the highest percentage at 41%. This signifies a notable amount of criticism or unfavorable reactions directed towards him. Possible reasons behind this negative sentiment could range from controversial statements, policy positions, or overall communication style during the debate. Analyzing the specific aspects that contributed to this negativity is essential for a more nuanced understanding of public perceptions. Anies, despite having a high positive sentiment, recorded a 27% negative sentiment, suggesting a more polarized response from the audience. This indicates that while a significant portion of the public responded positively to Anies, there was also a notable fraction critical of his performance or viewpoints. Understanding the nature of these criticisms and areas of disagreement can provide valuable insights into the diverse perspectives within the audience. Ganjar, with the lowest negative sentiment at 23%, seems to have attracted less criticism or negative reactions compared to Anies and Prabowo. This may indicate a relatively smoother reception of Ganjar's contributions during the debate. Exploring the reasons behind this positive sentiment and potential areas for improvement can further inform strategies for engaging with the audience effectively. By delving deeper into the specific issues, communication styles, and contextual factors influencing these sentiments, one can gain a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play during the debate, guiding future communication strategies and campaign efforts. For a more detailed breakdown, refer to the following figure:

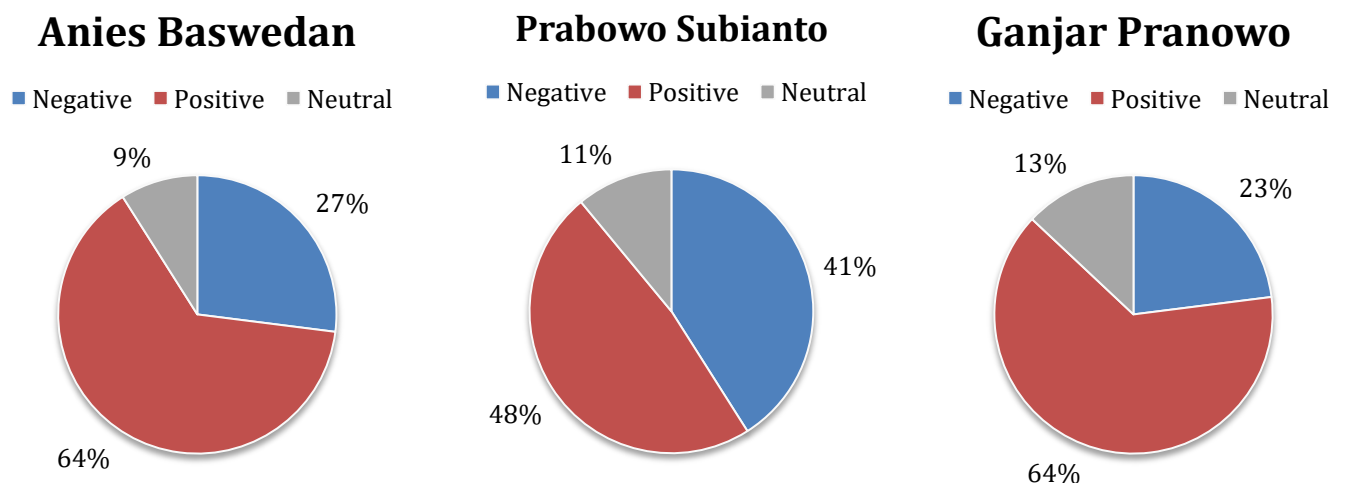


Figure 3 Sentiment analysis

First and foremost, it must be acknowledged that the high percentage of positive sentiment for Anies and Ganjar reflects significant appeal and support from the public towards both candidates. Anies, as the former governor of Jakarta, and Ganjar, as the governor of Central Java, might have successfully conveyed their messages and arguments in a captivating manner, winning the hearts of voters. This positive sentiment could stem from their positive image in leadership and their achievements in their respective regions. However, it is important to note that despite Anies and Ganjar having the same percentage of positive sentiment, the difference in negative sentiment reveals a significant distinction. Anies with 27% negative sentiment may face some criticism or controversy but still maintains a better level of acceptance from the public compared to Prabowo. Meanwhile, Ganjar with a negative sentiment of 23% indicates that he might have successfully built a cleaner and less controversial image compared to his two rivals.

Prabowo, who garnered 48% positive sentiment, reflects a strong appeal to a considerable portion of voters, but the high percentage of negative sentiment, namely 41%, becomes a major highlight. This elevated negative sentiment may indicate the existence of controversy or significant disagreement regarding his views, attitudes, or policies. This candidate might be challenged to alleviate concerns or dissatisfaction among some of his voters. This analysis also creates room to further explore why each candidate receives specific sentiments. Anies and Ganjar may have succeeded in conveying their visions and missions in a more inspirational or heartfelt way to the voters. Conversely, Prabowo may face the challenging task of balancing explaining his views and responding to emerging criticisms.

In the context of political campaigns, sentiments evolving on social media can be potential indicators of how the public will respond to presidential candidates in the actual election (Malesev & Cherry, 2021). High positive sentiments can help boost electability and support, while high negative sentiments can pose a challenge that needs to be addressed (Al-Shehan & Assbeihat, 2021). Therefore, the campaign teams of each candidate can leverage this data to adjust their communication strategies, respond to public concerns, and strengthen the desired image. It is also crucial to understand that sentiments on social media only reflect a portion of public opinions. There are voters who may not be active on these platforms, and online sentiments do not always reflect the majority's views. Therefore, additional analysis and direct observations are needed to understand more deeply the dynamics of support and rejection for each candidate.

Overall, sentiment analysis provides information on how the public responds to presidential candidates and can serve as a foundation for improving campaign strategies, communication, and a deeper understanding of the needs and concerns of voters. Sentiments evolving on social media can be a reflection of the developing political and social dynamics in society, and a profound understanding of this is crucial in building strong relationships between candidates and their voters.

3.5. Social Network Analysis (SNA) Map

In the contemporary era, General Elections attract substantial attention not just in physical spaces but also in the virtual realm, particularly on social media platforms. The primary objective of this research is to delve deeper into the analysis of conversational dynamics on social media concerning the General Election. The study concentrates on four



major clusters identified through social network analysis (SNA): Neutral Supporters, Pro-Anies, Pro-Prabowo, and Pro-Ganjar. Employing a social network analysis (SNA) approach, this research aims to comprehend the structure and patterns of conversations on social media linked to the general election. The chosen platform for data extraction is Twitter, recognized as one of the most prevalent and dynamic social media platforms in the Indonesian political context. Data collection took place on December 12, 2023, coinciding with the first-round presidential Candidates debate for the Indonesian 2024 election.

The clusters identified through SNA—Neutral Supporters, Pro-Anies, Pro-Prabowo, and Pro-Ganjar—serve as distinct communities within the larger social network discussing the General Election. These clusters likely represent different political affiliations, ideologies, or preferences among the online community. Understanding the interactions and connections within these clusters can offer valuable insights into the diverse perspectives, sentiments, and preferences prevalent in the digital discourse surrounding the election. Social network analysis enables researchers to map and analyze the relationships and interactions among individuals or groups in a networked environment. By applying this methodology to social media data, the research aims to uncover the patterns of communication, information flow, and influence dynamics during a critical period of the electoral process (Artz, 2020). This type of analysis is particularly pertinent in the digital age, where social media platforms play a significant role in shaping public opinion, political discourse, and the overall landscape of democratic processes.

The visual representation of the SNA map provides a snapshot of the interconnectedness and clustering of different groups or communities within the social media conversation related to the General Election. Researchers can further explore the nature of interactions within each cluster, identify key nodes or influential users, and analyze the flow of information between different clusters. This deeper analysis can unveil nuances in public opinion, the impact of influential figures, and the overall sentiment landscape during this crucial phase of the electoral process. The research not only aims to capture the broad dynamics of conversations related to the General Election but also seeks to dissect the intricacies within distinct clusters identified through SNA. This approach contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the digital discourse surrounding the election, paving the way for insights that can inform future research, political strategies, and a deeper comprehension of the evolving dynamics of political communication in the digital age. For a clearer view, the SNA map can be observed in the following figure:

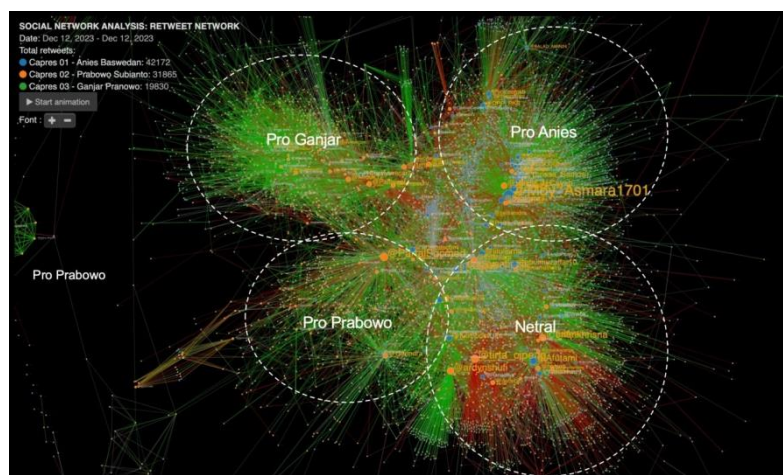


Figure 4 SNA Map of First Round 2024 Indonesian Presidential Candidate Debate

The analysis begins by identifying prominent clusters within the social network, namely Pro-Anies, Pro-Prabowo, Pro-Ganjar, and Neutral. The Neutral cluster is identified as a group that does not explicitly support any presidential candidate, while the other three clusters explicitly endorse Anies, Prabowo, and Ganjar, respectively. The Neutral cluster exhibits unique characteristics within the social media conversation structure. With its dominant size, this cluster reflects the majority of users who tend to remain impartial towards any specific candidate. However, there is complexity within this cluster, as despite being neutral, there is significant negative sentiment towards Prabowo. Sentiment analysis reveals that the color red, symbolizing negative sentiment, dominates the presidential candidate with the orange node, namely Prabowo. Additionally, there is also significant discussion regarding Anies (blue node), indicating a divergence of opinions within the Neutral cluster. The importance of this cluster lies in providing critical and in-depth analysis of both candidates. While general elections are marked by debates and polarization, the Neutral cluster can play a mediating role and offer objective perspectives. It's essential to note that Ganjar doesn't garner much attention from the Neutral cluster, suggesting potential bias in the discussions.

The Pro-Anies cluster represents a group that fervently supports Anies in the general election. With the highest volume of conversations related to Anies among the three candidates, this cluster indicates strong support and militancy from a considerable number of accounts. Discussions primarily focus on positive aspects of Anies (blue node), while negative sentiments tend to be directed towards Prabowo (orange node). Disagreement with Ganjar is also evident, although not as strong as the disagreement with Prabowo. Top influencers within the Pro-Anies cluster play a significant role in shaping opinions and views. Accounts such as @Mdy_Asmara1701 and @Yurissa_Samosir act as influential hubs directing conversations. The robust support from these top influencers strengthens the cohesion and focus of the Pro-Anies cluster in supporting Anies. For a clearer understanding, refer to the following figure.

**Figure 5** Top Influencer Anies

The Pro-Prabowo cluster signifies the support for the candidate with the least extensive volume of conversations among the identified clusters. This cluster is predominantly shaped by accounts such as @PartaiSocmed and @Gerindra, focusing their discussions on Prabowo (depicted as an orange node). Despite its relatively smaller size



compared to other clusters, Prabowo's presence in the overall conversation remains substantial. The Neutral cluster, as well as the Pro-Anies and Pro-Ganjar clusters, contribute to discussions about Prabowo, highlighting the cross-cluster attention he receives.

However, the Pro-Prabowo cluster faces challenges due to limited support and the absence of prominent influencers. The smaller size of this cluster suggests difficulties in attracting attention and cultivating support on social media. Despite these challenges, the Pro-Prabowo cluster remains significant as it represents the voices of a minority supporting Prabowo. The absence of top influencers might be compensated by the cluster's ability to articulate the views of this particular group, making it relevant in the broader discourse. For a more detailed visual representation, please refer to the figure.

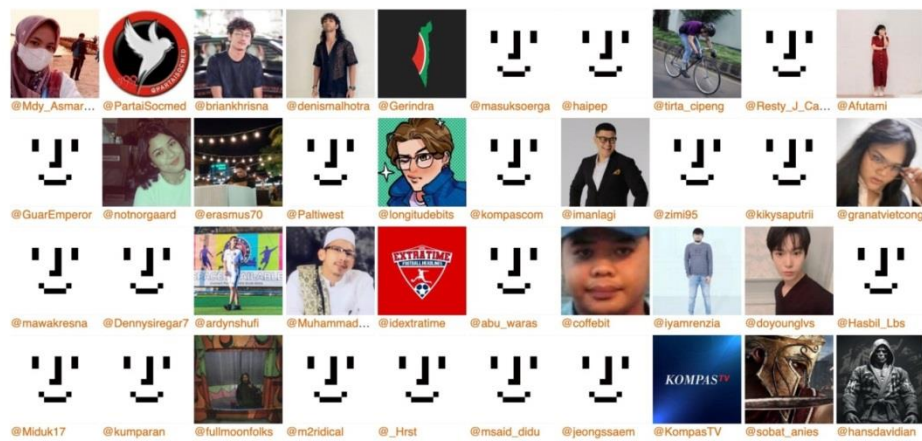


Figure 6 Top Influencer Prabowo

The Pro-Ganjar cluster possesses distinctive characteristics compared to the other clusters. Despite being smaller in size, this cluster primarily focuses on discussions about Ganjar (depicted as a green node) and Prabowo (orange node). However, the analysis reveals that discussions about Ganjar are less extensive, with top influencers showing a greater interest in discussing Prabowo. The significance of this cluster lies in its expression of support for Ganjar and the limited influence of top influencers. While the volume of conversations about Ganjar may not be as extensive as in other clusters, its presence contributes to opinion diversity and provides a voice for a candidate who might receive less attention from larger clusters. For a clearer view, please refer to the following figure:



Figure 7 Top Influencer Ganjar

In this study, social network analysis provides an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of conversations on social media related to the general election. The Neutral cluster is pivotal in offering a critical and analytical perspective, while the Pro-Anies, Pro-Prabowo, and Pro-Ganjar clusters reflect the diversity of support and sentiments among social media users. This analysis is dynamic and subject to change over time. The influence of top influencers within each cluster plays a crucial role in shaping opinions and the direction of conversations. Despite the smaller size of the Pro-Prabowo cluster, its relevance in voicing minority opinions demonstrates the plurality within the political dynamics on social media.

4. Conclusions

The social media construction research on political hegemony in the analysis of the first-round debate of the 2024 Indonesian presidential candidates has yielded several significant conclusions. Social media serves as a crucial stage in shaping the polarization of public opinion, dividing users into groups supporting or opposing each candidate. Viral narratives and information dominate conversations, often initiated by controversial speeches or responses that create intense and emotional discussions among social media users. The importance of facts and contextual understanding is emphasized, while the influence of traditional media continues to play a crucial role in shaping and directing online conversations. Small groups with extreme opinions also play a significant role, creating an “echo chamber” where their views are reinforced and permeate broader discussions. Debate panelists and moderators have a significant impact on shaping perceptions of presidential candidate performances, and challenges in distinguishing between facts and opinions in the digital world are highlighted. This research provides profound insights into the complexity of social media dynamics in the political debate context, laying the foundation for a better understanding of its influence on shaping public opinions and political dynamics.

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