
AGE IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION IN THE 2024 INDONESIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION DISCOURSE: AN IDENTITY POLITICS REVIEW

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Abstract	Article Information
<p><i>This research examines the construction of age identity in the discourse of presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates in preparation for the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections in Indonesia. This research uses Stuart Hall's identity politics to understand how age identities are expressed, debated and manipulated in political discourse regarding the age limits for presidential and vice presidential candidates. This research uses descriptive qualitative method accompanied by secondary data sources as references. The data obtained involved analysis of texts from various media sources, such as speeches, news coverage, and political statements related to the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections. This research will focus on the use of language and rhetoric related to the age of the candidates in an effort to shape public opinion, gain political support, and construct their age identity.</i></p> <p>Keywords: Election, Identity Politics, Stuart Hall</p>	<p><i>Received:</i> Sept 20, 2024</p> <p><i>Revised:</i> Sept 24, 2024</p> <p><i>Accepted:</i> Sept 25, 2024</p>

INTRODUCTION

The election of the president and vice president is an important moment in the Indonesian political life. The preparations and debates leading up to the election brought various aspects of identity into the spotlight, including age identity. The age limit for presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates has become an intense topic of discussion in the context of general elections in various countries, including Indonesia. The debate surrounding the qualifications and credibility of candidates in terms of age has become an issue of interest to the public and political scientists. Thus, before explaining identity politics, people must first understand the meaning of identity in the context of society. In simple terms, identity refers to the core attributes used as a basis for recognizing an entity. Identity is a

characteristic that distinguishes each individual or group and becomes a reference point for other parties or other communities to identify them (Widayanti, 2009: 13).

The General Election of President and Vice President in Indonesia is one of the important moments in the history of this country's democracy. Along with the times and changes in society's political needs, various regulations related to elections have evolved. One of the important aspects in the Presidential Election is the provisions regarding the age limit for presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates. In the 2024 Presidential Election, there will be several rule changes and significant differences compared to the past. One of them is the age limits. In the previous Presidential Election, namely in 2019, the ages limit for presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates was a minimum of 35 years and a maximum of 70 years at the time of nomination. However, in the 2024 election, there will be a significant change in the minimum age limit to 40 years. The 2024 Presidential Election marks Indonesia's commitment to continue developing its democratic rules, marked by changes made by the government, providing greater opportunities for the younger generation, and adapting to the needs and dynamics of society. This reflects the spirit of democracy that continues to develop in Indonesia, making the 2024 election an interesting election for the public to observe and participate in.

The debate surrounding the age limits for presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates opens up space for a deeper understanding of the way age identity plays a role in contemporary politics. As part of discourse analysis, this research will focus attention on the use of language, rhetoric and narratives used by various stakeholders in an effort to shape public opinion, gain political support and shape the candidate's age image. In addition, this research aims to explore the construction of age identity in discourse related to presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates in preparation for the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections in Indonesia. This research will use the theory of identity politics developed by Stuart Hall as a theoretical framework to analyze how age identities are represented and formed in political discourse relating to the age limits of presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates. This research also facilitates a deeper understanding of the role of language and rhetoric in forming and representing political identities in the context of general elections.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In previous research, several researchers have tried to study this issue. Several studies such as those conducted by Cecep Prayatno and Tri Susilowati (2023) in the *Pemilihan Umum Serentak Tahun 2024 Berdasarkan Putusan Mahkamah Konstitusi Republik Indonesia* chose to focus on changes in the electoral system and the beginning of instability in the role of political parties. Muhdar Muhdar and Tri Susilowati (2023) in a *Analisis Yuridis Putusan Mahkamah Konstitusi Tentang Penetapan Pasangan Calon Presiden dan Wakil Presiden Terhadap Penegakan dan Kepastian Hukum di Indonesia* analyzed the decision of the Constitutional Court (MK) Number 90/PUU-XXI/2023 regarding the age requirements for presidential candidates and Vice presidential Candidate which caused controversy. Nala

Syandhira Suzeeta and Kayus Kayowuan Lewoleba (2023) in *Pelanggaran Kode Etik oleh Hakim Mahkamah Konstitusi Terkait dengan Putusan Mahkamah Konstitusi Nomor 90/Puu-Xxi/2023* focused their research on the accountability mechanism for judges who violate professional ethics and the role of the Constitutional Court Honorary Council (MKMK) in dealing with ethical violations by constitutional judges. Bintang D, Mela Roido B S, and Ghasela Julianna A (2023) in *Pelanggaran Kode Etik: Pelanggaran Kode Etik yang Dilakukan oleh Anwar Usman selaku Ketua Mahkamah Konstitusi* mention the importance of implementing management ethics in the Constitutional Court institution regarding cases of ethical violations committed by Chief Constitutional Court Anwar Usman. Rio Subandri (2023) in a *Tinjauan Yuridis Putusan Mahkamah Konstitusi Nomor 90/PUU-XXI/2023 Tentang Persyaratan Batas Usia Pencalonan Presiden dan Wakil Presiden* with a research focus on the importance of the role of the Constitutional Court in handing down final and binding decisions as regulated in Law no. 24 of 2003 concerning the Constitutional Court Article 10.

In this research, Stuart Hall's theory of identity politics will assist researchers in analyzing how the age identities of presidential candidates and Vice presidential candidates are constructed, contested and utilized in a political context. Through analysis of discourse, media and political rhetoric, this research can reveal how age identity influences people's perceptions of presidential candidates and how this identity is used in political campaigns. Apart from that, there was no research found regarding the issue of age limits for presidential candidates and Vice presidential candidates in 2024 that used Stuart Hall's Identity Politics approach. Therefore, researchers found novelty in the objects studied. It is hoped that this research will provide a meaningful contribution to all audiences in the future.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method accompanied by secondary data sources as references, aiming to understand and describe how age identity is understood in the political discourse of the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections. Data comes from various media sources, such as speeches, news coverage, and political statements will be collected and analyzed with a focus on the themes, language, and narratives used to shape age identities. This research takes into account the political context relevant to the election, providing a deeper understanding of the way age identity is reflected in specific political situations. The results of the analysis will be presented in narrative format to illustrate the various ways in which age identity construction occurs in the political discourse of the 2024 presidential and vice presidential candidates.

The researcher expected that the results of this research will reveal how age identity is related to the qualifications, credibility and potential of presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates. Apart from that, this research also discuss how identity politics, which involves aspects such as generation, experience and hope, influences people's perceptions of candidates and political decision making in the context of the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections.

This research has important relevance in understanding the dynamics of identity politics in Indonesia and provide better insight into how age identity plays a role in contemporary politics. Thus, this research contributes to a broader discussion about democracy, political leadership, and identity construction in the context of general elections.

Stuart Hall's theory of identity politics is a concept or framework that is very relevant for understanding and analyzing the construction of age identity in the discourse of presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates in the 2024 Presidential Election in Indonesia. This theory puts forward the view that identity is a concept that is formed through social and cultural processes, not a fixed or natural entity. In the context of this research, age identity refers to how age is an important factor in shaping the public's image and views of the presidential and vice presidential candidates.

Stuart Hall states that a person's identity cannot be separated from "a feeling of connectedness within a group." Thus, when identity is defined as something that brings similarities to other people, it also at the same time, constructs differences or elements that distance from that equality. Therefore, identity characteristics are not only formed by ties within groups, but also by categories of differences (Setyaningrum, 2005: 26). Identity politics is a relatively new term in the political science discipline. Biopolitics and the politics of difference are similar concepts, focusing on differences that arise from bodily variations. Although this discourse already exists in philosophy, its application in political science research was increasingly emphasized after it was presented at the international meeting of the International Association of Political Scientists in Vienna in 1994 (Abdilah, 2002: 16).

FINDINGS

The results of this research generally reveal that public discourse surrounding the 2024 presidential and vice presidential candidates are full of the political interests of the ruling elite. This has an impact on the way society views the figures and identities of candidates through certain construction processes. There are at least three main things that were found to be influential in shaping public opinion and the identity of the presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates for the 2024 election, namely as follows.

The Influence of President Jokowi's Power

The identity construction of the 2024 presidential and vice presidential candidates cannot be separated from the political and power dynamics at play behind the scenes. As the current president with a wide information network, Jokowi's figure is thought to have a big influence on the discourse surrounding the 2024 Presidential Election. This is indicated by his following statement.

"Ya saya itu secara rutin mendapatkan laporan mengenai hal yang berkaitan dengan politik, yang berkaitan dengan ekonomi, yang berkaitan dengan sosial selalu mendapatkan informasi itu, baik dari intelijen di BIN, di BAIS mengenai keamanan, di kepolisian BIG atau dari aliran dana dari PPATK semuanya saya dapat. Itu makanan sehari-hari saya," (news.republika.co.id, 2023)

Initial findings show that Jokowi has wide access to information related to political, economic and social issues in Indonesia through regular reports from state intelligence institutions such as BIN and BAIS. The data also states that there is a flow of information regarding financial flows to the President from PPATK. This indicates the great influence and power of President Jokowi over the current political and policy dynamics in Indonesia.

The president's strong position in accessing various strategic state information can influence the direction of discourse and discussions surrounding the 2024 presidential and vice presidential candidates. For example, the background information, track record and capacity of presidential candidates comes from intelligence institutions under the control of the president. The president's power over this information can be interpreted as an effort to build, construct, or even sharpen a particular image and identity of the presidential and vice presidential candidates in the eyes of the public. Thus, the discourse surrounding the 2024 presidential election cannot be separated from the influence of Jokowi's political interests and agenda as current President.

Dynastic Politics and Family Power

Apart from President Jokowi's dominance, the 2024 presidential and vice presidential candidate discourse is also influenced by the dynamics of dynastic politics and the family interests of the political elite in Indonesia. This can be seen from Jokowi's following statement which indicates his in-depth knowledge of the power of political parties which are dominated by family interests and group loyalties.

“Dalamnya partai seperti apa saya tahu, partai-partai seperti apa saya tahu. Ingin mereka menuju ke mana saya tahu. Informasi yang saya terima komplet,”
(*news.republika.co.id*, 2023)

On the other hand, apart from the strong influence of President Jokowi, the discourse on the 2024 presidential and vice presidential candidates is also inseparable from the dynamics of dynastic political power which involves the interests of the families and families of the political elite. This is indicated by Jokowi's statement that he has complete information regarding the orientation and interests of various major political parties in Indonesia. This information gives him access to influence the direction of support for each party in the 2024 presidential election.

The existence of dynastic politics and family power can also be seen through the involvement of a number of presidential and vice presidential candidates from the descendants of past political elites such as Megawati, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and Hamzah Haz. This shows that family ties and group loyalty are still determining factors in the process of selecting and selecting candidates for a number of major parties. By utilizing existing information networks, President Jokowi has the opportunity to intervene in this process, including in shaping the image and identity of candidates from these parties.

“Mungkin itu pula sebabnya, posisi Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Wali Kota Solo, yang juga anak sulung Jokowi memiliki magnet luar biasa dalam dinamika pencapresan kali ini. Karena Gibran dianggap memiliki makna asosiasi yang paling mendekati Jokowi daripada sosok lain di negeri ini.” (*kompas.id*, 2023)

Apart from strong intelligence data, the most concrete evidence of the rise of dynastic politics and the interests of the political elite also appears from the Gibran Rakabuming Raka phenomenon. As the eldest son and current mayor of Solo, Gibran's figure is the center of attention because he is considered to be full of political associations with the figure of President Jokowi. In other words, in the context of the 2024 presidential and vice presidential candidates, the figure of Gibran is seen as the closest representation and direct heir to his father's political power and influence. This strengthens allegations about Jokowi's efforts to use Gibran for dynastic political interests in the 2024 elections in order to maintain his power in the future through the vice presidential candidate mechanism.

This finding further emphasizes the strong indication of the political influence of the Jokowi family dynasty in the 2024 presidential and vice presidential candidate discourse. Gibran's figure is clear evidence of how the identities and figures of the sons and daughters of the political elite are played for the political interests of their parents. Thus, discussions regarding the identity construction of the presidential and vice presidential candidates cannot ignore the factors of family power and dynastic politics of the president's family who are trying to gain profits through the 2024 elections.

Age Identity Construction

The discourse surrounding the identity and ideal attributes of presidential and vice presidential candidates is now undergoing changes following the publication of the Constitutional Court's (Mahkamah Konstitusi) decision which canceled the minimum age requirement of 40 years. This decision, which is considered controversial, certainly has implications for public perception regarding the criteria for leaders who are considered competent and worthy of being elected. This can be seen in the following quote from the Constitutional Court's decision.

“Mengabulkan permohonan Pemohon untuk sebagian. Menyatakan Pasal 169 huruf q Undang-Undang Nomor 7 Tahun 2017 tentang Pemilihan Umum yang menyatakan, 'berusia paling rendah 40 (empat puluh) tahun' bertentangan dengan Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945 dan tidak mempunyai kekuatan hukum mengikat, sepanjang tidak dimaknai 'berusia paling rendah 40 (empat puluh) tahun atau pernah/sedang menduduki jabatan yang dipilih melalui pemilihan umum termasuk pemilihan kepala daerah.’” (mkri.id, 2023)

The latest Constitutional Court decision canceling the minimum age requirement of 40 years for presidential and vice presidential candidates is an important turning point regarding the discourse on age identity in the 2024 presidential election. Previously, 40 years of age was considered a representation of maturity, experience and leadership capability. However, this decision opens up opportunities for young figures under 40 to emerge as candidates. This changes the public's view that age is no longer the main requirement for determining a person's leadership capacity. In other words, the identity and image of candidates are now measured more in terms of their integrity, competence and vision and mission rather than just the biological factor of age. However, cultural traditions that glorify old and experienced leaders still have the potential to be embedded in the preferences of the majority of Indonesian voters.

*“Tampaknya, Jokowi memahami modal politiknya, dan juga sedang membuat perhitungan politik, agar dirinya tidak menjadi lame duck di akhir periode pemerintahannya. Sebab, dia ingin menjaga martabat kekuasaannya tetap stabil, sehingga—sebagaimana dikatakan sendiri oleh Jokowi—presiden selanjutnya diharapkan bisa memastikan keberlanjutan cita-cita pembangunannya.”
(kompas.id, 2023)*

Apart from having an impact on changing public views, the Constitutional Court's decision regarding the minimum age for presidential and vice presidential candidates also indicated to influence Jokowi's political strategy, which he wants to remain relevant after 2024. He wants to ensure that the leadership after him can continue the policies and ideals during the 2 periods of his administration. In other words, Jokowi is trying to build great influence until the end of his period, including by exploiting the age issue of the presidential and vice presidential candidates. One way is to encourage the emergence of young figures under 40 years old from allied parties as potential vice presidential candidates for 2024. This strategy is expected to maintain the continuity of Jokowi's interests and policies even without nominating his son. Therefore, the topic of the age identity of the presidential and vice presidential candidates cannot be separated from Jokowi's mission to maintain his influence in the dynamics of Indonesian politics after 2024 through young pawns from his current supporting coalition parties.

DISCUSSION

The identity construction of the 2024 presidential candidates and vice presidential candidates cannot be separated from the various interests and political agendas at play. Using Stuart Hall's identity politics perspective, it can be concluded that the identities of public figures, including potential leaders, are actually the result of social production and construction involving power dynamics and the political interests of certain elites, rather than purely reflecting natural public aspirations. Identity construction tends to shape certain views and influence the public's perspective on the ideal figure of a potential state leader.

CONCLUSION

In summary, at least three things have been identified. First, President Jokowi's strong influence through his broad access to intelligence data and information which can be used to shape public opinion regarding the identity of the presidential and vice presidential candidates according to his interests. Second, the domination of dynastic politics and the interests of political elite families who play an important role in the construction of candidate identities through the public figure Gibran Rakabuming as a representation of efforts to inherit Jokowi's power. Third, the Constitutional Court's decision regarding the minimum age for presidential and vice presidential candidates has the potential to shift the conventional view that only senior politicians of mature age are worthy of being leaders. This opens up opportunities for the formation of public opinion that glorifies the figure of a reformist young leader as an ideal future leader.

Thus, a common thread can be drawn that basically the identities of potential leaders are the result of social construction and production of meaning by certain political elites, not truly representing the neutral aspirations of the public. This also confirms the application of Stuart Hall's identity politics perspective in the case of elections and democracy in contemporary Indonesia.

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