TOWARDS THE 2024 INDONESIAN ELECTIONS: THE USE OF THE INDONESIAN GENERAL ELECTION COMMISSION`S TWITTER ACCOUNT

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Abstract

Social media platforms have become one of the most important online spaces for political communication. The General Election Commission as the organizer of the election must be able to use social media to socialize the stages of the election that have been and will be held. By focusing on the use of Twitter in Indonesia, this research examines how the Indonesian General Election Commission is using the Twitter platform for socialization towards the 2024 general election. Researchers used a qualitative descriptive approach. The data is sourced from the KPU RI Twitter account with the account name @KPU_ID, then processed using Qualitative Data Software Analysis (QDSA), namely NVivo 12 Plus. The results show that the intensity of electoral content socialization delivered by KPU accounts has different intensities. The highest percentage of socialized content is Political Parties with 55%, Updating voter data at 17%, Formulation of Regulations at 16%, and Electoral districts with a percentage of 12%. However, while the intensity of KPU_ID tweets is very high, the reaction of followers to the presented content is very low because the information presented is not detailed. When using social media to communicate with their followers, KPU can provide a clear information reference to increase follower feedback. A clear reference to followers is crucial in exploring representational linkages between KPU and followers.

Keywords: electoral, election commission, socialization, twitter

Abstrak

Platform media sosial telah menjadi salah satu ruang online terpenting untuk komunikasi politik. Komisi Pemilihan Umum sebagai penyelenggara pemilu harus dapat menggunakan media sosial sebagai sarana untuk mensosialisasikan tahapan pemilu yang telah dan akan diselenggarakan. Dengan berfokus pada penggunaan Twitter di Indonesia, penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana Komisi Pemilihan Umum Indonesia menggunakan platform Twitter untuk sosialisasi menjelang pemilihan umum 2024. Peneliti menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Data bersumber dari akun Twitter KPU RI dengan nama akun @KPU_ID, kemudian data diolah menggunakan Qualitative Data Software Analysis (QDSA) yaitu NVivo 12 Plus. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa intensitas sosialisasi konten pemilu yang disampaikan oleh akun KPU_ID memiliki intensitas yang berbeda-beda. Persentase konten sosialisasi tertinggi adalah Pendaftaran Partai Politik sebesar 55%, Pemutakhiran data pemilih sebesar 17%, Perumusan Peraturan sebesar 16%, dan Penetapan Daerah pemilihan dengan persentase sebesar 12%. Namun, meski intensitas Tweet KPU_ID sangat tinggi, reaksi pengikut terhadap konten yang disajikan sangat rendah karena informasi yang disajikan tidak secara detail. Saat menggunakan media sosial untuk berkomunikasi dengan pengikutnya, KPU

dapat memberikan referensi informasi yang jelas untuk meningkatkan feedback dari pengikut. Referensi yang jelas kepada pengikut sangat penting dalam mengeksplorasi hubungan representasional antara KPU dan pengikut.

Kata Kunci: pemilu, komisi pemilihan umum, sosialisasi, twitter

Introduction

The presence of new technology, especially social media, is essential for society and has entered democratic life (Aziz & Hasna, 2020; Shirazi et al., 2010). The role of social media in political and election campaigns has grown significantly over the years (Prihatini, 2020). Several studies have also been published on the use of social media for political activity in various countries, showing the increasingly important role of social media in national politics (Guerrero-solé, 2018). In Indonesian democracy, social media emerged and played an active role in socializing the 2019 elections. Previously, social media was not widely used in Indonesia's electoral history. Even though elections have been held eleven times since 1955, 1971, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 1999, 2004, 2009, and 2014 (Priyanto et al., 2021).

The use of social media in a democracy is supported by the level of internet penetration. Data from the Association of Indonesia Internet Service (APJII) found that the number of internet.

User penetration reached 73.7% in 2019-2020, an increase from previous years which amounted to 64.8% (Akbar et al., 2022). According to the latest data as of July 2021, internet penetration in Indonesia has reached around 70%. It can be a great resource to improve the quality of communication between communities and stakeholders (Cahyaningsih et al., 2019). Here governments/agencies. The existence of the internet, social media, and other digital platforms are tools that assist in the conduct of political processes and activities that promote active, fast, and transparent public participation (Saud et al., 2020).

Social media present an interesting opportunity for the government to provide information, ideas, and policies through various messages (Alessandro Lovari, 2020). One of the state institutions that use social media in its activities is the General Election Commission (KPU) of the Republic of Indonesia. As an independent institution in the Indonesian constitutional system, the General Election Commission has the duties, powers, and obligations of election organizers stipulated in Law Number 15 of 2011 concerning Election Organizers (Sahroni, 2019). The General Election Commission is the only institution allowed to organize legislative, presidential, and regional head elections in Indonesia. All aspects related to the conduct of elections are the responsibility of the KPU, including socialization (Gelar Pangestu, 2020)

The purpose of socialization by the KPU has been regulated in KPU Regulation Number 5 of 2015,: a) socialization of election stages, schedules, and socialization of the program. b) to improve public knowledge, understanding, and awareness of voting rights and obligations; c) Increased voter participation in elections (Bima Pratama, Danang Wijaya Saputra, 2022). For first-time voters who are unfamiliar with political issues because of their closeness to social media, this can serve as a reference for deciding which legislative candidate to vote for (Melenia, 2022). A study by the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) shows that 60.6% of those in Generation Z born between 1996 and 2005 had access to political news via social media. This shows that social media has a significant influence on young people's political decision-making (Adnan et al., 2020).

KPU RI held socialization in several ways, both directly (face to face) and using social media. The General Election Commission organizes the socialization stage of the 2024 General Election face-to-face and via social media because online and offline socialization is a vital need (Nurjaman, 2022). Social media used by KPU to disseminate election information are Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube. Recent elections (presidential, vice presidential, and regional elections) have increased the number of eligible voters.

The number of voters for the 2014 presidential and vice-presidential elections was 69.9%, increasing to 81.9% in 2019. It was 70.0% in the 2015 regional elections, 74% in the 2017 regional elections, 73.2% in the 2018 regional elections, and 76.9% in the 2020 regional elections (Setkab.go.id, 2022). The 2020 regional elections were held during the massive spread of the Covid-19 virus but citizen participation has increased compared to previous years. This is inseparable from the effectiveness of information provided by the (KPU) through socialization methods (Pratama & Suswanta, 2022)

After the previous Election was successfully implemented, one of the challenges in the 2024 Election is maintaining participation levels. Toward the 2024 general election, the KPU shared a lot of information on social media. Research shows that social media activity is closely linked to upcoming elections (Kruikemeier, 2014).

There are various studies available on the use of social media election socialization in Indonesia (Nurjaman, 2022; Pratama & Suswanta, 2022; Priyanto et al., 2021), the use of Twitter to Increase Election Participation During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Communication Network and 2020 Pilkada socialization Content (Akbar et al., 2022). On the other hand, no recent study has discussed the use of KPU_ ID Twitter Account towards the 2024 Election. To address this gap in knowledge this study aims to analyze the use of Twitter by the KPU RI in socializing the 2024 elections.

In this study, the authors used a qualitative descriptive method. Descriptive description obtained through a search of relevant literature. The authors chose KPU RI Twitter account with the account name @KPU_ID, as the data source. This is because Twitter usage in Indonesia including the most popular social media, reach 18.45 million in 2022 (Dataindonesia.id, 2022). Twitter data helps provide insight into a variety of topics, offering real-time availability, faster access, and lower labor costs (Giger et al., 2021). The Twitter platform is considered one of the latest news and information references and topics related to elections are no exception (Rahmat & Purnomo, 2020).

Data was taken from the KPU RI Twitter account via NCapture in NVivo 12 Plus with Google Chrome. Tweet data coding was carried out from August 2022 to December 2022 as various stages of socialization for the 2024 elections took place during this period. The data obtained were then processed with several features namely Croostab, Crosstab Query, and Sociogram. The Crosstab feature automatically calculates and analysis the variables, The Crosstab Query feature is also used for automatic calculations between all data related to the 2024 General Election.

The Use of Twitter for socialization

The General Election Commission (KPU) of the Republic of Indonesia conducted socialization and information dissemination activities through tweets and retweets from August to December 2022, with 1,120 tweets and retweets. During this period, the government not only tweeted about the holding of the election but also provided general information unrelated to the election. Informing about a public holiday, and other important activities attended by the KPU chairperson and members. Otherwise, accounts retweeted by KPU RI are only related to electoral accounts, as shown in figure 1.
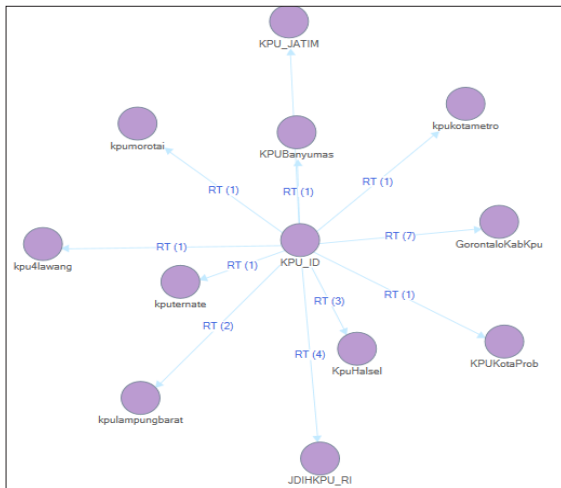
Figure 1. Account retweet by KPU_ID
Source: _Processed using Nvivo_

Figure 1 shows accounts retweeted by KPU_ID. The most retweeted accounts by KPU_ID are GorontaloKabKPU 7 times, JDIHKPU_RI 4 times, and KPUKalsel 3 times. Everything revolves around information about the 2024 election. Besides the high information dissemination ability of the KPU_ID account, it is also necessary to pay attention to the content of messages during the 2024 election.

Therefore, researchers categorize the contents of messages shared via Twitter KPU_ID following the agenda which is regulated through General Election Commission Regulation (PKPU) Number 3 of 2022 concerning Stages and Schedules for the 2024 General Election. The content of socialization messages will be divided into several categories. 1) Formulation of Regulations 2) Voter list Update 3) Registration of political parties. 4) Electoral districts and allocation of seats. As seen in Fig 2
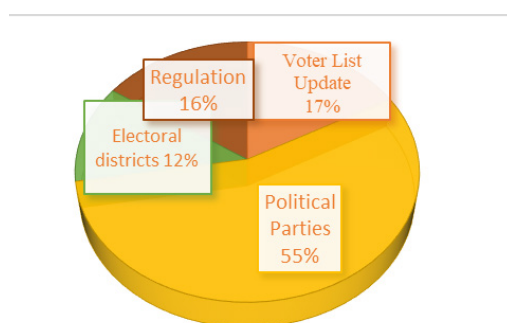
Figure 2. Data coding socialization content
Source: _Processed using Nvivo_

The picture above shows the contents of the general election socialization message dominated by tweets related to the Registration of Political Parties which reached 55%, The second content with the highest percentage of information sharing on the KPU RI Twitter account is Voter List Update, reaching 17%, Regulation 16% and Electoral District 12%.

Political Parties

Political party registration has the highest percentage reaching 55%. The highest percentage of this content was due to political parties registered as candidates for the 2024 elections being openly announced by Indonesia's KPU through tweets generated since registration was opened. The registration period for election candidates opened on August 1, 2022, with nine parties registering on the first day. Based on the Timeline by week, the most messages delivered by KPU_ID were on 08/08/2022-14/08/2022 with 82 tweets, because August 14 at 23.59 is the last day for political party candidate registration.

From 43 political parties that have accounts in the political party information system 'Sipol', 40 political parties have registered and 3 parties are not registered for the 2024 elections. The three parties are Partai Damai Sejahtera, Partai Mahasiswa Indonesia and Partai Rakyat. After the registration and verification stage, it was announced via the KPU Twitter account on Sept. 14 that 24 of the 40 registered political parties passed the administrative certification stage and 16 returned or failed their registration documents.

In the third stage, namely factual verification, KPU_ID informed that 18 national political parties and 6 local political parties from Aceh will take part in the 2024 election. Therefore, KPU's Twitter account shares quite complete and detailed information about the registration of political parties.

Voter List Update

The second content with the highest percentage of information sharing on the KPU RI Twitter

account is Voter List Update, reaching 17%. Percentages of voter lists updated are lower than political party registrations because the Voter list will be updated until June 2023. Hence KPU does not provide intensive information. The voter list is constantly changing and KPU needs to update its data (Cahyaningsih et al., 2019). The quality of the voter list depends on accuracy and correctness according to specified standards. Technically, Voter List is a list of people eligible to vote in a particular election (Agus Sutisna, 2022).

The socialization message in the Voters list is KPU will update the voter lists de jure or according to the law. This means for residents who are 17 (seventeen) years old the voter list is carried out according to their domicile address on the e-KTP. for residents who are 17 years old and do not have an electronic KTP, an update will be carried out via the Family Card. Voters who are not in their domicile address on Election Day can vote but must have processed the A5 form in advance. Special locations (TPS) are also prepared for voters who are in prisons, social institutions, and correctional institutions (Lipas).

On December 14, 2022, the KPU_ID announced that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs submitted Data on DP4 (potential voters), or the list of foreign voters for the 2024 elections, to the General Elections Commission (KPU). With more than 1.8 million people. The KPU is working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ensure the participation of Indonesian citizens abroad in the 2024 elections. Registration and accuracy of voter lists are important as they relate to aspects of democracy (Syaiful et al., 2023).

Besides sharing quite important information about voter list update procedures, the KPU_ID account also shares various program activities. Such as Updating the voter list through holding technical guidance (bimtek), held in Surabaya, West Sumatra. The KPU also formed the Voter List Update Commission (Pantarlih) from January 2023 to around February. The aim is to keep the Regency/Municipal State KPU up-to-date on the procedures for updating the voter list.

Regulation

The third content, namely Formulation of Regulations, is content that is often shared by the KPU_ID account, reaching a percentage of 16%. The main content is a coordination meeting, capacity building, and focus group discussions (FGD) to synchronize personal data protection laws. KPU member Betty Epsilon Idroos held Socialization to Increase Understanding of Political Laws. Other content includes technical guidance and mentoring activities to deal with administrative violations in the 2024 general elections. KPU member Mochammad Afifuddin conveyed the KPU's willingness to face legal action over the 2024 election process. The KPU's position in handling election disputes is that of a legal advisor who provides legal help to the Provincial KPU or KPU at Regency/Municipal.

Electoral districts and allocation of seats

Electoral districts and allocation of seats have the lowest percentage, with 12%. Electoral district determination and allocation of the seat are carried out through Preparation and Implementation. During the preparatory stage, the KPU receives subregion aggregate population data and government administrative area data, then KPU will synchronize the data with the government administrative area map. After synchronization, the number of seats for DPRD members in each regency/municipality will be adjusted and determined. Regency/Municipal KPU will follow up with the arrangement of electoral districts.

The KPU_ID tweet also revealed that the Electoral District plan will go through a series of processes, including receiving public responses, and a public testing stage. From November 23rd to December 6th, 2022, the public will provide feedback on the design of the Electoral District. Feedback can be sent directly to the local Regency/Municipal KPU office or via helpdesk. kpu.go.id/tempaan.

The rest of the topics from the KPU_ID account also conveyed the activities of the

Coordination Meeting for preparing electoral districts. As an example, KPU members Idham Holik and August Mellaz, accompanied by the director of the Election Administration Technical Department, held a coordination meeting to submit a draft election agreement and allocation of seats to the regency/municipality DPRD members in 2024 elections. on that occasion, Idham conveyed that one of the seven principles of the electoral district is continuous. Therefore, KPU includes these principles to meet constituent standards. However, the tweet does not further explain how the principles for forming electoral districts comply with the law

Feedback on Socialization Content

The results a disparity between the high number of followers of the KPU_ID account and the response to the information. Followers on Twitter means you receive all messages (called tweets) from users you follow (Haewoon Kwak, Changhyun Lee, Hosung Park, 2013). The KPU_ID account has 232,000 followers and those followers can see the tweets shared on the KPU account because posted messages (tweets) are for public. KPU_ID Follower count may continue to grow. Since its creation, the number of Twitter users has grown each year and is expected to keep growing (Enrique Cano-Marin, Marçal Mora-Cantallops, n.d.). But, As shown in Figure 3, reply which measure audience reaction to user tweets, do not correlate strongly with follower count.

The figure above is the account that replied to KPU_ID's tweet. Most provide Reply about Content Political Parties and Regulations but the replies are still lower. Low Reply mean that most followers of the KPU_ID account are less interested in the content and information they send. Research shows that Reply are another way to ask about a Tweet (Guerrero-solé, 2018). Even the reply given by KPU followers are not always related to the election. xer,when it comes to the messages conveyed by KPU_ID, the discussion above shows that the KPU as an election organizer has been active to provide information on the agenda for the 2024 election stage. Despite the intensity of tweets
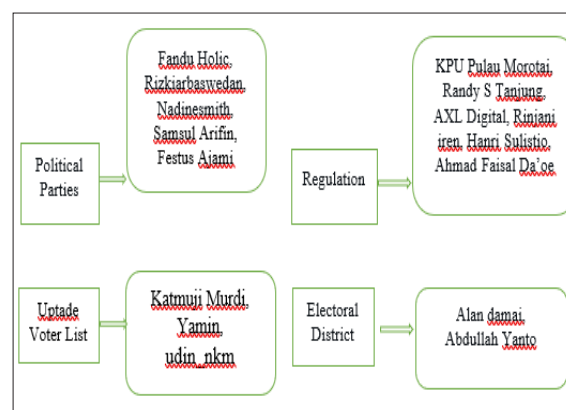

Fig 3. Replies to each content Source: Processed by researchers

from various socialization categories, some are intense and some are not. When conveying information, KPU_ID has tried not to always use verbal messages but often used virtual image. It fails in increasing public interaction in terms of curiosity about candidates, political parties, and another electoral stage.

This means that the KPU_ID account is unilaterally active. There is no interactive and two-way communication between the KPU_ID account and its followers, especially potential voters. The framing of political communications shared via social media seems to show that disseminated news can influence citizen behavior and have consequences (López-Rabadán, 2021). Beside that Socialmedia also enables direct interaction, such as the collection of public feedback and opportunities for policy co-production (Can, 2022).

Twitter **users can** also interact with other users through mention (Stevanus Wisnu Wiiava, 2021). In this context, KPU_ID most frequently mentions accounts @mellaz,id, @bettyidroos, @idhamholik77 and Regency/Municipal KPU accounts. KPU_ID does not mention other users. This interaction and circumstances differ from most Western democracies (Lorenz-spreen et al., 2022). **With** the mentioned feature, KPU should be able to **put it to** good used to interact with **potential** voters. Through mentions, they can gain a deep understanding of how a tweet can attract public awareness (Habsari, 2020).

From this, we can conclude that the low response of KPU_ID account followers

is because of KPU_ID only retweeting and mentioning KPU members. Another reason is inseparable from the information conveyed, which focuses less on discussing the content of the message and more on discussing the KPU's activities. Activities held include technical guidance, webinars, coordination meetings. Indirectly, content provides information about internal process, decisions, and how they work. Hence the involvement of the KPU_ID account followers was seen from the very few responses because they were not involved in the activities.

Low interaction is also inherently related to Socialization tactics that are institutionalized. On the one hand, KPU_ID may want to inform voters about policy and show that they hard-working, taking care of and solving the problem. so that the outcome of such a strategy will be social media content that is focused on activities. The author believes that a better understanding of election information will lead to more responses from followers. In line with the goal of socialization is to provide information and understanding of the electoral process and to encourage the public to take part in the 2024 elections. **Therefore, clear information is important to explore the relationship between KPU_ID and followers (Giger et al., 2021),**

Because of the **many benefits** and uses of social media, the KPU should make the most of the opportunities that social media presents to ensure **effective elections** as a means of **socialization.** KPU_ID can use Twitter as a source of real-time data to help raise awareness and transferring election knowledge.

Conclusion

Using the social media Twitter as a means of socialization is becoming an integral part of the 2024 election socialization efforts. The KPU RI account Twitter has been extensively active in its socialization efforts. Here, the topic of socialization is the holding of the 2024 elections. The study also identified socialization messages in the KPU RI accounts. Based on the General Election Commission Regulation (PKPU) Number 3 of 2022 concerning the

Stages and Schedule of the 2024 General Elections, the most conveyed message related to political party registration reached 55%, The second most shared content related to voter data updates reached 17%, followed by regulatory content at 16%. The lowest content is the Electoral District Arrangement and Seat Allocation with a percentage of 12%. However, it was found that followers of the @ KPU_ID account gave very little feedback on the information they shared. It was concluded that KPU_ID has been successful in conveying information to their followers but not successful in increasing user interest related to curiosity about candidates, political parties, and other stages of elections. This is because most of the content and information shared is related to KPU activities and the content of messages from these activities has not been discussed. As an information medium, The KPU Twitter account may share information that can provide in-depth knowledge to their followers. In the end, it can attract their interest to participate and creating two-way communication.

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