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Rational Voters and Emotional Voters: Analysis of Socio-Psychological Factors in Voting Behavior in the 2024 Presidential Election

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Abstract

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Abstract: The 2024 Presidential Election in Indonesia reflects the increasingly complex dynamics of democracy, marked by the increasing role of social media, identity-based campaigns, and candidate personalization. This study aims to analyze the socio-psychological factors that influence voting behavior, identify the characteristics of rational and emotional voters, and examine the implications of the dominance of emotional behavior on the quality of electoral democracy. The approach used is a mixed-method, through a quantitative survey of young voters as well as in-depth interviews and analysis of digital campaign content. The results of the study show that factors such as identity affiliation, emotional closeness to candidates, and the intensity of social media exposure play a significant role in shaping voting behavior. Rational voters tend to consider the track record and work programs of candidates, while emotional voters are more influenced by symbolism, emotional narratives, and personal perceptions. These findings indicate that the dominance of emotional behavior in elections has the potential to weaken the quality of electoral democracy because political decisions are often not based on informative rational considerations. This study recommends the importance of increasing political literacy, especially among young voters, as well as the development of more ethical and educational political communication strategies to strengthen the foundations of a healthy democracy that is oriented towards quality leadership.

Introduction

The 2024 presidential election in Indonesia reflects the increasingly complex dynamics of electoral democracy, marked by the increasing role of social media, identity-based campaigns, and candidate figurization. In this context, voter preferences are not solely determined by rational considerations, such as candidates' work programs and track records, but are also influenced by emotional aspects, such as symbolic closeness, personal perceptions, and identity ties. This phenomenon has led to a debate on the extent to which Indonesian voters are rational or emotional in determining their political choices. The phenomenon of voting behavior influenced by emotional aspects has been studied by (Erlina 2023) in their study of post-Reformation Indonesian voter behavior. They found that loyalty to candidate figures is more dominant than preferences for political parties or policy platforms. This suggests that many voters in Indonesia still rely on emotional ties, either due to candidate charisma or

personal perceptions, rather than rational considerations such as policy evaluation or party ideology. The study also notes that symbolism, ethnic background and religion have a significant influence on people's political choices, especially in areas with strong collective identities.

Another study by Aspinall and Berenschot (2019) in the book "Democracy for Sale: Elections, Clientelism, and the State in Indonesia" reveals that patronage politics and emotion-based campaigns remain effective instruments in winning voters' votes. They show that political narratives that touch on aspects of affection and identity are more easily accepted by the public than complex rational arguments. This is in line with the increasing use of identity sentiments by candidates and parties to create emotional bonds with certain groups of voters, especially through religious symbols and similarities in regional origins. Furthermore, a study by Haris (Pardana 2023) on the behavior of young voters in the 2019 elections showed that although millennial voter groups have high access to digital information, they remain vulnerable to emotional framing in social media. The research shows that visual campaigns, political memes, and narratives of "inspirational" figures have a major influence in shaping political opinions among youth. This shows that digital literacy is not always directly proportional to rationality in political decision-making, as emotional information is often more attractive and easily consumed than fact-based data and arguments.

Understanding voting behavior is very important because it plays a direct role in the quality of election results and democratic consolidation. If the majority of voters are emotional without a strong information base, then elections risk producing leaders who are elected not because of capability, but because of momentary perceptions or emotional manipulation. Conversely, understanding the social-psychological factors that influence voters can provide a foundation for strengthening political literacy and designing more ethical and educative political communication strategies. In the 2024 General Election, young voters (aged 17-39 years) are estimated to be close to 60% of the total electorate. Although they have extensive access to digital information, many of them do not have adequate political literacy. This makes them vulnerable to emotional influence and disinformation. in making political choices. According to the Indonesian General Election Commission (KPU), voters aged 17-40 years old are estimated to reach around 107 million people, or around 53-55% of the total voters in the 2024 elections. Although young voters have extensive access to digital information, their political literacy remains a challenge. Research by Pew Research Center (2023) shows that around 93% of Gen Z accesses political information through social media, which is often filled with viral content and information that is not necessarily accurate. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in 2014 noted that although young voters dominate the voter demographic, their interest in being directly involved in political parties is very low, only around 1.1%. This suggests a gap between electoral participation and deeper political engagement.

In the past five years, various studies have examined voting behavior in the context of Indonesia's Presidential Elections, focusing on aspects of voter rationality and emotionality. However, most of these studies tend to highlight either approach separately, without systematically integrating the two. For example, research by (Wahyuningtyas et al., 2025) in North Maluku Province shows that political information from social media significantly influences novice voters' perceptions of candidates, which in turn influences voting behavior through identification with candidates. This highlighted the dominance of psychological and emotional aspects in voting behavior. In contrast, a study by (Ardiansyah et al., 2024) of

university students in Surabaya found that rational factors, such as the vision, mission, credibility, and track record of candidates, are the main determinants in Gen Z voting behavior. This finding suggests that young voters can be rational in making their political choices. However, studies that combine these two approaches as a whole in the context of the 2024 Presidential Election are still limited. Therefore, further research that integrates rational and emotional aspects in analyzing voting behavior is needed, in order to understand the complex dynamics of political decision-making by Indonesian voters.

This study aims to: 1) Identify and analyze the socio-psychological factors that influence voting behavior in the 2024 Presidential Election; 2) Classify the characteristics of rational and emotional voters based on empirical data; 3) Explain the implications of the dominance of emotional voting behavior on the quality of electoral democracy in Indonesia.

Method

This research uses a mixed-method approach, which is a combination of qualitative-descriptive methods and quantitative support, (Waruwu 2023) to obtain a full and comprehensive understanding of voting behavior in the 2024 Presidential Election. This approach begins with a survey of voters to measure the extent of their perceptions, emotions, and rational orientation in assessing presidential candidates. The survey was designed to capture voters' cognitive and affective dimensions, including factors that influence their political decisions, such as work programs, personal image, social identity, and media influence.

In addition, this research is complemented by in-depth interviews with a number of voters from diverse social backgrounds to explore perspectives, motivations and subjective experiences that cannot be revealed quantitatively. In addition, content analysis of social media campaigns and news reports was conducted to assess how political communication strategies influenced the formation of voters' emotional perceptions. This combination of methods is expected to be able to explain more holistically how the dynamics of rationality and emotionality work in voting behavior, as well as how political campaign strategies utilize both to gain electoral support.

Result and Discussion

The analysis or research results section is organized in a clear and concise manner to present the main findings from the field without overloading the data. The main focus is on the scientific interpretation of the results obtained through quantitative surveys, in-depth interviews and social media content analysis. The findings are summarized in the form of patterns of voting behavior tendencies that reflect the dominance of rational or emotional factors, as well as their relationship with the socio-psychological aspects of voters.

This research finds a discrepancy between the assumption of voter rationality that is often used as the basis for classical electoral democracy theories, and the reality on the ground that shows the strong influence of emotional, symbolic and social identity factors in determining political choices. Unlike previous research that focuses more on the effects of social media or identity politics singularly, this study presents a synthesis of two rational and psychological approaches that explain the dynamics of voting behavior more fully. Thus, this analysis not only strengthens the understanding of voters in the context of the 2024 Presidential Elections, but also offers an update to the theoretical framework relevant in the study of voter behavior in Indonesia.

1 Socio-Psychological Factors Affecting Voter Behavior

In the context of the 2024 Presidential Elections, voting behavior cannot be partially understood from a purely rational perspective. Contemporary political realities in Indonesia show that voters' political decisions are strongly influenced by complex social and psychological dynamics. Factors such as group identity, perceptions of candidate personality, the influence of the social environment, and exposure to digital media, are important elements that shape a person's political preferences. In the midst of the rise of personalized campaigns and emotional narratives spread widely through social media, voting behavior becomes an arena for interaction between rational reasoning and emotional impulses that are often unconscious. These social-psychological factors reflect how voters respond to political information not only based on the content of the candidate's program or vision-mission, but also through the lens of their perceptions, affiliations and social experiences. Voters tend to refer to the values embraced by their social groups such as family, religious communities, or digital media circles in shaping political orientation. In addition, psychological aspects such as trust, hope, fear or nostalgia also drive political preferences, which are often intuitive and emotional.

The results show that voting behavior in the 2024 Presidential Election is not solely influenced by rational consideration of candidates' work programs or track records, but is also strongly influenced by social-psychological factors that shape voters' perceptions, emotions, and identities. Through a mixed-method approach, it was found that social factors such as group affiliation (family, community, religious organizations) and psychological factors such as perceptions of candidate personality, emotional expectations, and the need for identity representation have a significant influence on voting decisions.

One important finding is the strong influence of the candidate's personality image on voting intention. Many respondents, especially from younger age groups, stated that they voted for candidates because they were considered "authoritative", "populist", or "inspirational", rather than because of policy considerations, (Yuliani & Ibrahim 2025) suggesting that emotional and symbolic personal perceptions play a dominant role. Candidates who are able to build touching emotional narratives such as childhood stories, simplicity of life, or closeness to the people tend to get greater support than those who only highlight rational programs.

Research by (Meilia et al., 2025) in Solok Regency shows that political hoaxes on social media have a significant influence on the behavior of young voters, with a contribution of 23.5%. This finding highlights the vulnerability of young voters to disinformation that affects their political decisions emotionally. However, this study has not examined in depth the interaction between social-psychological factors and voter rationality in a broader context. A study by (Mutiah & Diana 2023) in Jakarta City found that political campaigns through social media have a significant effect on young voters' behavior. However, this study focuses more on the technical aspects of the campaign and has not explored in depth psychological factors such as social identity and emotional perceptions that shape young voters' political preferences. Research by (Cahyo et al 2025) in Cimahi City shows that the use of Instagram has a positive effect on voter behavior, with a contribution of 12%. This study highlights the role of social media in shaping political preferences, but has not integrated an analysis of how social-psychological factors such as group identity and emotions mediate the influence of social media on voting behavior.

Another prominent socio-psychological factor is the influence of social identity, especially in relation to religion, ethnicity and regional origin. In some areas, voters claimed to feel a “moral obligation” to support candidates who came from the same background as them. This suggests that identity politics remains one of the main emotional drivers of voting behavior. This preference is not always ideological, but rather a psychological need for representation and symbolic attachment. A study by (Suherli et al., 2024) in Makassar City revealed that exposure to political information through social media, both in terms of criteria and sources of information, has a significant effect on the behavior of novice voters. However, this study has not specifically examined how socio-psychological factors such as candidate perceptions and social identity influence voting behavior in the context of information received.

The research also revealed that emotions such as fear for the future, hope for change, or disappointment with the previous government were important motives for decision-making. Candidates who successfully associated themselves with hope and a “way out” of difficult conditions (such as the economy or corruption) received greater support. Conversely, narratives that generate fear of instability or threats from other ideologies are also used in campaigns to sway voters' choices. Social groups such as family and digital communities have been shown to have a major influence in shaping voting decisions. In some cases, voting decisions are based more on narratives developed in family WhatsApp groups, neighborhood community chats, or trends on TikTok and Instagram, rather than independent judgment. Social media amplifies the psychological effect by presenting emotional, provocative and often unverified content, forming an echo chamber that directs voters' perceptions. Research by (Jannah 2024) discusses the phenomenon of identity politics ahead of the 2024 elections, with a focus on Islamic identity politics. They concluded that identity politics can have both positive and negative impacts depending on the context in which it is used. However, this study has not directly linked the impact of identity politics on individual voting behavior within a broader socio-psychological framework.

This research aims to bridge the various previous approaches by integrating social-psychological and rational approaches in one framework of voting behavior analysis, thus offering theoretical and practical contributions to political literacy and more ethical communication strategies, which are listed in table 1 below:

Tabel 1: Matriks Socio-Psychological Factors Influencing Voter Behavior

| Main Findings | Research Limitations | Implications for This Research |
|---|---|---|
| Political hoaxes on social media influence the behavior of young voters (23.5%) | Does not discuss the interaction between rationality and social-psychological aspects | This research fills the gap by explaining how emotions and perceptions interact with rationality in influencing choice. |
| This research fills the gap by explaining how emotions and perceptions interact with rationality in influencing choiceSocial media campaigns have a significant impact on young voters. | ocus on the technical aspects of the campaign, not the identity or emotional dimensions | This research extends the analysis to include the dynamics of social identity and symbolic proximity of candidates. |
| Instagram influences voter behavior with a 12% contribution | Does not explore the role of perception and emotion as mediators | This research includes personal perceptions and emotions as |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | important variables in voting behavior. |
| Sources of political information have a significant effect on novice voters | Does not analyze how information shapes emotional or rational perceptions | This research assesses information content in terms of shaping voters' emotional/rational perceptions. |
| Islamic identity politics has the potential to polarize | Not directly linked to individual voting behavior psychologically | This research bridges the issue of identity politics with voter psychology and its impact on rationality. |

Overall, the results of this study confirm that Indonesian voters in the 2024 Presidential Elections fall on a broad spectrum between rationality and emotionality. Although there are groups of voters who try to consider critically, the majority still show strong emotional tendencies, both due to individual psychological influences and collective social pressure. This finding strengthens the argument that future political communication strategies need to seriously consider socio-psychological aspects, while encouraging increased political literacy that allows voters to make more rational and informed considerations.

2 Characteristics of rational and emotional voters

One important aspect of understanding voter behavior in the 2024 Presidential Elections is distinguishing the characteristics between rational voters and emotional voters. This classification not only reflects individuals' political preferences, but also shows how they form perceptions, make decisions and respond to political information circulating, especially in today's digital and social media era. Rational voters generally base their choices on program evaluation, candidate track records, and strategic issues relevant to their needs. In contrast, emotional voters are more influenced by candidates' personal images, identity symbols, and emotional closeness built through visual campaigns and sentimental narratives, (Rahayu et al., 2024).

This research seeks to empirically identify how these two types of voters are formed in the sociological and psychological context of Indonesian voters. The findings not only provide an overview of how dominant each characteristic is in society, but also explore the social background, media preferences and political communication patterns that shape their decisions. By systematically elaborating the characteristics of rational and emotional voters, this research contributes to the design of political communication strategies that are more adaptive and based on an understanding of actual electoral behavior. Research by (Pewo & Buku 2024) identified that voting behavior in Ekoroka Village is influenced by a combination of sociological, psychological and rational factors. Sociological includes social environment and family relationships; psychological involves perceptions of candidates and campaign issues; while rational relates to the evaluation of benefits and policies offered by candidates through social media such as Facebook and TikTok. The findings suggest that voters are not only influenced by a single factor, but by a complex interaction between these various factors.

The results show that rational voters are generally dominated by individuals with higher levels of education, especially those who have access to credible and diverse sources of political information. This group tends to analyze candidates' visions and missions, compare policy track records, and consider the economic and social implications of the work programs offered. In addition, rational voters have a tendency to verify information before making

political decisions, including distinguishing facts from opinions or disinformation spread on social media. (Rofieq et al., 2025) examined how political information and candidate image affect the perceptions of novice voters in Semarang City. Using binary logistic regression analysis on 720 samples, the results show that political information, especially from social media, has a significant influence in shaping perceptions of candidates, which then affects voting behavior through identification with candidates.

Meanwhile, the characteristics of emotional voters are more prominent among younger age groups and people in areas with low political literacy. In these groups, political preferences are often based on symbolic aspects such as similarities in ethnicity, religion, or the physical appearance of candidates. Personal sentiments, such as liking the communication style, “populist” impression, or emotional ties to narratives built on social media, are the main factors in making voting decisions. Emotional voters are also more easily swayed by media framing, political influencers and viral visual messages on digital platforms. (Azizah et al., 2024) examined the relationship between information seeking behavior and the decision-making process of swing voters in the 2024 presidential election. Using the Ellis model and Spearman correlation analysis, this study found that good information seeking behavior is positively related to the quality of voter decision making. This means that swing voters who actively seek and verify information tend to make more rational voting decisions. Meanwhile (Dermawan & Supiyah 2024) studied the behavior of novice voters in Tipulu Village, West Kendari. The majority of voters show a tendency to be rational calculative voters, assessing the work program and experience of candidates as the main factors. However, social identities such as ethnic, religious, or cultural similarities also play an important role, reflecting primordial voter behavior. Emotional aspects, such as the sincere and charismatic character and personality of candidates, also influence their political preferences.

A survey conducted by Parameter Politik Indonesia (2022) shows that the majority of Indonesians choose a president for emotional or psychological reasons (52.7%) compared to rational (30.1%) and sociological reasons (2.2%). Emotional reasons include “populist” impression, assertive character, and personal image of the candidate, showing the dominance of emotional aspects in voting decisions. The findings also show differences in media consumption patterns between the two groups. Rational voters access more news from mainstream media that have journalistic standards, such as print media or verified national news portals. Meanwhile, emotional voters more often obtain information from social media such as TikTok, Instagram, or WhatsApp groups, which often become spaces for spreading emotional narratives, hoaxes, or pieces of information without context. These differences in media consumption patterns contribute greatly to differences in mindset and voting orientation.

In terms of political communication, rational voters show interest in candidate debates, public discussions and academic forums that feature data and evidence-based arguments. Emotional voters, on the other hand, are more interested in visual campaigns that touch emotions, such as inspirational videos, touching slogans, or content that displays candidates' empathy for the little people. Both have strong dynamics in shaping public opinion and influencing electoral trends during the campaign period. (Ardiansyah et al., 2024) examined Gen-Z voting behavior in Surabaya and its influence on the realization of the Golden Indonesia Vision 2045. This study found that Gen-Z has high political participation and tends to be rational in voting, considering the candidate's work program and vision. However, quick access to

information through social media also influences their political views, suggesting that emotional aspects still play a role in Gen-Z voting behavior.

Field data also reveals that the boundary between rational and emotional voters is not always rigid. Most voters exhibit mixed behavior, combining rational considerations with emotional factors in voting. For example, a voter may like candidate A's work program, but choose candidate B because he feels more "emotionally close" or because the narrative touches his religious values. This shows that the voting process is a complex phenomenon that involves the interaction between thoughts and feelings. It appears that voting behavior in the 2024 Presidential Election is influenced by a combination of rational and emotional factors. Rational voters tend to consider candidates' work programs, track records and policies, while emotional voters are more influenced by personal image, social identity and emotional narratives built through social media. These findings support research that highlights the importance of understanding the characteristics of rational and emotional voters to improve the quality of electoral democracy in Indonesia, (Hanan, 2022).

Tabel 2: Matriks Characteristics of rational and emotional voters

| Research Findings | Voter Characteristics | Implications for Democracy |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Sociological (family), psychological (perceptions & emotions), and rational (work program) factors influence each other in choosing | Mixed (Rational & Emotional) | A holistic political education strategy is needed to strengthen critical voters and prevent emotional manipulation. |
| Political information influences perceptions and shapes identification with candidates | Emotional | Media literacy must be strengthened so that voters are not only influenced by image, but also substance. |
| Swing voters with active information seeking are more rational in decision making | Rational | Campaign media should be geared towards providing objective information and encouraging knowledge-based participation. |
| Novice voters show rational calculations, but still | Mixed (Rational & Emotional) | Identity-based campaigns must be balanced with substantial program delivery. |
| Most people vote because of emotional factors such as "populist" character and firmness. | Emotional | Campaign regulations and ethics are needed to limit the exploitation of shallow sentimental and symbolic narratives. |
| Gen-Z shows rational tendencies, but is easily swayed by public opinion and social media virality | Rational but emotionally vulnerable | Digital education and political literacy need to be improved among youth to balance critical thinking and empathy. |

This matrix illustrates that despite the growing rational tendency, emotional aspects remain dominant in Indonesia's electoral political landscape, especially in the 2024 Presidential Election. Therefore, strategies to improve the quality of democracy need to combine educative, regulative, and ethical communication technology approaches. Finally, the results of this study provide an important illustration for policymakers, political parties, and other democratic actors that voters cannot be assumed to be always rational or always emotional. Political communication segmentation needs to be tailored to the psychosocial characteristics of voters. To improve the quality of electoral democracy, political literacy strategies should be directed at emotional voters, while programmatic discussions and transparency need to be strengthened to maintain a rational voter base. An in-depth understanding of these two voter

characteristics is an important basis for developing a more inclusive and civilized political communication strategy.

3 The Dominance of Voter Behavior on the Quality of Electoral Democracy in Indonesia

The dominance of voter behavior in an election is an important indicator that reflects the depth of democratic consolidation in a country. In Indonesia, as the third largest democracy in the world, the quality of elections is largely determined by the way voters make political decisions. In the context of the 2024 Presidential Elections, there is an interesting trend related to the pattern of voter preferences that shows the dominance of emotional aspects over rationality. This phenomenon not only has implications for electoral results, but also touches the core of electoral democracy itself, namely the extent to which the electoral process produces leaders who are chosen based on objective and substantial considerations, (Oktavia et al., 2024).

When voting decisions are more influenced by symbolic ties, candidate figurization, and identity narratives or momentary sentiments, then electoral democracy risks experiencing quality degradation. Elections that should be a place to debate ideas and work programs, instead turn into a contestation of emotions and imagery, (Sukmawati 2023). This raises concerns that elected leaders do not reflect the rational aspirations of the community, but are the result of emotional manipulation formed through populist political communication strategies. Therefore, examining the dominance of voter behavior between emotionality and rationality is an important step in evaluating and improving the quality of electoral democracy in Indonesia.

The results show that voting behavior in the 2024 Presidential Election is dominated by emotional preferences compared to program-based rationality and candidate track records. This finding was obtained from the analysis of survey data, in-depth interviews, and campaign content on social media. The majority of respondents stated that their decision to vote was influenced by non-substantive factors such as candidate appearance, media narratives, and emotional affiliations, rather than solely on the candidate's policies or vision-mission. This indicates that the dynamics of Indonesian electoral politics are still strongly influenced by affective and symbolic aspects in shaping political choices. (Cahyani 2025) in her research identified three main types of voters: emotional, rational, and situational, in the context of the 2024 simultaneous regional elections. This research highlights how the integration of local traditions and digital technology affects voters' political behavior. Campaigns that integrate local traditions and technology have the potential to significantly increase political participation. However, disinformation and polarization remain major challenges in this democratic process.

The dominance of emotional behavior is reinforced by the way political campaigns work, which prioritizes image and rhetoric over policy substance. Analysis of social media shows that campaign content plays more on viral, controversial, and sometimes divisive social identity issues, rather than presenting objective policy information. This reliance on emotional approaches causes polarization between support groups to increase, which in turn weakens public rationality in assessing candidate competence. This is in line with the study (Kristian & Yamardi 2024) analyzing voter behavior in the 2024 Presidential and Legislative Elections in Cimahi City. The results showed that voter behavior was divided into four main categories: rational, emotional, traditional, and pragmatic. Influencing factors include demographics, media influence, the role of community leaders, government performance, economic

conditions, and campaign strategies. This research confirms that voters are influenced by a combination of rational and emotional aspects, so campaign strategies must adjust to the evolving social dynamics.

The results show that from a sociological perspective, this emotional behavior is influenced by people's low political literacy and the high influence of informal figures, such as religious leaders, celebrities and digital influencers. Interviews with voters from various social backgrounds show that many voters simply follow the direction of figures they trust without verifying the content of the campaign or the candidate's track record. This creates a situation where political preferences are derived from social relations, rather than the result of individual reflection on existing political issues. Ma'arif and Kuswandro (2024) examined the influence of social media "Wise Choices" on rational voting behavior in the 2024 elections. Using a quantitative approach, this study found that the social media had a significant influence on the rationality of its followers in the election. The results show that social media can play a big role in creating rational voting behavior.

The dominance of emotional behavior in voting also has a direct impact on the quality of electoral democracy in Indonesia. Democracy, which should rely on rational consideration, public deliberation, and information transparency, becomes fragile when voters do not have a critical foundation in making choices. Elections become an arena for the contestation of symbols and sentiments, not a forum for the maturation of democracy. This certainly hampers the process of selecting leaders who are competent and have integrity. (Wijayanti & Tohawi 2024) in a qualitative study in Gemenggeng Village, Bagor District, Nganjuk Regency, examined the behavior of novice voters in the 2024 elections from the perspective of sociology and Islamic law. The results showed that the majority of novice voters were rational, with education and family work factors influencing voting decisions. Religion does not provide the main influence in voting orientation, indicating the tendency of novice voters not to be fanatical about different political parties. (Suwarji & Rahmawati (2024) conducted a quantitative analysis of emak-emak political preferences in the 2024 Presidential Election in Pemalang, Pekalongan, and Batang Regencies. The results showed that 37% of respondents based their choices on the rational model, 32% on the psychological model, and 31% on the sociological model. This research indicates that emak-emak have the same tendency to vote for the three presidential candidates, without any tendency to vote for one particular candidate.

The results show that although not all voters are emotional, the proportion is large enough to affect the overall election outcome. Some groups of voters, especially the younger generation and first-time voters, have the potential to act more rationally. However, this potential is not optimally developed due to exposure to biased information and the lack of effective political education. Therefore, digital and political literacy is an urgent need to strengthen more rational and responsible voting behavior. An article on Kompas.id (2024) observed the tendency of voters in Central Java to be rational in the 2024 Pilkada. Although there is a potential division between rational and less rational voters, survey results show that Central Java voters actually tend to be rational, with consideration of the vision and mission of candidates and supporting parties. However, challenges remain in maintaining the consistency of voter rationality amidst the growing political dynamics.

Tabel 3: Matriks The Dominance Voter Behavior Quality of Electoral Democracy in Indonesia

| Research Findings | Description of Findings | Implications for the Quality of Electoral Democracy |
|--|---|---|
| The dominance of emotional behavior in choosing | Voters are more influenced by emotional sentiments, candidate images, and symbolic closeness than program or vision-mission considerations. | Voters are more influenced by emotional sentiments, candidate images, and symbolic closeness than program or vision-mission considerations. |
| Campaigns emphasize rhetoric and symbolism | Campaign content on social media and mass media is more viral, controversial, and full of emotional narratives | It shapes biased public opinion, reinforces polarization, and undermines healthy policy debate. |
| Low political and digital literacy of voters | Many voters, especially young voters, are not able to verify information and do not critically understand the substance of policies. | Opening up space for disinformation and manipulation, threatening the integrity of healthy political information. |
| Strong influence of informal leaders and identity communities | Voters are more likely to follow the preferences of religious figures, celebrities or identity groups without personal reasoning. | Weakening voter autonomy in making political choices and inhibiting the formation of independent and rational voters. |
| The potential rationality of young voters has not been optimized | ome young voters show interest in policy issues, but lack the media and political education that shapes critical thinking. | If not strategically intervened, the potential of the younger generation to strengthen substantial democracy may not develop optimally. |

This matrix illustrates that voting behavior in the 2024 Presidential Election is dominated by emotional aspects rather than rationality. Voters tend to be influenced by emotional sentiments, candidates' personal images, and symbolic narratives in campaigns disseminated through social media. Political campaigns also emphasize rhetoric and identity issues rather than policy substance, which is exacerbated by the low political and digital literacy of the community, especially among young voters. In addition, political preferences are heavily influenced by informal figures or identity communities, reducing voters' critical thinking autonomy. The lack of substantial public deliberation space and minimal policy discussions reinforce polarization and undermine deliberative democracy. Despite the potential for rationality among the younger generation, this opportunity has not been optimized due to weak political education and lack of access to quality information. These findings suggest that the dominance of emotional voting behavior has negative implications for the quality of electoral democracy in Indonesia, which should be built on rationality, deliberation and critical participation. Overall, these findings show that the quality of electoral democracy in Indonesia is strongly influenced by the pattern of people's voting behavior. As long as political preferences are still dominated by emotion and identity, democracy will find it difficult to produce leaders who answer substantive public needs. For this reason, structured and systematic efforts are needed from various parties from the state, civil society, educational institutions and the media to build a more rational and participatory political awareness among voters.

Conclusion

Voting behavior in the 2024 Presidential Elections in Indonesia is strongly influenced by socio-psychological factors, such as social identity, emotional closeness to political figures,

personal perceptions of candidate figures, and the influence of the social environment and digital media. Voters not only rely on objective assessments of candidates' work programs and track records, but are also heavily influenced by the symbolic and affective narratives shaped by political campaigns, especially through social media. This research also succeeded in classifying the two main characteristics of voters, namely rational and emotional. Rational voters tend to consider programmatic aspects, performance and track records of candidates, and demonstrate the ability to sort out information and evaluate critically. In contrast, emotional voters are more influenced by political symbolism, group identity, candidates' personal image, and social dynamics that lead to conformity and emotional affiliation. The proportion of emotional voters is still more dominant, especially in young age groups and communities with low levels of political literacy. The dominance of emotional voting behavior poses a serious challenge to the quality of electoral democracy in Indonesia. When political choices are based more on sentiments and perceptions than rational arguments and policy substance, democracy risks regressing towards shallow populism. Elections that are supposed to be an arena for public rationality turn into a contestation of emotions and symbolism, which ultimately weakens the deliberative function of democracy.

The implications of the results of this study emphasize the importance of strengthening political literacy, voter education, and political communication ethics that emphasize transparency, data-based arguments, and encourage substantive dialogue between community groups. The government, EMBs, political parties, and civil society need to work together to create a healthier and more rational political ecosystem. Especially in the digital era, public information management and communication strategies must be directed at building critical, participatory voters who are not easily provoked by emotional narratives.

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