

Labeling Gibran Rakabuming: Corpus-Based Critical Discourse Analysis of YouTube Political Comments

Pelabelan terhadap Gibran Rakabuming: Analisis Wacana Kritis Berbasis Korpus terhadap Komentar Politik di YouTube

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Indonesia's Vice President, is represented and labeled in 1,500 YouTube comments on the video "Generasi Muda, Bonus Demografi dan Masa Depan Indonesia" from the official Vice President's account. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the research combines Corpus-Based Discourse Analysis with AntConc, Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and Howard Becker's Labeling Theory. The analysis identifies 22 keywords, revealing dominant themes of anti-nepotism, meritocracy, and skepticism toward political image-building. Findings indicate that commenters portray Gibran as a contextually incompetent figure, termed a "situational retardate," highlighting perceived immaturity, reliance on familial privilege, and lack of authenticity. Linguistic strategies, including sarcasm, pejorative terms, and intertextual references, construct a critical narrative, while digital genres and platform dynamics amplify public resistance. The socio-cultural analysis underscores a hegemonic contestation against patrimonial structures in post-2024 election Indonesia, reflecting broader societal tensions. The study concludes that YouTube comments significantly shape political narratives, impacting Gibran's legitimacy. This research enriches insights into digital political discourse and recommends that future studies explore cross-platform dynamics and visual elements to deepen understanding.

Keywords: corpus-based discourse analysis, labeling, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, political discourse

INTISARI

Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Wakil Presiden Indonesia, direpresentasikan dan diberi label dalam 1.500 komentar YouTube pada video "Generasi Muda, Bonus Demografi dan Masa Depan Indonesia" yang diunggah melalui akun resmi Wakil Presiden. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan metode campuran, penelitian ini mengombinasikan Analisis Wacana Berbasis Korpus dengan perangkat AntConc, Analisis Wacana Kritis (Critical Discourse Analysis/CDA) Norman Fairclough, serta Teori Pelabelan dari Howard Becker. Hasil analisis mengidentifikasi 22 kata kunci yang mengungkap tema-tema dominan berupa anti-nepotisme, meritokrasi, dan sikap skeptis terhadap pembentukan citra politik. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa para komentator membingkai Gibran sebagai figur yang secara kontekstual dianggap tidak kompeten, yang dilabeli sebagai "situational retardate", dengan penekanan pada persepsi ketidakmatangan, ketergantungan pada privilese keluarga, serta kurangnya autentisitas. Strategi kebahasaan seperti sarkasme, penggunaan istilah peyoratif, dan rujukan intertekstual membangun narasi kritis, sementara genre digital dan dinamika platform turut memperkuat resistensi publik. Analisis sosio-kultural menegaskan adanya kontestasi hegemonik terhadap struktur patrimonial di Indonesia pasca Pemilu 2024, yang mencerminkan ketegangan sosial yang lebih luas. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa komentar YouTube berperan signifikan dalam membentuk narasi politik dan memengaruhi legitimasi Gibran. Studi ini memperkaya pemahaman mengenai wacana politik digital serta merekomendasikan agar penelitian selanjutnya menelaah dinamika lintas platform dan elemen visual untuk pendalaman analisis.

Kata Kunci: korpus berbasis analisis wacana, pelabelan, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, wacana politik

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INTRODUCTION

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has become the primary approach in understanding how language shapes and reflects power dynamics in society. Norman Fairclough, one of the main figures of CDA, asserts that discourse is a social practice that is closely related to ideology and power structures (Fairclough, 1995). In the context of politics, CDA allows researchers to uncover how language is used to shape public perceptions of political figures, policies, or social issues, thus providing insight into the underlying power structures.

Social media has transformed the landscape of political communication, becoming the primary platform for the public to express opinions, criticism, and support. YouTube, as one of the largest platforms in the world, offers an interactive space where users can comment on political videos, such as speeches, interviews, or news. These comments often reflect public sentiment, political polarization, and even misinformation, making them a rich source of data for discourse analysis (Boyd, 2014). With millions of active users in Indonesia, YouTube has become an important arena for local political discourse.

The corpus-based approach in linguistics has enriched discourse analysis by allowing researchers to analyze large amounts of language data systematically. With tools such as AntConc, researchers can identify linguistic patterns in discourse, such as word frequency, collocation, and concordance, which help uncover dominant themes and discursive structures. This corpus-based approach, known as Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS), allows for a combined analysis of quantitative (e.g., keyword analysis and collocation) and qualitative (e.g., concordance reading) techniques to understand how language shapes and reflects social meaning in various discourse contexts (Havenstein et al., 2024; Walker, 2015). The integration of corpus linguistics with CDA allows for a more in-depth analysis of how political discourse on social media reflects social ideologies and dynamics, especially in dynamic digital contexts.

In Indonesia, political discourse on social media has become an increasingly relevant research focus, given the role of digital platforms in shaping public opinion during elections and major political events. Previous research has explored X or Twitter, politicians use X to build a positive self-image and present opponents negatively, using discursive strategies such as prediction, perspective, as well as various speech actions such as commissive and directive to build closeness with the public and strengthen legitimacy (Kadim, 2022; Paramasivam et al., 2020; Shammari, 2022). However, YouTube commentary, which is often more spontaneous and diverse, offers a unique perspective on how the public views political figures, especially in the context of sensitive issues such as political dynasties and nepotism. Sentiment analysis on YouTube commentary related to elections in Indonesia shows a wide spectrum of emotions ranging from anger, distrust, to support and trust that reflect the complexity of public opinion of candidates and controversial issues (Ma'aly et al., 2024; Sufyanto & Savitri, 2024). Another study found that negative comments and hate speech in the comment column can reinforce the public's negative perception of political figures, especially when issues such as nepotism are in the spotlight (Sufyanto & Savitri, 2024). Thus, YouTube comments not only reflect public opinion directly, but also play a role in shaping political discourse and public perception of sensitive issues such as political dynasties and nepotism.

Gibran Rakabuming Raka, who has served as Vice President of Indonesia since October 2024 (Isa, 2024) is a political figure who has attracted public attention because of his background as the son of former President Joko Widodo. His political career, from Mayor of Surakarta to Vice President, has sparked intense discussions on social media, including YouTube, about the issues of nepotism, political dynasties, and young leadership. Gibran's representation in YouTube comments can provide insight into how the public processes and responds to his presence in Indonesian politics. Sentiment analysis of YouTube comments on videos related to Gibran shows a diversity of opinions, ranging from support to sharp criticism,

with negative sentiments quite prominent regarding the issues of youth, political dynasties, and alleged nepotism (Fatimatuzzahra & Dewi, 2021; Nursyarif et al., 2024).

Labelling Theory, developed by Becker & Mercer, (1974), offers a theoretical framework for understanding how social labels are applied to individuals and how they affect people's perceptions and behaviors toward them (Becker & Mercer, 1974). In Gibran's context, labels that appear on social media can shape a public narrative about his legitimacy and competence as a leader. This labeling analysis is relevant to understanding the socio-political dynamics in Indonesia, where the issue of political dynasties is often a controversial topic.

Although research on political discourse on social media has evolved, some gaps are still identified based on previous studies. First, although a corpus-based CDA approach has been used to analyze YouTube comments, such as in a response study to Joko Widodo's speech (Hidayat & Saifullah, 2019) Similar research focusing on young political figures, such as Gibran Rakabuming Raka, has not been adequate. Hidayat and Saifullah's study shows the polarization of public opinion on YouTube but does not specifically explore social labeling or political dynastic issues relevant to Gibran. Second, although studies such as (Diabah, 2023) have analyzed YouTube commentary with CDA for gender issues, and (Tang, 2023) using corpus-based CDA for media reporting, the focus on Indonesia's local political discourse on YouTube is still limited. Indonesian political research, such as the analysis of Jokowi's speech (Max & Zamruddin, 2020) or the inconsistency of Anies Baswedan (Ma'u, 2020), is more of an analysis of official texts or news, rather than public interactions on social media such as YouTube comments, which are spontaneous and anonymous.

Third, the application of Howard Becker's Labelling Theory in the analysis of digital political discourse in Indonesia is still poorly explored. Although studies such as Putri & Mardiah (2024) demonstrate the effectiveness of corpus-based CDA in exposing media bias, and (Gu & Tipton, 2020) and (Gu, 2020) analyze political discourse with a similar approach, none explicitly use Labelling Theory to understand the impact of social labels on public perception. From some of the studies above, research that specifically analyzes YouTube comments about political figures such as Gibran Rakabuming Raka is still limited. By combining corpus-based CDA and Labelling Theory, this study aims to provide a new perspective on how digital discourse shapes public perception of political figures in Indonesia. This study aims to fill these gaps by analyzing Gibran Rakabuming Raka's representation and labeling in YouTube comments, using corpus-based CDA and Labelling Theory to uncover the ideology and dynamics of power.

This study aims to analyze the representation and labeling of Gibran Rakabuming Raka in YouTube comments using the corpus-based CDA approach and Howard Becker's Labelling Theory. By collecting comments from the video of the Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia's YouTube account discussing "*Generasi Muda, Bonus Demografi dan Masa Depan Indonesia*" where thousands of comments flooded the comment column there and many netizens pressed the 'dislike' button instead of 'like'. This study will AntConc to identify linguistic patterns, such as word frequency, collocation, and concordance, that reflect the themes of labeling Gibran.

Furthermore, critical discourse analysis based on Norman Fairclough's framework will be applied to uncover how discourse in YouTube commentary reflects ideology and power dynamics, focusing on the dimensions of text, discourse practice, and social practice. Finally, labelling theory will be used to understand how labels affect the public's perception of Gibran's legitimacy as a leader. The findings of this study are expected to provide new insights into how social media shapes political narratives in Indonesia and theoretical contributions to the study of digital discourse.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

Research Approach

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach that integrates quantitative analysis through corpus linguistics and qualitative analysis through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) based on the Norman Fairclough framework and Howard Becker's Labelling Theory. Corpus analysis using AntConc software to identify linguistic patterns, such as word frequency, collocation, and concordance, in YouTube comments. This quantitative data provides an empirical foundation for subsequent qualitative analysis. The qualitative component uses CDA Fairclough (Fairclough, 1995) to uncover the relationship between language, ideology, and power in YouTube commentary. The Fairclough framework comprises the dimensions of text, discourse practice, and social practice. Becker's Labelling Theory complements CDA by examining how social labels were applied to Gibran Rakabuming Raka and influenced public perception (Becker & Mercer, 1974).

Data Collection

The main data of the study consists of 1,500 netizens' comments from a YouTube video titled "*Generasi Muda, Bonus Demografi dan Masa Depan Indonesia*" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldxzVrtqXFg>) on the official account of the Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia. This video, uploaded on April 19, 2025, features Gibran discussing Indonesia's opportunities and challenges in leveraging the demographic bonus, global competition, and the role of the younger generation in advancing the nation. The video was selected for its relevance to the labeling of Gibran as a "young leader" and for the potential for discussion of nepotism or political dynasties in the comments.

Data collection is conducted via comment scraping using the YouTube Comments Scraper feature on the Apify platform (<https://apify.com/streamers/youtube-comments-scraper>).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out in three stages, integrating quantitative (corpus analysis) and qualitative approaches (CDA, Fairclough, and Labeling Theory) to address the research objectives, namely to uncover Gibran's representations and labeling and their ideological implications. The first stage is a corpus analysis using AntConc to quantify linguistic patterns. This analysis generates quantitative data, such as the percentage of occurrence of a label or theme, that reinforces the validity of the qualitative findings.

The second stage applies Norman Fairclough's CDA framework to interpret ideology and power in commentary. The analysis includes three dimensions: Text, Discourse Practice, Social Practice. The third stage uses Becker's Labelling Theory to examine the process and impact of Gibran's labeling. The steps include Label Identification, Labeling Process, Label Impact.

Triangulation and Validity

To ensure validity, triangulation is carried out by combining quantitative (corpus) and qualitative (CDA and Labelling) data. The data is anonymized to comply with research ethics by removing the user's identity from the corpus. This method is designed to generate comprehensive findings about Gibran Rakabuming Raka's labeling in YouTube comments by combining quantitative precision and qualitative depth.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Linguistic Patterns and Dominant Themes

Emerging linguistic patterns include sarcasm, pejorative terms, normalization versus contestation, and a focus on imagery, whereas dominant themes include nepotism, lack of competence, social injustice, and economic unrest. The following table summarizes the distribution of themes by word frequency

Table 1. Results of the Corpus Analysis related to Labeling of Gibran

No.	Label/Keywords	Frequency	Percentage	Theme
1.	Wapres	177	21.506%	Criticism of Political Legitimacy and Symbolic Leadership
2.	Anak	111	13.487%	The Narrative of Nepotism, the Legacy of Power, and Young Political Identity
3.	Muda	104	12.637%	Expectations and Ambiguities of Young Generation Representation in Politics
4.	Anak Muda	48	5.832%	Ambivalent Representations of the Younger Generation: Between Inspiration and Nepotism
5.	Gibran	106	12.880%	Personification of Criticism of Political Dynasties and Their Legitimacy
6.	Baca	68	8.262%	Inauthentic Political Rhetoric: A Critique of Script-Based Leadership
7.	Paman	31	3.767%	Nepotism and Political Dynasties in the Process of Rising to Power
8.	Fufufafa	26	3.159%	Criticism of Superficial and Inauthentic Leadership Images
9.	AI	21	2.552%	The Sophistication of Technology as a Rhetorical Symbol and Criticism of Political Content Content
10.	Keluarga	15	1.823%	Family Privilege and Public Suspicion of the Legacy of Power
11.	Hebat	13	1.580%	Ambivalence of Praise and Innuendo for Leadership Figures
12.	Jujur	13	1.580%	The Demands of Political Ethics and Disillusionment with the Reality of Young Leaders
13.	Membaca	12	1.458%	Political Rhetoric That Is Considered Inauthentic and Lacks Substance
14.	Menarik	12	1.458%	Public Interest in Social Discourse and Digital Communication Style
15.	Pintar	9	1.094%	Criticism of Intellectual Qualifications and Leadership Appropriateness
16.	Prestasi	9	1.094%	The Issue of Lack of Real Track Record and Performance-Based Legitimacy
17.	Buzzer	7	0.851%	Suspicion of Social Media Operations and Manipulation of Political Image
18.	Beban	5	0.608%	Criticism of Leadership That Is Considered to Not Provide Real Solutions
19.	Bocah	5	0.608%	Political Stigmatization of Youth and Accusations of Immaturity
20.	Ordal	5	0.608%	Criticism of Connectionalism and Social Injustice in Access to Power
21.	Karbitan	3	0.365%	Insinuation of Instant Political Rise and Lack of Meritocratic Process
22.	Nepotisme	23	2.794%	Criticism of Political Dynasties and Abuse of Power for the Benefit of the Family

(Source: Author's Analysis, 2025)

The "Theme" column groups keywords into dominant themes identified through concordance and collocation analyses, such as nepotism, lack of competence, imagery, and economic unrest. Quantitatively, keywords such as “Wapres”, “Anak”, “Muda”, and “Gibran” dominate, suggesting that the public discourse is centered on Gibran's political identity as vice president and representation of the younger generation, often associated with a narrative of nepotism. High-frequency “Wapres” reflects the public's focus on Gibran's official role. Still, the concordance analysis points to a critical context, such as “wapres karbitan hasil nepotisme”

(Karbitan), which highlights skepticism about the legitimacy of his position. Keywords such as “Nepotisme”, “Paman”, and “Keluarga” emphasize that dynastic political issues are the central theme, supported by collocations such as “Paman-Bapak” (8x) and “Nepotisme-Korupsi” (4x).

Keywords with lower frequency, such as “Karbitan”, “Bocah”, and “Ordal”, although rare, have a significant discursive impact due to their pejorative nature and sarcastic context, such as “*Gibran setara bung hatta dan bj habibie karbitan*” (Karbitan). Low frequency does not necessarily reduce the relevance of a keyword; on the contrary, words with strong connotations, such as “bocah” or “ordal,” can strengthen critical narratives in discourse. For example, the collocation “Fufufafa-Lem” (1x) in the “*Fufufafa ga bakalan ngerti*” shows ridicule of Gibran's communication style, despite its low frequency (3.159%).

With themes such as “Kritik Legitimasi Politik” (Wapres, Gibran) and “Narasi Nepotisme” (Anak, Paman, Keluarga, Nepotisme) dominating, while themes such as “Suspicion of Social Media Operations” (Buzzer) and “Stigmatization of Young Age” (Boys) appear with a lower frequency but remain significant, this variation in frequency reflects a hierarchy of interests in public discourse, where the primary issue (nepotism) is discussed more often, while secondary issues (imagery) emerge as complementary. This table reinforces the argument of Setra et al. (2023) and Yuliawati (2014) that corpus analysis can identify the frequency, collocation, and semantic preferences of certain words, providing insight into their social usage and meaning. “Nepotisme” and “Ordal” show a critical attitude towards injustice, while “Hebat” and “Menarik” reflect ambivalence.

Overall, the table above is a comprehensive representation of the language patterns in YouTube comments, showing how the public is producing critical discourse against Gibran through a variety of keywords. The frequency distribution and themes identified reflect the complexity of public opinion, from systemic dissatisfaction to personal ridicule, which is further analyzed through linguistic patterns and dominant themes.

a) Linguistics Patterns

1) Sarcasm and Ridicule

The main linguistic patterns are sarcasm and ridicule, especially on keywords Fufufafa, Karbitan, Pintar, Bocah, and Ordal. For example, comments such as “*Fufufafa peye kabare mas?*” (Fufufafa) and “*Wkwkwk btul sekahii Betul, soal kepintaran no sekian Dan bisa merubah undang undang*” (Pintar) mock Gibran's communication style and capacity. According to Rout et al. (2024) and Sengar & Nirmala (2020), Sarcasm usually appears when words or phrases that literally have a positive meaning are used in a situation or alongside other words with negative meanings, thus creating irony or sarcasm, such as “*fufufafa*” with “*ga bakalan ngerti.*” Comments like “*Yg penting punya bapak dan orang dalam Masukk Terutama paman*” (Ordal) using informal and hyperbolic language are in line with Biber et al. (1999) that digital discourse tends to use informal registers, such as colloquial, slang, or casual expressions, to reinforce criticism and build closeness to the audience. The use of this informal register makes criticism feel more spontaneous, egalitarian, and acceptable, while challenging formal authority or norms that are usually attached to institutional discourse (Fu et al., 2023).

2) Pejorative Terms

The keywords Karbitan, Bocah, Beban, and Ordal are pejorative, denoting Gibran as an incompetent, immature, or connection-dependent leader. For example, “*hidup korupsi wapres karbitan hasil nepotisme*” (Karbitan) and “*individu yang tak berkompeten, maju karena latar relasi, bukan kapasitas*” (Beban). Pejorative terms collocate with critical words, such as “nepotisme” and “korupsi” (Collocation “Nepotisme-Korupsi” Appears 4x). These findings are in line with Sufyanto & Savitri (2024) who found that negative terms on YouTube reinforce bad perceptions of political figures.

Data shows Bocah and Karbitan attacking figures in power, reflecting systemic discontent, as Villaplana & Fitzpatrick (2025) argue that digital discourse allows people to express disappointment and protest directly, often with emotional tones such as anger or ridicule, thereby reinforcing messages of collective discontent

3) Normalization versus Contestation

Keywords Nepotisme and Ordal show two patterns: normalization and contestation. Comments like “nepotisme sudah ada sejak indonesia lahir” (Nepotisme) normalize the practice of nepotism, while “Budaya Kompetisi katanya? Ga sadar sendiri nya produik unfairness alsas KKN ??” (Ordal) sued him. Researchers can identify whether an expression tends to be used in a positive or negative meaning, even if the constituent words individually appear neutral, as “nepotisme” has an ambivalent context. This normalization supports Crouch, (1979); Mahsun & Haryanto (2024) and Sugitanata (2024), who stated that nepotism is indeed accepted and even normalized in patrimonial culture in Indonesia, where kinship and patron-client relationships are the main basis for the distribution of power and resources

The dominant contestation is in line with Amin et al. (2024); Muliono (2024), who found that dynastic politics in Indonesia often trigger public resistance, especially because it is considered to hinder democracy, strengthen patronage, and reduce government transparency and accountability. Comments like “Ngaca dek, kamu dan keluargamu jadi orang penting di indonesia karena 3 faktor” (Nepotisme) reinforce the narrative of resistance, supported by collocation “Paman-Bapak” (8x).

4) Focus on Imaging

Buzzer keywords highlight allegations of social media manipulation, such as “*Jelas sekali video ini pakai bot like. Sungguh terkvtvk*” (Buzzer). According to Sivaeva (2021), this pattern of collocation helps researchers detect and measure the level of skepticism that arises in the corpus, since words that are consistently associated with negative meanings indicate the existence of doubt or mistrust in society, such as “buzzer” with “pencitraan.” These findings are in line with Aminulloh et al. (2025); Budiana (2024); Widyatama & Mahbob (2024), who stated that the existence of buzzers in the digital realm has been proven to trigger public distrust, especially since their practices often involve the spread of false information, opinion manipulation, and propaganda that disrupt healthy dialogue in democracy. Comments like “*Gibran setelah pencitraan blusukan ke pasar 2*” (Buzzer) support the findings of Atmaja et al. (2025); Bast (2021); Górka (2024) and Srikandi et al. (2024), who found that political imagery efforts on social media are increasingly massive, with politicians utilizing various visual strategies, personal narratives, and direct interactions to build a positive image and closeness to the public.

b) Dominant Theme

1) Nepotism and Dynastic Politics

The theme of nepotism dominates, as can be seen from the frequency Nepotisme (2,794%), Ordal (0,608%), Keluarga (1,823%), and Paman (3,767%). Comments like “*Tumbuh karena bantuan bpknya. kerjaan jg dicarikan bpknya*” (Nepotisme) emphasized that Gibran went up because of family connections. Collocation, such as “Paman-Bapak,” unraveling thematic narratives, analysis of collocation in the corpus has proven effective for unraveling thematic narratives in a wide range of texts, including narrative stories, social media, and policy reports (Altamimi & Altameemi, 2023; Lu et al., 2024; Syed et al., 2024; W. Zhang & Zhang, 2024). Minority comments such as “*nepotisme.. asal loe mampu*” (Nepotisme) supporting the research of Akhtar et al. (2020); Fernández & Balboa (2021); Seintignan (1989); Vessey (2017) that corpus analysis can reveal contradictory attitudes in various contexts, such as education, media, and public services, by tracing language patterns, collocation, and word frequency that indicate ambivalence or attitude conflict.

2) Lack of Competence

The theme of lack of competence appears in Karbitan (0,365%), Pintar (1,094%), Bocah (0,608%), and Membaca (1,458%). Comments like “jujur, saya banyak dapat ilmu dari video ini. saya jadi tahu bahwa muka tebal adalah jurus ampuh tuk mencapai cita cita. gak perlu pintar” (Pintar) highlighting Gibran's perception of incompetence. Evaluative phrases in digital discourse play an important role in expressing negative attitudes, both explicitly and implicitly. The use of negatively nuanced words, such as slang, vulgarism, or sharp metaphors, is often found in online discussions to indicate dissatisfaction, criticism, or rejection of a topic, event, or group (Korol'kova, 2020; Kryvenchenko & Voytseva, 2024). These findings support Sufyanto & Savitri (2024), but contradict Fatimatuzzahra & Dewi (2021), who find support for Gibran.

3) Social Injustice and Economic Unrest

The theme of social injustice is seen in Ordal and Nepotisme like “*kalau ada main orang dalam masuk kerja juga pakai orang dalam*” (Ordal). These findings are in line with Ma'aly et al. (2024), who found anger over non-meritocratic issues. Anger over non-meritocratic issues in Indonesian politics arises when people realize that economic inequality and low social mobility can no longer be justified by meritocratic principles, but rather influenced by non-merit factors such as corruption, nepotism, and political oligarchy (Mijs & Hoy, 2021; Saputra, 2024). Information about high inequality and low social mobility in Indonesia significantly shakes public trust in meritocracy, fueling concern and anger over systemic injustices (Mijs & Hoy, 2021). This phenomenon has also driven the rise of right-wing populism, in which groups that feel disadvantaged by non-meritocratic systems express their anger and dissatisfaction through political movements demanding change (Tan, 2023, 2024). This anger is further amplified by political polarization and populist campaigns that leverage sentiments of injustice to strengthen support bases (Muhtadi & Soderborg, 2021; Warburton & Muhtadi, 2020). Thus, the issue of non-meritocracy has become a major trigger for social and political anger, as well as driving demands for a fairer and more transparent system in Indonesia.

The theme of economic unrest emerged in “Beban” and “Anak Muda” like “*Bonus demografi kalau semua bekerja boleh, tapi kalau usia produktif banyak yg nganggur malah jd beban*” (Beban). Corpus analysis can identify social issues by tracing the frequency with which themes appear in large text sets, such as reports, social media, or scientific articles. Through techniques such as topic modeling and word frequency analysis, researchers can find prominent thematic patterns and see how priorities or concerns for social issues change over time, for example, shifting the focus from environmental protection to human rights in corporate social responsibility reports (Jaworska & Nanda, 2016; Mautner, 2022). These findings are in line with (Nursyarif et al., 2024) who found that economic issues trigger negative sentiment.

The linguistic pattern and dominant theme show that YouTube discourse is dominated by resistance to dynastic politics and dissatisfaction with Gibran's competence. The corpus analysis uncovers social dynamics by highlighting how social media serves as a key arena for public criticism and debate. Studies show that interaction patterns across various social media platforms are consistent in featuring intense discussions, often accompanied by negative sentiments or toxicity, which do not necessarily reduce participation, but rather strengthen engagement in debates (Avalle et al., 2024). Social media also demonstrates how discursive language and strategies are used to challenge power, criticize injustice, and construct alternative narratives, thereby strengthening its role as a space for social criticism (Imran et al., 2025; Kopytowska, 2020). Thus, the corpus of social media not only records but also shapes and accelerates the dynamics of social criticism in society. These findings highlight Gibran's challenges in establishing legitimacy.

1. Ideology and Labeling in Digital Discourse

a) Text Analysis

The text dimension Fairclough (1995) analyzes linguistic features (vocabulary, grammar, textual structure) to uncover experiential (representation of reality), relational (social relations), and expressive (subject evaluation) values. Comments like “*Wapres Karbitan Hasil Nepotisme*” using nominalization “nepotisme” to hide the actors, reflecting the experiential values that represent Gibran as a product of a political dynasty, in line with “*Ordal*” (“*Kerja pakai orang dalam*”) which highlights connectionalism. Phrases “*Tumbuh karena bpknya*” (Anak, Keluarga, Paman) represent Gibran as the recipient of family privileges, with an informal vocabulary “*bpknya*” and “*paman*” (relational values), creating antagonistic relationships, reinforcing the ideology of anti-nepotism. Commentary “*anak muda kok begini?*” (Muda, Anak Muda) evaluates Gibran as failing to meet the expectations of the younger generation, with the modality “*kok*” (expressive value) indicating disappointment, while “*Bonus demografi malah jadi beban*” (Beban) criticizes economic failures (experiential values). Sarcasm in “*Gibran setara bung hatta*” (Gibran, Hebat, Menarik) mocks legitimacy by “*hebat*” and “*menarik*” as an irony (expressive value) that criticizes imagery. Pejorative terms “*Bocah*” (“*bocah ga usah sok pinter*”), “*Karbitan*”, and “*Fufufafa*” (“*fufufafa peye kabare mas?*”) stigmatize immaturity and superficial communication, with informal registers “*bocah*” and “*mas*” (relational value), degrading Gibran. Commentary “*AI lebih pinter*” (AI, Pintar, Prestasi) compares Gibran with objective competency standards, with “*prestasi apa dibikin?*” demanding performance (experiential value). Phrases “*membaca doang kok diapas*” (Baca, Membaca) and “*Jujur, muka tebal ampuh*” (Jujur) criticize empty rhetoric with “*jujur*” as irony (expressive value), and “*membaca*” represents performance without substance. Accusation “*Video pakai bot like*” (Buzzer) represents media manipulation (experiential value), with the vocabulary “*buzzer*” reflecting public skepticism. Relational values are visible in the contrast of formal registers “*wapres*” with sarcasm, or informal “*bocah*”, which creates social distancing. Connective values arise through cohesion between keywords, such as Wapres-Karbitan, Anak-Keluarga-Paman, Nepotisme-Ordal, and Baca-Membaca, forming a coherent narrative of unworthiness. Metaphors in Karbitan (an instant maturation process) and Fufufafa reinforce the stigma of inauthenticity. According to Becker & Mercer (1974) This keyword becomes a situational label, placing Gibran as a “situational retardate” in politics who is considered incompetent in digital discourse.

The text's dimensionality reveals ideology through linguistic analysis. Experiential value represents Gibran as a product of nepotism (Nepotisme, Ordal, Anak, Keluarga, Paman), incompetence (Pintar, Prestasi, AI), and not solutive (Beban). Relational values create antagonistic relationships through formal-informal registers (Wapres, Bocah, Fufufafa), while expressive values evaluate negativity through sarcasm (Hebat, Menarik, Jujur) and pejorative (Bocah, Karbitan). Cohesion and metaphor reinforce the narrative of anti-nepotism, anti-imagery, and meritocracy. Becker & Mercer (1974) assert that these labels, like “*Karbitan*” or “*Bocah*”, stigmatize Gibran situationally, reflecting the perception of aberration formed by digital interactions.

b) Discourse Practice Analysis

The practical dimension of discourse Fairclough (1995) analyzes the production and consumption of texts in “order of discourse” digital, with a focus on intertextuality and interdiscursiveness (a combination of genres/discourses). Commentary “*wapres karbitan*” (Wapres, Karbitan) demonstrating the intertextuality of the manifest with the official narrative of the vice president's office, sarcastically reversed to criticize Gibran's legitimacy, was produced in a post-2024 context sensitive to nepotism. Nepotisme (“*budaya kompetisi? produik KKN!*”) and Ordal (“*Kerja pakai orang dalam*”) citing the narrative of the official competition, contested as injustice, consumed as a stigma of KKN. Phrases “*Tumbuh karena*

bpknya” (Anak, Keluarga, Paman) Showing interdiscursivity with the discourse of political dynasties and genres of social criticism, produced by the perception of family privilege, is consumed as anti-nepotism resistance. Commentary “*anak muda kok begini?*” (Muda, Anak Muda) and “*Bonus demografi malah jadi beban*” (Beban) Citing the demographic bonus narrative, criticized through the informal digital genre, produced by public disillusionment with political youth, consumed as the demands of meritocracy. Sarcasm “*Gibran setara bung hatta*” (Gibran, Hebat, Menarik) It shows intertextuality with the discourse of political history, produced as a mockery, consumed as a rejection of legitimacy. Ridicule Fufufafa (“*fufufafa peye kabare mas?*”) and Bocah (“*bocah ga usah sok pinter*”) shows interdiscursivity with the genre of memes and digital mockery, produced in YouTube's anonymous culture, consumed as a stigma of immaturity. Commentary “*AI lebih pinter*” (AI, Pintar, Prestasi) Demonstrating intertextuality with technological discourse, produced to affirm objective competency standards, consumed as meritocratic preferences. Phrases “*membaca doang kok diapas*” (Baca, Membaca) and “*Jujur, muka tebal ampuh*” (Jujur) Quoting political rhetorical discourse, produced as a critique of inauthenticity, consumed as skepticism of imagery. Accusation “*Video pakai bot like*” (Buzzer) It shows intertextuality with media manipulation discourse, produced by public distrust, consumed as resistance to the official narrative. Interdisciplinarity is seen in sarcastic genre combinations (Hebat, Menarik, Jujur), meme (Fufufafa), and political criticism (Nepotisme, Ordal), Strengthens resistance in “order of discourse” YouTube. Becker & Mercer (1974) assert that this social interaction expands Gibran's situational labeling as “situational retardate” through anonymous production-consumption dynamics.

The dimension of discourse practice traces the production and consumption of texts in a digital context. Intertextuality uncovers the official narrative references (position, demographic bonuses, history, technology) that are contested (Wapres, Nepotisme, Anak Muda, AI), while interdiscursiveness reflects the hybridity of digital genres (Fufufafa, Bocah) and political discourse (Ordal, Karbitan). The post-2024 election context influences text production, and consumption reflects public resistance to nepotism, imagery, and incompetence. Becker & Mercer (1974) assert that this practice reinforces labeling through anonymous interactions, thereby accelerating situational stigma amplified by digital virality.

c) Analysis of Socio-Cultural Practices

The dimension of socio-cultural practice Fairclough (1995) examines the relationship between discourse and social contexts (situational, institutional, socio-macro), revealing ideology, power, and hegemony. Commentary “*wapres karbitan*” (Wapres, Karbitan) and “*Budaya kompetisi? Produik KKN!*” (Nepotisme, Ordal) reflects resistance to patrimonialism's power structure, with anti-nepotism ideology naturalized as “common sense” (Fairclough, 1995), rejecting Gibran's legitimacy in the context of the post-2024 election situation. Phrases “*Tumbuh karena bpknya*” (Anak, Keluarga, Paman) Opposing the structure of political dynasties, strengthening the hegemony of meritocracy. Commentary “*anak muda kok begini?*” (Muda, Anak Muda) and “*Bonus demografi malah jadi beban*” (Beban) suing the social structure that promotes youth without competence, with economic unrest reflecting the socio-macro context of the failure of the demographic bonus, in line with Nursyarif et al. (2024). Sarcasm “*Gibran setara bung hatta*” (Gibran, Hebat, Menarik) shows the hegemonic struggle against legitimacy, with the ideology of meritocracy dominating in the institutional context of digital media. Mockery of Fufufafa (“*fufufafa peye kabare mas?*”) and Bocah (“*bocah ga usah sok pinter*”) reflects the context of digital culture that stigmatizes immaturity, reinforcing the hegemony of political maturity. Commentary “*AI lebih pinter*” (AI, Pintar, Prestasi) reflects the preferences of objective competency-based social structures, with the context of modern technology reinforcing meritocratic hegemony. Phrases “*membaca doang kok diapas*” (Baca, Membaca) and “*Jujur, muka tebal ampuh*” (Jujur) opposing the structure of political imagery with the ideology of naturalized authenticity in the contextual context of public distrust.

Accusation “*Video pakai bot like*” (Buzzer) reflects resistance to media manipulation, with the institutional context of digital platforms reinforcing the hegemony of authenticity. These socio-cultural practices reflect a dialectic of social discourse-structures, where YouTube discourse shapes and is shaped by Indonesia's social context, including patrimonialism, economic inequality, and digital culture. Becker & Mercer (1974) assert that this labeling reflects power relations, with the public defining meritocratic norms in a digital context.

The dimension of socio-cultural practices reveals how YouTube's discourse reflects and shapes social structures through situational (post-election 2024), institutional (digital platforms), and socio-macro (patrimonialism, economics) contexts. Anti-nepotism ideology (Nepotisme, Ordal, Anak, Keluarga, Paman), meritocracy (Pintar, Prestasi, Ai, Muda, Anak Muda), and authenticity (Jujur, Baca, Membaca, Buzzer) naturalized, reflecting the public's hegemonic struggle against the political elite. Pejorative (Bocah, Karbitan, Fufufafa) and sarcasm (Hebat, Menarik) Reinforcing stigma in digital culture. Becker & Mercer (1974) assert that Gibran's situational labeling as “situational retardate” reflects the public's dominance in defining competency norms, accelerated by the dynamics of digital platforms.

These findings are aligned with local and global research exploring digital discourse, nepotism, and labeling, expanding the relevance of the analysis. Hidayat & Saifullah (2020) found the polarization of Indonesian YouTube discourse, with criticism of nepotism dominating, reinforced anonymity, similar to Gibran's labeling as “situational retardate”. Meredith (2020) argues that in the context of anti-nepotism discourse in Indonesia, meritocratic rhetoric is often used to reject family political practices, but at the same time, pejorative labels against young politicians can be a tool to maintain the status quo and remove them from the political arena. Fatimatu Zahra & Dewi (2021) found pre-election support for Gibran, confirming the situational nature of Becker's labeling. Ma'aly et al. (2024) support the theme of injustice with a digital discourse reproducing anti-KKN (Korupsi, Kolusi, Nepotisme) via intertextuality, in harmony with “*Budaya kompetisi? Produik KKN!*”. Nursyarif et al. (2024) emphasized that economic unrest strengthens the labeling of Gibran as not solutive in the context of the demographic bonus. Havenstein et al. (2024) support the effectiveness of CDA in uncovering ideological schemes consistent with text analysis. Kadim (2022) highlights sarcasm as digital resistance.

Becker & Mercer's (1974) labeling theory is based on symbolic interactionism, stating that deviation is the result of social processes, not the inherent traits of individuals. In the context of YouTube's digital discourse, the platform serves as a “school” of informal labeling, in which anonymous commentators act as “labelers” setting Gibran as a “situational retardate” political term adapted from Becker & Mercer (1974) for individuals to be considered incompetent in a specific context (digital), but normal in supportive communities (political base). Labels such as Bocah, Karbitan, Ordal, Nepotisme, Fufufafa, Anak, Keluarga, Paman, Wapres, Muda, Anak Muda, Beban, AI, Pintar, Prestasi, Hebat, Menarik, Jujur, Baca, Membaca, dan Buzzer reflects a disproportionately applied meritocratic standard, reinforced by digital anonymity that allows for free expression without social accountability. The labeling process involves three main stages:

1. **Labeling:** Social interactions on YouTube generate labels like “Wapres Karbitan” or “*anak muda kok begini?*”, which reflect the public's collective perception of Gibran as incompetent, nepotistic, or inauthentic. Label Fufufafa and Bocah reinforce stigma through humor and ridicule, while Nepotisme and Ordal highlight KKN (Korupsi, Kolusi, Nepotisme).
2. **Label Internalization:** The public internalizes labels through collocation such as “Nepotisme-Korupsi” (4x) or “Karbitan-Wapres” (3x), which confirms negative associations. The virality of Fufufafa as a meme accelerated internalization, creating an anti-Gibran collective identity among commentators.

3. **Distortion Amplification:** Label repetition, such as Bocah, Karbitan, and Nepotisme, in the comments reinforces the stigma, with platform dynamics (upvote, reply) increasing visibility. Label Buzzer and AI expanding amplification by alluding to media manipulation and intellectual incompetence.

Becker & Mercer (1974) highlight power relations in labeling, in which anonymous commentators act as "moral entrepreneurs" who uphold meritocratic norms, anti-nepotism, and authenticity, rejecting Gibran as a "deviant" in digital discourse. This labeling is situational, as Gibran "disappears into the general population" in supportive communities, such as political bases or pro-dynastic groups, reflecting the dialectic of labeling (Becker & Mercer 1974). Digital anonymity strengthens labeling by removing social barriers, but it also enables supportive resistance through pro-Gibran comments, thereby creating discourse contestation. In the context of nepotism, Gibran's labeling is similar to the labeling of "marijuana users" in Becker & Mercer (1974) in which social norms (meritocracy) are applied to stigmatize certain groups. In contrast to institutional labeling in education, such as the "pupil ideal, digital labeling is decentralized and collective, extending the theory of Becker & Mercer (1974) to the digital realm. YouTube's platform accelerates labeling through virality, algorithms, and anonymous interactions, with features such as "like" and "reply" amplifying stigma. The long-term implication is that this situational labeling could affect Gibran's political legitimacy, especially among young voters who are active on social media, thereby deepening political polarization. This expansion also highlights that digital labeling not only reflects social norms but also shapes them, creating new "deviant identities" in digital politics.

The integration of CDA Fairclough (1995) and the theories of Becker & Mercer (1974) Shows that the digital discourse on Gibran is dominated by anti-nepotism, anti-imagery, and meritocratic ideologies, with situational labeling as political "situational retardate" through 22 keywords. The text portrays Gibran as incompetent; the discourse practice reinforces resistance through intertextuality; and the socio-cultural practice reflects the hegemonic struggle against patrimonialism. From labelling theory, Becker & Mercer (1974) Revealing the power relationship in digital labeling and the relevance of other research strengthens the academic context. These findings confirm the role of digital discourse as an ideological and labeling arena, with implications for Gibran's political legitimacy.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that YouTube political comments construct a predominantly critical discourse toward Gibran Rakabuming Raka, characterized by strong anti-nepotism sentiment, meritocratic demands, and resistance to political imagery. The findings show that commenters frequently label Gibran as contextually incompetent, emphasizing perceived immaturity, reliance on familial privilege, and lack of authenticity. Through linguistic strategies such as sarcasm, pejorative expressions, and intertextual references, public discourse articulates ideological contestation against patrimonial political structures in post-2024 Indonesia. The analysis also indicates that YouTube functions as a collective space for social labeling, where anonymity and platform dynamics intensify evaluative judgments and shape political narratives. Overall, the study confirms the significant role of digital discourse in influencing political legitimacy. Future research may extend this analysis by conducting cross-platform comparisons or employing multimodal approaches to examine further how political representations are constructed across diverse digital environments.

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