

Abstract

This study examines Prabowo Subianto's self-branding approach as a prominent presidential candidate in the 2024 Indonesian election, including his usage of Instagram as a digital political communication platform. The study examines how political and personal identities are constructed, performed, and disseminated on social media using an integrated theoretical framework that includes Political Branding Theory (Newman, Lees-Marshment, Marland), Self-Branding Theory (Pich & Newman), and Alice Marwick's Theory of Micro-Celebrity and Performative Authenticity. This study uses qualitative content analysis based on Krippendorff's methodology to examine Instagram posts published during the official campaign period (November 28, 2023 - February 10, 2024), focusing on thematic categories such as leadership traits, relatability, policy advocacy, and emotional appeal. The findings show that Prabowo's Instagram strategy combines personal and political tales to create a relatable and authoritative image, strategically engaging voters through visual storytelling, symbolic gestures, and interactive digital media. According to the study, postings that emphasize emotional authenticity and personal relatability create more engagement than policy-focused posts. These findings underscore the expanding role of social media in altering political branding, voter perception, and campaign outcomes in the digital era.

Keywords: Political Branding, Self-Branding, Instagram, Prabowo Subianto, Digital Campaign Strategy