Modern Media in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Elections: Effectiveness of Use, Challenges and Impacts

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Abstract

This study examines the use of modern media in delivering political messages during the 2024 Banda Aceh regional election, focusing on the effectiveness of social media in influencing voter behaviour. In the digital era, social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have replaced traditional methods in political campaigns. These platforms enable candidates to reach voters quickly and interactively. The research analyses how each candidate pair utilizes various modern media platforms to shape public opinion and encourage the community to vote for them in the election. Data were collected through observation, documentation, and literature review by examining and analyzing the modern media content used by each candidate pair. The findings indicate that each candidate selected platforms based on their target audience. Voter responses show that young voters are more attracted to creative content on social media such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, X and YouTube. In contrast, for adult voters, political messages delivered through direct and traditional campaign media, such as billboards, flyers, banners, and similar media, were more effective. However, challenges such as the spread of misinformation and the accuracy of audience targeting remain significant factors affecting campaign effectiveness. The study concludes that modern media play an essential role in supporting the delivery of political messages by each candidate pair. Nonetheless, these emerging challenges require special attention to maximize their influence on voters.

Introduction

Political messages in elections determine whether a candidate succeeds in attracting public attention and influencing people's choices. According to McQuail, whether a political message can be successful depends mainly on how the message is conveyed and received by the audience (Triwicaksono & Nugroho, 2021). The internet, including modern media, has become a tool that can replace old methods such as direct campaigns and advertisements in various newspapers.

Pairs of regional head candidates who contest to win the people's hearts often take advantage of the development of modern media to create messages that are closer to voters and can reach more people in a short time. In the agenda-setting theory proposed by McCombs and Shaw, mass media has the power to determine an issue that is considered necessary by the public (Candra, A., Fauzi, A., and Rahmadhani, M. L, 2023).

Modern media, or in many literatures also known as new media, is a communication medium that develops by utilizing the internet and digital technology or computers as a means of operation. The rapid progress of modern media can gradually shift the effectiveness of conventional communication media. Various forms of contemporary media, such as blogs, social media, and websites, are examples of applications included in modern media (Hasan, Kamaruddin., et al., 2023).

An interesting thing that can be observed is that modern media is a tool to disseminate information and a space for the audience to discuss and form opinions. The success of this strategy certainly depends on how well the candidates for regional heads understand the audience's character.

The progress of modern media today has, in principle, become an opportunity and a challenge. In politics and regional elections, pairs of regional head candidates can create different images to attract voters' attention. However, this can be problematic because the information does not reach the intended audience. In addition, various data can be spread quickly, and there is a risk of fake news that can damage the reputation of the candidate pair in the region.

This means it is very important for the pairs of regional head candidates to ensure that the information submitted shows accuracy and honesty and remains trusted by the public. The political communication approach must pay attention to the persuasive communication theory put forward by Hovland, where whether or not a political message can be conveyed effectively depends on who conveys it, how well the argument is, and how strong the emotions are in the message (Dwitama et al., 2022). Furthermore, candidates who combine these elements well will have a greater chance of convincing voters. Understanding Goffman's framing theory is also quite significant in conveying political messages because it is beneficial in influencing voters (Farid, 2023).

In the context of this research study, modern media analyzes the effectiveness of messages conveyed through the data processing process. According to Mayer-Schönberger, digital data can be used to determine what voters like so potential candidates can develop more targeted strategies (Weninggalih & Fuady, 2023). This is done by looking at sentiment analysis on social media. The pairs of regional head candidates can learn about various issues that are developing and widely discussed so that the campaign's substance leads to the problems that have been analyzed.

Furthermore, there is currently a gap in access to technology, so a successful political communication strategy must combine modern media and traditional ways to reach everyone. In-person campaigns, such as orations or community meetings, are still essential to reach inactive voters in contemporary media. This certainly gives a more personal impression and can increase the emotional bond of voters with the candidates for regional heads (Farida et al., 2023).

Then, in compiling a political message, the candidate pairs must also consider the cultural aspects and local values that develop in the community. Messages tailored to the local culture will be more receptive to the crowd. In elections, using local symbols or regional languages can effectively get closer to voters (Malik, 2022).

Based on the results of researchers' observations, the 2024 Banda Aceh regional election contest has become an interesting democratic party event, especially because modern media plays a large and significant role in conveying political messages to the public. More and more candidates for regional heads in Banda Aceh are using modern media to communicate their vision and mission through platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, X, and YouTube. Although modern media is effective, many still wonder if it can change how voters think and impact the quality of democracy in the region.

The problem that arises is whether the use of modern media is more effective than how campaigns use conventional media that are usually carried out. From the observation results, it was also found that there were candidates for regional heads who intensely uploaded campaign videos on YouTube and Instagram, and some focused more on interaction through TikTok, Facebook, and X. Some campaign videos received much attention. In contrast, others were less effective because of the lack of audience responses. Some have started to use augmented reality (AR) technology in their digital advertising.

From this statement, we need to examine further whether the current use of modern media can influence voter decisions in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election. Therefore, this research focuses on discussing the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election issue and how regional head candidates use modern media to convey their political messages. This study is important to provide new knowledge about how modern media plays a role in political communication at the local level. The election of regional heads is part of democracy that affects policies and people's lives. This research is expected to provide input and information to the public regarding the effectiveness of modern media on voter behaviour in Banda Aceh, as well as to see how regional head candidates can maximize modern media in gaining support.

Specifically, this study aims to analyze how modern media is used in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Elections. It focuses on the types of digital media used, the political communication strategies applied, and their effectiveness in influencing voter opinions and behaviour. In addition, this study will look at the factors that affect the success or failure of modern media in political campaigns and provide recommendations for regional head candidates to maximize the use of contemporary media today.

Research Methods

The research approach is a method used to find solutions to research problems. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to explore and understand how candidates for the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election convey political messages through modern media. Researchers can see the communication strategies, how people respond to the message, and the factors influencing its success. Researchers also use qualitative research techniques that are not only focused on social phenomena in society but can also come from literature or documentation materials in writing, depiction, voice, and so on, commonly called the document elicitation technique (Harahap, 2020).

Data collection techniques are done through observation, documentation, and literature study. Data collection techniques are an important step in research to obtain relevant and accurate information. Through observation, researchers can get empirical data based on the occurring phenomena. This technique helps understand the subject's context, situation, and real-life behaviour. Observation allows researchers to dig into information in detail and depth, which often cannot be uncovered through other methods.

In addition, this study also uses documentation techniques that are carried out by collecting data from documents relevant to the research, such as reports, archives, photos, videos, or other recordings. This approach is used to obtain historical data or previously recorded information. Documentation helps complement observational data, providing additional context and ensuring the accuracy of research results. The data obtained from data collection techniques through documentation is in the form of screenshots of each modern media account used by the candidates for the pair of regional head candidates in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election.

Furthermore, to complete various analytical studies, the researcher utilizes the literature study method or literature review as a data collection method by examining various written sources such as books, scientific journals, articles, research reports, and other documents. This technique enriches the theoretical foundation and supports data analysis with valid references. Literature studies also help researchers understand concepts, theories, and previous findings relevant to the research topic.

The overall design of this study is designed to answer research questions, including how to collect and analyze data. Data that has previously been obtained using data collection techniques through observation and documentation will then be analyzed using an inductive analysis stage model, which begins with observation of social phenomena, identification, revisions, and re-checking of existing data, categorizing the information obtained, straightening and explaining the categorization, explaining the relationships, drawing general conclusions and building or explaining theories (Bungin, Burhan, 2010)

This study uses a case study design to focus on the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Elections. Case studies can allow researchers to look at the phenomenon in a real context and provide a complete explanation of how modern media is used in political campaigns. Researchers will study modern media, digital advertising, and other online platforms used by candidates and how they affect voter behaviour in Banda Aceh.

Result

Profile of Candidates for Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Banda Aceh for the 2024 Regional Elections

In the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Head Election, four candidates compete to become Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Each pair has a vision and mission to build a more Islamic, sustainable, and competitive city. Several candidate pairs highlighted excellent programs such as strengthening digital-based governance, improving the quality of public services, and community-based economic development. In addition, some emphasize the need to integrate local culture with technological innovation as a foundation to make Banda Aceh a more advanced and equitable city. The following is a brief profile of each candidate pair, namely:

1. Illiza Sa'aduddin Djamal – Afdhal Khalilullah
   a. Illiza Sa'aduddin Djamal: Served as Mayor of Banda Aceh and Member of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia for 2019–2024. He is known as an experienced figure in government and has a strong commitment to the implementation of Islamic sharia in Banda Aceh.
   b. Afdhal Khalilullah: He served as chairman of DPD KNPI Banda Aceh for the 2016–2019 period, showing his work in youth organizations and having a vast network among the younger generation.
2. Zainal Arifin – Mulia Rahman
   a. Zainal Arifin: Served as Deputy Mayor of Banda Aceh for the 2014–2022 period. He advanced independently, indicating the public's trust in his leadership.
   b. Mulia Rahman: He served as chairman of the Aceh BKPRMI DPW for 2023-2027, showing his role in fostering mosque youth and religious activities in Aceh.
3. Aminullah Usman – Isnaini Husda
   a. Aminullah Usman: Served as Mayor of Banda Aceh for the 2017–2022. Previously, he was also known as a professional banker with extensive economics and banking experience.

b. Isnaini Husda: Once served as a Member of the Banda Aceh DPRK, showing her involvement in the legislature and understanding of regional regulations.
4. Teuku Irwan Djohan – Khairul Amal
    a. Teuku Irwan Djohan: Served as an Aceh House of Representatives member for the 2014–2024. He has an architectural background and is known to be active in Aceh's various social and cultural activities.
    b. Khairul Amal: Served as a Member of the Aceh House of Representatives from 2004–2009, showing his experience in the legislature and contribution to regional development.

These four candidate pairs have been determined by the Banda Aceh Independent Election Commission (KIP) in the 2024 Regional Elections.

Strategies for the Use of Modern Media in Political Campaigns
1. Illiza Sa'aduddin Djamal – Afdhal Khalilullah

In the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election, candidates Illiza Sa'aduddin Djamal and Afdhal Khalilullah used digital media as a campaign strategy. Their winning team focused on using social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and YouTube to convey their vision, mission, and work program. This modern media is used to get closer to the public, especially the younger generation familiar with digital technology.

They use this platform to spread the vision and mission of the "City of Collaboration," including creating direct interaction with voters. Additionally, their campaign team engages young people as spokespersons to reach a wider audience. This digital campaign is complemented by the support of community leaders and organized publications to increase the electability of the couple.

Their digital approach also involves visual and narrative campaigns highlighting Illiza's experience as a former Mayor of Banda Aceh and support for Sharia-based policies and inclusivity. They are also actively building their image by rallying support through digital volunteers who spread campaign content on various online platforms. In addition, one of their digital strategies is to publicize support from important figures, including Ustadz Abdul Somad (UAS), who provides open support to the couple. This support is uploaded to social media and news sites to strengthen their position in the eyes of the public.

2. Zainal Arifin – Mulia Rahman

In the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election, independent candidates Zainal Arifin and Mulia Rahman utilize digital media as part of their campaign strategy, focusing mainly on modern platforms such as Instagram. Social media is used to convey visions, missions, and work programs and build two-way communication with voters, especially the young generation who are active in the digital world. This strategy demonstrates the inclusive approach of Zainal Arifin and Mulia Rahman in reaching out to the broader community through technology. In addition, they also gathered support through various independent initiatives that are characteristic of their candidacy path, including establishing the Zainal Arifin – Mulia Rahman Center Secretariat as a center for coordinating campaign activities and strengthening volunteer networks.

However, compared to other candidate pairs, the intensity of modern media use by this couple still seems to need to be improved. In the context of increasingly tight competition, other candidate pairs are seen more aggressively utilizing various digital platforms to expand the reach of their campaigns. This is a challenge for Zainal Arifin and Mulia Rahman's team to maximize the potential

of digital media more effectively, not only as a means of promotion but also as a tool to strengthen emotional connections with voters.

3. Aminullah Usman – Isnaini Husda

The candidates for Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Banda Aceh, Aminullah Usman and Isnaini Husda, utilize various digital media in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election campaign. They intensively use the internet for socialization, which includes social media platforms, websites, and other online media.

Digital media allows them to reach voters widely and effectively and convey their vision and mission to the people of Banda Aceh. With this strategy, Aminullah Usman and Isnaini Husda have increased their electability, as shown in various surveys ahead of the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Elections.

In the campaign, the couple put forward the vision of "Banda Aceh Islamic, Gemilang, and Sustainable," focusing on environmental issues, creative economy, and sharia-based public services. Digital media is the primary tool to strengthen these messages, considering the importance of online platforms in modern elections.

4. Teuku Irwan Djohan – Khairul Amal

In the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election, the pair of candidates, Teuku Irwan Djohan and Khairul Amal, used various digital media platforms to expand the reach of their campaigns. They launched initiatives like the Irwan Djohan-Khairul Amal Youth Millennial Movement (Gempika), focusing on youth engagement and integrating technology and creativity in campaign strategies. Gempika is also a strategic partner in connecting youth aspirations with city policies, such as developing creative centres and technological innovation facilities.

In addition, the couple leveraged videos and digital content to convey their political message, emphasizing Banda Aceh's vision as a creative, Islamic, open, and trustworthy city. They also intensified community participation through digital campaigns targeting various groups, focusing on improving the quality of life, especially for youth and the creative sector.

Challenges and Obstacles to the Use of Modern Media in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election

The use of modern media in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election is still faced with various challenges and obstacles, both in the campaign process and political communication. In the digital era, modern media is increasingly dominating as the primary means of communication in regional elections. While modern media offers great opportunities to expand reach and increase public participation, several obstacles must be overcome.

1. Spreading False Information (Hoax)

   The use of modern media in the Banda Aceh Regional Election is vulnerable to the spread of false information or hoaxes. This hoax can damage the image of regional head candidates, disrupt public trust, and create social instability. Without strict control, fake news can spread quickly through platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter, which are difficult to control.

2. Access Inequality

   As an area located in the capital of Aceh Province, not all people in Banda Aceh have the same access to digital technology. There is an inequality between those with internet access and those

who cannot use modern media. This can lead to information imbalances, where most voters less familiar with modern technology can lose the information needed to make informed decisions.

3. Campaign Patterns That Rely on Modern Media

   Political campaigns in modern media often prioritize personal image and controversy rather than the candidate's program, vision, and mission. This leads to distortion of information and too narrow a focus on sensational issues. Candidates not skilled in managing modern media may find it difficult to reach voters with a more substantial and sustainable approach.

4. Social Polarity

   The presence of modern media often exacerbates social polarization. In Regional Elections, differences in political views are often seen as sharper and more intense, especially when candidates attack each other through digital platforms. This can exacerbate social tensions and create an atmosphere that is not conducive to a healthy democracy.

Discussion

The study results show that modern media and digital platforms are vital in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election campaign. Each campaign team adjusts their communication with voters according to age and social group. Platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, X and YouTube were chosen because they fit voters' preferences. Young voters prefer creative and light content on TikTok, Instagram or YouTube, while adult voters prefer direct and practical information through social media such as X and Facebook.

Some campaign teams use multiple platforms to reach different types of voters in a way that suits their needs. This emphasizes the importance of a flexible and fast strategy in dealing with changes in the digital world. Overall, the modern media in this campaign is very effective in introducing candidate programs and building emotional connections with voters.

The Effectiveness of Modern Media in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election

Modern media plays an important role in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Elections, both as a campaign tool and a platform for interaction between candidates and the public. This election was attended by four pairs of candidates who used various strategies, including modern media, to increase electability and convey their programs.

The use of modern media in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election campaign has proven effective in reaching various types of voters. The presence of modern media opens the door for more active dialogue and public participation, and it is very important to consider how the audience filters and verifies the information received through the media (Prabunindya RR, 2024). The platforms chosen, such as TikTok for young voters, Facebook and X for adult voters, and Instagram and YouTube for more diverse ones, demonstrate a diversity of successful strategies.

This shows that increasing digital literacy is very important, coupled with people who are increasingly skilled in filtering information received through modern media, making them more able to capture and critically assess campaign messages spread by candidates.

The use of modern media can be seen as an integral part of the development of political communication in the digital era. Modern media has fundamentally changed the political landscape by providing a platform for candidates to directly reach a broader and more diverse audience without being limited to geographical or temporal aspects.

In this case, the use of modern media has proven effective in the 2024 Banda Aceh regional elections, as shown by the high level of voter participation. Information disseminated through modern media can reach a broader and more diverse audience, including the younger generation who are closer to digital technology. As reported by serambinews.com, dated November 30, 2024, the voter participation rate in the 2024 Regional Elections reached 85%, exceeding the set target (serambinews.com, 2024). This shows that modern media plays a quite effective role, especially in encouraging political awareness and active participation of the public.

Challenges and Solutions

The use of modern media in the current elections allows candidates to interact directly with voters, listen to their input, and adjust campaign strategies based on the responses received (Juliswara & Muryanto, 2022). The use of modern media in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election is a challenge and an excellent opportunity to increase public participation and strengthen democracy. Modern media has the potential to disseminate information quickly and evenly. However, the use of this media also presents various challenges that require strategic solutions.

Challenges emerging in modern media include the large amount of unverified information disseminated. Although the use of modern media in political contestation has a positive impact, it also has various challenges that must be overcome. One of the main challenges is the spread of fake news or disinformation. In the modern open media environment, information that is not verified correctly can quickly spread and influence public perception. In addition, *bubble* filters and *echo chambers* can narrow people's access to different points of view, causing polarization and a lack of comprehensive understanding (Ahmad Salman Farid, 2023).

Another challenge that is also faced is the non-neutrality of the media. In this condition, some media can become a tool of specific political propaganda, which is detrimental to the principle of justice in the regional elections. In addition, political polarization that occurs in the community is also often a challenge in itself. Media algorithms often reinforce user bias by displaying content that matches their preferences. As a result, society tends to be polarized into groups at odds with each other. This polarization affects social relationships and creates an unhealthy political environment.

Then, to solve these various challenges, of course, practical solutions that can be applied are needed, one of which is increasing digital literacy for the community. This must be done through synergy and collaboration from local governments, the General Election Commission (KPU), and community organizations by organizing digital literacy education programs for the community. This activity aims to teach how to identify valid information and avoid the spread of hoaxes.

Furthermore, the solution to challenges can be achieved by strengthening cooperation with media platforms. KIP and Panwaslih Banda Aceh need to collaborate with modern media platforms to monitor the spread of campaign content. These platforms can help remove content that violates the rules or potentially divides society. In addition, strengthening regulations and supervision must be appropriately implemented. Local governments need to issue policies that regulate the use of modern media in the Regional Elections. This regulation must include a ban on spreading hoaxes, regulating digital campaign funds, and protecting people's data.

The Impact of the Use of Modern Media on the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election

In general, modern media is a wide-scale place to invite the public to assess how qualified the candidates in the regional elections are to be elected so that even before the implementation of the

campaign, the public, as voters, can measure the pair of candidates to be chosen later. This is a positive impact of the development of the use of modern media (Suntra Yanti et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, the negative impact of modern media is the potential for fake news or hoaxes that spread quickly so that people easily believe in the news. This is certainly very detrimental to related parties who are affected by fake news. Digital media literacy is an educational method for prevention that is expected to provide vigilance for the public when interacting with modern media.

Furthermore, the study's findings show that modern media is used to convey messages and increase voter participation while shaping people's political views. The right strategy can increase voter participation, while if it is wrong in managing modern media, it will potentially harm candidates. Therefore, candidates for regional heads in future political contests must understand how modern media works and adjust their strategies according to the needs of diverse voters.

Conclusion

Modern media plays an important role in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election process. This media allows candidates and political parties to more easily communicate with voters, disseminate information, and mobilize support. Its effectiveness can be seen in increasing voter participation, rapid dissemination of information, and its influence in shaping public opinion.

However, challenges such as the spread of hoaxes and polarization of opinion remain a concern. Collaboration between the media, the public, and relevant authorities is needed to maximize the benefits of modern media and minimize its risks so that the democratic process can run well and produce leaders who are by the people's aspirations.

The impact of the use of modern media in the 2024 Banda Aceh Regional Election is very significant. On the one hand, this media strengthens democratization and information openness, but on the other hand, it also carries the potential for disinformation that can damage the democratic process. Therefore, stricter regulations and increased media literacy are needed to ensure a more effective and responsible use of modern media.

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