
K-popfication in the Indonesian Political Arena: The Phenomenon of @aniesbubble on X

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Abstract

Political years in Indonesia have always presented new and unexpected occurrences, including campaign strategies and activities of candidate supporters. Social media has played a significant role in shaping these patterns due to its ability to mobilize the community. One of the campaigns in the 2024 presidential election was the @aniesbubble account on X, a supporter of presidential candidate 01 Anies Baswedan. When it first appeared, this account drew widespread attention for its similarities to a Korean Pop (K-Pop) fan account. Anies was portrayed as an idol, while @aniesbubble is a fan account dedicated to sharing updates and information about him. Other accounts affiliated with @aniesbubble: @olpproject, and @haveniesday further amplified this strategy. This study aims to examine the 'K-popfication' (K-pop-inspired communication) of the content produced by the three accounts on X. This study employs a qualitative content analysis method to see the elements of 'K- popfication' in tweets or messages published within December 2023 and February 2024. The results reveal significant elements of 'K-popfication', signaling a new era in Indonesian politics, defined by the pervasive use of social media and a more proactive and participatory audience dynamic. In addition, this research shows that the communication aspect was reflected in the creative use of social media and political support for Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar was reflected in various online and offline activities. Lastly, these accounts played crucial roles in spreading information about the candidates as they gained early access to information by attending and participating in Anies and Muhaimin's events.

Keywords: Qualitative Content Analysis; Anies Bubble; K-popfication; Presidential Election; Politics

Introduction

As the 2024 Indonesian presidential election approached, political activity was intensifying. The three candidate pairs (*paslon*) actively campaigned to gain and secure voter support. Social media remains a favoured platform, both for the candidates and their supporters. Social media is also believed to influence voters' attitudes, especially young voters (Biswas, Ingle, and Roy 2014). Data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) in 2022 shows that most internet users in Indonesia are aged 13-34 years, which is classified as a young age group. Similarly, as cited by GoodStats (2023), Statista reports that most social media users in Indonesia are aged 18-24 years. This makes social media an effective channel for candidates to gauge public responses to their visions and missions. X, formerly known as Twitter, is one of the most popular platforms used by politicians and civil society to engage in public discourse and foster interpersonal connections (Lefky, Brewer, and Habegger 2015; Bruns and Burgess 2012). The data of X social media users in Indonesia in early 2024 was also fantastic, reaching 24.69 million users (Kemp 2024). For young people, X is a medium that can voice their aspirations, and in a political context, X is often used by young people to express their dissatisfaction with political parties or election candidates (Hosch-Dayican et al. 2016). Young people played significant roles in Indonesian elections since the voters were 60% millennials and generation Z (Prihatini 2023).

At the same time, X has become a space for Korean-pop (K-pop) fans to discuss, interact, share information, and join a community of fellow enthusiasts. Jenkins (2008) highlights that audiences actively transform their interests into various cultural activities, which gradually became known as fan culture. With the growing influence of social media, this fan culture has also evolved and expanded, including on Twitter or X. Over the past decade, X (at that time still called Twitter) has become the most important source for K-pop fans, especially young fans in finding information about idols and their activities. In early 2024, the virtual world was abuzz with the emergence of an account that bridged social media, fan culture, K-pop, and politics. The account @aniesbubble was created to support presidential candidate Anies Baswedan, where Anies was treated and portrayed like a K-pop

star. The term “bubble” refers to an application frequently used by K-pop artists to communicate with their fans. @aniesbubble clarified that they were not Anies' official campaign team but rather a grassroots initiative by a group of people aiming to support Anies in a creative, meaningful, and unconventional way. Anies Baswedan acknowledged @aniesbubble, describing it as a product of young people's creativity and something unprecedented in Indonesian politics (Putra 2024). This account showed a level of originality and creativity of campaign, employing K-pop language and visual appeal which reflect a shift in the paradigm of Indonesian politics (Dwi and Kurniati 2024; Sagita Cahyani 2024).

Anies Bubble has faced criticism from some groups, arguing that it does not represent all K-pop fans. In response, @aniesbubble clarified that its members are not exclusively K-pop fans. Despite the pros and cons, the emergence of @aniesbubble introduces a fresh dynamic to the Indonesian political landscape. K-pop and politics have long been discussed, but phenomena like @aniesbubble contain several pivotal aspects that merit further exploration. The @aniesbubble account, along with its affiliated accounts, @olpproject and @haveaniesday, have successfully reshaped Anies Baswedan's public image, which has often been associated with identity politics and conservative Islamic groups. Anies Bubble is even seen as surpassing Prabowo's trend with his *gemoy* dance, which was massive on social media, especially TikTok (Fauziyah and Putri 2024). In addition, despite only launching for a month, @aniesbubble surpassed 140,000 followers in February 2024, surpassed 230,000 followers in March 2024, and trended on X several times (Fairuz 2024; Ria 2024). The phenomenon of 'K-popfication' (adopting K-pop fan culture in political campaigns) also indicates at least two things, first, in the era of convergence, the authority and power of audiences or media users can create unpredictable, creative and innovative movements (Jenkins 2008), then second, social media plays a critical role in introducing new elements and patterns to Indonesian politics, fostering political participation among previously less-engaged groups or individuals. Compared to previous campaigns, Anies bubble and other affiliated accounts showed distinctive characteristics that are pivotal to be studied. Therefore, this study aims to delve deeper into 'K-popfication' during the 2024

presidential election campaign through a qualitative content analysis of the X accounts @aniesbubble, @olpproject, and @haveaniesday.

Social Media is a Crucial Political Battleground

Social media and politics have become deeply intertwined and inseparable. Social media is increasingly viewed as a critical communication tool for politicians, their supporters, and civil society. Social media is often regarded as an alternative platform that can strengthen democratic practices. On the other hand, social media replicates the hierarchy or unequal structure in society (Mosco 2009; Fuchs 2010). In political contexts, social media plays a key role in disseminating information and claims of political groups (Chadwick 2013). As a vital channel for political communication, social media facilitates the dissemination and exchange of information, especially in Indonesia, where internet and social media usage is exceptionally high. In his article titled "Indonesia's Media Oligarchy and the 'Jokowi Phenomenon'" Ross Tapsell (2015) stated that Jokowi's victory in several political events was due to his social media skills. The battle of ideas, discourses, visions, and missions occurs not only in the offline realm but also online. Although it does not directly guarantee increased political knowledge, social media can potentially increase public participation and involvement in political activities (Dimitrova et al. 2014; Molaei 2017). Social media also empowers the public to act as 'monitors' and 'watchers', keeping track of candidates' actions through platform features. In addition, social media has given rise to influencers focusing on political issues. They are often referred to as political influencers who specifically target specific audiences and are involved in online and offline political campaigns (Goodwin et al. 2023; Cotter 2019).

Fandom and Participatory Culture: The Audience Shift, from Passive to Proactive

Fandom, often referred to as fan culture, has undergone significant dynamics and transformation since the advent of social media. Previously, fan communication and interaction were limited by geographical and temporal boundaries. However, the development of technology and social media now enables fans to interact with other fans, even with their idols (Cai 2009). With social media, fans can carry out more diverse activities

and have impactful contributions. Fans are no longer passive but are also active in producing cultural products that influence aspects such as economics and politics (Jia, Li, and Ma 2021). Fandom or fan culture can be understood from the lens of participatory culture, as discussed by Henry Jenkins. Participatory culture emphasizes that communities such as fandoms are an important part of the dissemination of culture, particularly through digital platforms. Participation is a cornerstone of cultural engagement in the digital age. Integrating media and technology creates opportunities for fans to be more active in producing cultural content and engaging in related activities. This situates fans within the participation theory framework, often called online participation (Jenkins 2008). Lucy Bennet (2014) identifies four key concepts within fandom, including communication, creativity, knowledge, and organization and civil empowerment. Communication also refers to the interactive processes facilitated by the internet and social media, which often lead to the formation of online communities. Creativity encompasses the innovative outputs of fans through contemporary media, particularly on social platforms. Knowledge relates to the dissemination of information by fans, often including exclusive or lesser-known insights. Finally, organization and civil empowerment reflect collective actions, initiatives, and mobilizations driven by fan activities and shared interests.

The Phenomenon of 'K-popfication' in the Digital Era

The concept of 'K-popfication' is not widely recognized, especially in academic studies. This term is more widely used in the context of K-pop fans in Indonesia. However, researchers interpret 'K-popfication' as making activities, communities, or figures unrelated to K-pop appear similar to or inspired by K-pop. In many cases, this 'K-popfication' emerged because it was initiated by fans who idolize certain figures, or because the figures go viral for their distinctive traits. In the digital age, fans can simultaneously act as producers and consumers, community leaders and members, writers and readers, collaborators, and media affiliated with specific institutions (Catherine and Chin 2010). Fans also connect, unite, and form their communities and hierarchies (Hills 2002; Catherine and Chin 2010; Zheng 2016; Gerrard, 2021). Within K-pop, these tendencies create unique characteristics that distinguish one fan community from another. Familiar terms and practices within fan

communities include concepts like fans, canon, cosplay, fan talk, fan art, fandom, fanfiction, fangirl and fanboy, fannish, groupie, head cannon, ship, ship names, ship wars, shipper, shipping, spoilers, stan, and The Powers That Be (TPTB) (Alexandra Tavares Agostinho 2022). In addition to these shared practices, K-pop fans usually demonstrate support by installing videotrons featuring their idols' videos and sending food trucks or coffee trucks to their idol's events, for example, when their idol has a birthday, releases a new album, stars in a drama, and many others (CNN Indonesia 2024). Several studies have been conducted to examine Anies Bubble in more depth, particularly focusing on its striking use of 'K-popfication'. Anies Bubble account on X incorporates various elements typically associated with K-pop fan culture, such as symbols, emojis, layouts, visuals, activity schedules, and expression of support (Kurniasih et al 2024; Rafika Sari and Fikrani Deslia 2024).

Research methodologies used in these studies mentioned above include qualitative descriptive approaches and netnography. Beyond 'K-popfication', other studies have analyzed communication strategies, image-building efforts, political communication and messaging, and parasocial relationships between the Anies Bubble community (or its creators) and Anies Baswedan himself (Safira Triandharini, Teddy Kurnia Wirakusumah, and Detta Rahmawan 2024; Sagita Cahyani 2024; (Adninta et al. 2024). This research employs qualitative content analysis and frameworks that differ to prior studies, focusing on the detailed aspects of 'K-popfication' elements, adopted from Agostinho's study (2022), the transformation of media audience (Jenkins 2008), and the characteristics and roles of fandom (Bennett 2014).

Methods

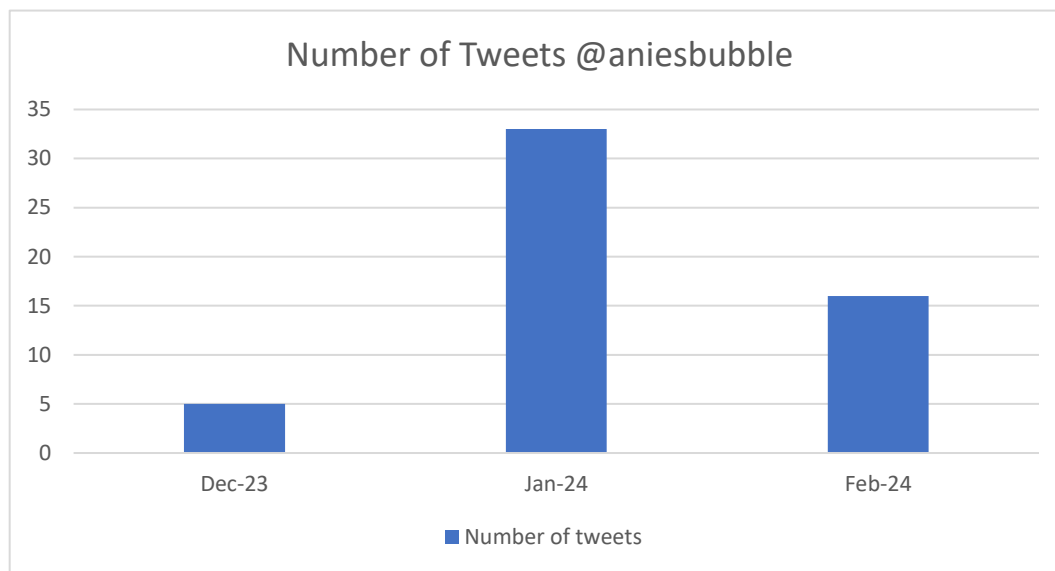
This study employs qualitative content analysis with data collection techniques that include observation, documentation, and literature review. In qualitative content analysis, data are presented in words available for analyzing and interpreting their meanings (Bengtsson 2016; Schreier 2024)). The research stages (Elo et al. 2014) that were done preparation phase (data collection, sampling strategy), organization phase (categorization, interpretation), and reporting phase (results, analysis process). include The primary data

was obtained from @aniesbubble, @olpproject, and @haveaniesday posts. Researchers used X Archive to gather posts uploaded between December 2023 and February 2024. A total of 138 tweets were collected, with 54 tweets from @aniesbubble, 37 from @HaveAniesDay, and 47 from @olpproject. After collecting data, researchers grouped posts that had the highest engagement. The next stage involved categorization based on the researcher's observations and the concepts used in this study. The aspects examined include the month the tweet was uploaded, type of content (post, mention, reply, retweet), format (text, audiovisual), category (daily activities, events, interactions, awards, recommendations, promotions or campaigns, others), sub-categories (fandom or fan club, fan meet, food truck or coffee truck, ship or ship names, fan talk, fandom identity fan ship, fan work, others), and the concept of fandom according to Bennet (2014) which consists of communication, creativity, knowledge or information, and organization and civil empowerment. Researchers then analyzed data to identify patterns, comparisons, and characteristics in the content posted by the three accounts. Finally, these findings were connected to the broader socio-political context in Indonesia. To ensure validity and reliability of the data, researchers performed as investigators, analyzed the data separately, and discuss the results after that (Graneheim and Lundman 2004). In addition, this research used different techniques and sources for data collection, compared the results, conducted triangulations for confirming the results (Patton 2002; Rolfe 2006).

Results

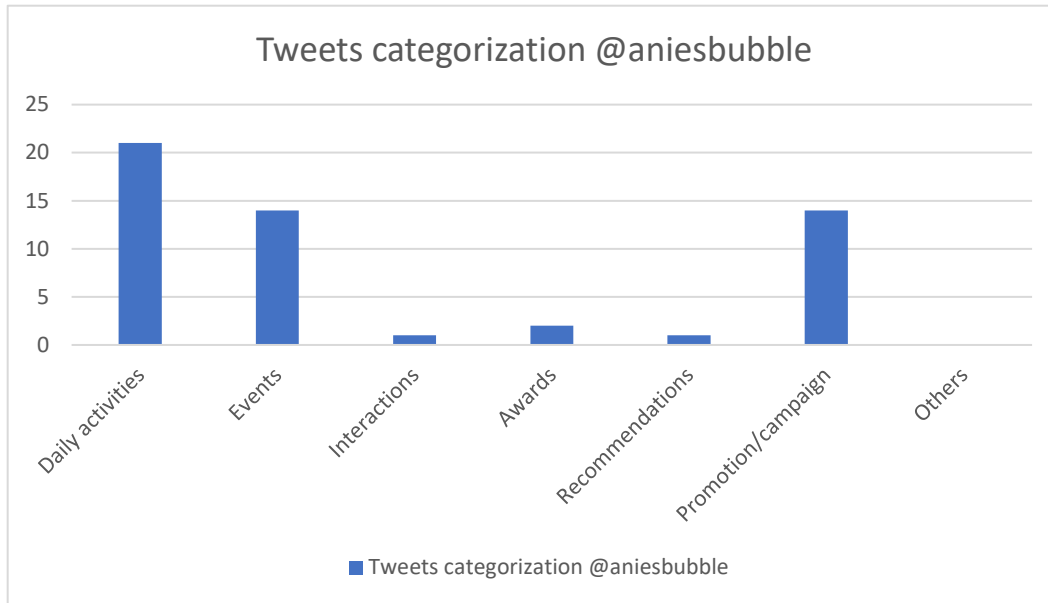
Anies Bubble Movement in the Presidential Election Wave

The presidential election in Indonesia often gives rise to new phenomena, such as Anies Bubble, which was once in the public spotlight. Fandoms or fan bases closely associated with Korean pop (K-pop) artists, in the hands of the audience, can shift to become fan bases for politicians. This study found that the @aniesbubble account on X has been active since the end of December 2023, approximately two months before the presidential election was held on February 14, 2024. The intensity of @aniesbubble in uploading content was highest in January 2024, and after the presidential election, the intensity decreased.

Figure 1. Number of Tweets of @aniesbubble

Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

The tweets often uploaded by @aniesbubble are tweets in the form of posts without mentions, replies, or retweets. Only three tweets mention other accounts, including @olpproject, an Anies Baswedan supporter account that is still affiliated with @aniesbubble, and @aniesbaswedan. Audio-visual formats dominate the format of @aniesbubble's tweets, while text formats only have six tweets. Then, the topics most often shared by @aniesbubble are Anies Baswedan's daily activities, such as information about Anies' TikTok live schedule, quotes from Anies, and videos of Anies playing with cats. In addition to daily activities, @aniesbubble's content also contains many events during the presidential election campaign, such as the Presidential-Vice Presidential Debate and Desak Anies. These events are also intertwined with promotional activities or campaigns carried out by @aniesbubble, for example, support questions explicitly conveyed by @aniesbubble, publications regarding achievements (rice exports, facilities in DKI Jakarta during Anies' leadership), Anies' Videotron, and many others. Although the @aniesbubble account was active in uploading content, the interactions they did were relatively minimal. Meanwhile, other content shared is related to awards received by Anies during his leadership in DKI Jakarta and book recommendations from Anies.

Figure 2. Tweets categorization of @aniesbubble

Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

In examining the aspects of 'K-popification' present on the @aniesbubble account, researchers identified the following key indicators and characteristics: fandom or fan club, fan meet, food truck or coffee truck, ship or ship names, fan talk, fandom identity fan ship, fan work, and others. The X account @aniesbubble conveys more information, such as quotes from Anies Baswedan on topics like Desak Anies and the Presidential Debate, announcements about Anies' live TikTok sessions, and his participation in Space X live. In addition to this information, @aniesbubble's content contains many fandom or fan club issues where fandom or fan club discussions elaborated further on the @HaveAniesDay and @olpproject accounts. Additionally, K-poptification in the @aniesbubble account is shown by the existence of a fandom identity that is implicitly or explicitly contained in the @aniesbubble content, for example, there is a video where Anies mentioned the name of their fandom, Have Anies Day, during an interview. Other examples included photos of Videotron displays and banners as a form of support for Anies. Additional elements such as quotes from Anies Baswedan's live TikTok sessions (this live TikTok inspired Anies' fans or supporters to create Anies Bubble), publication of the Desak Anies events in various cities, tweets celebrating Anies' achievements written in style reminiscent of K-pop idols receiving

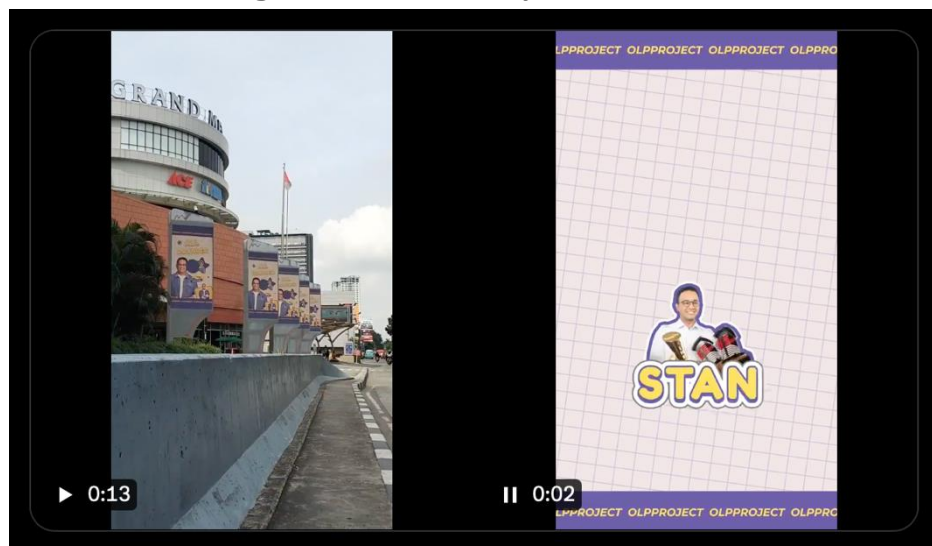
awards in South Korea, updates about the Presidential Debate, information on Anies' accomplishments as a leader in DKI Jakarta, and details of his events.

Figure 3. Videotron by Anies Bubble

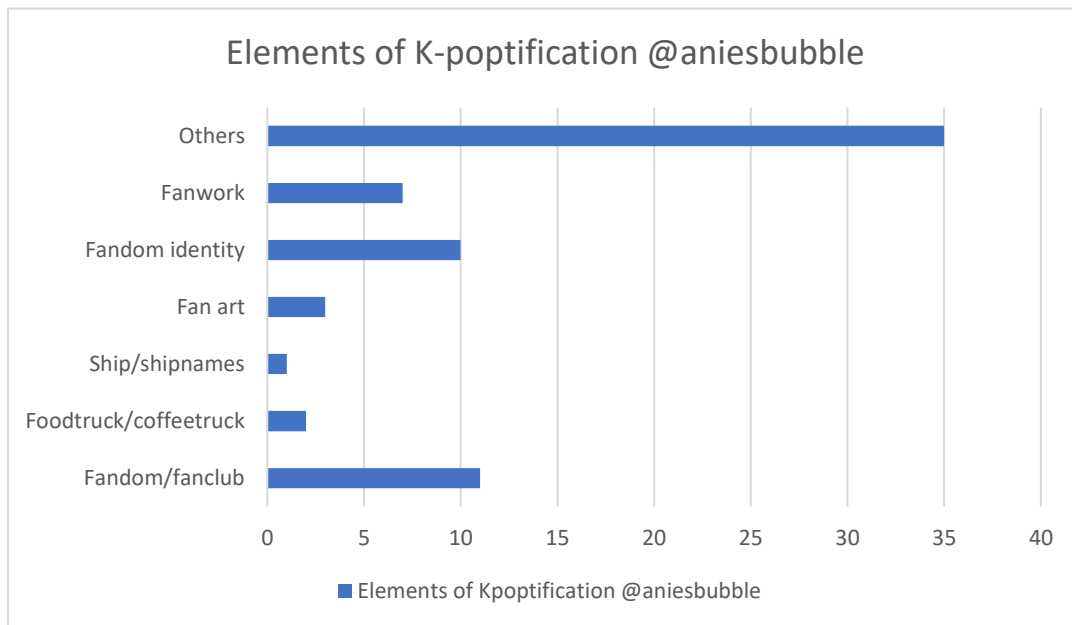


Source: <https://x.com/aniesbubble?lang=en> (Secondary data, 2024)

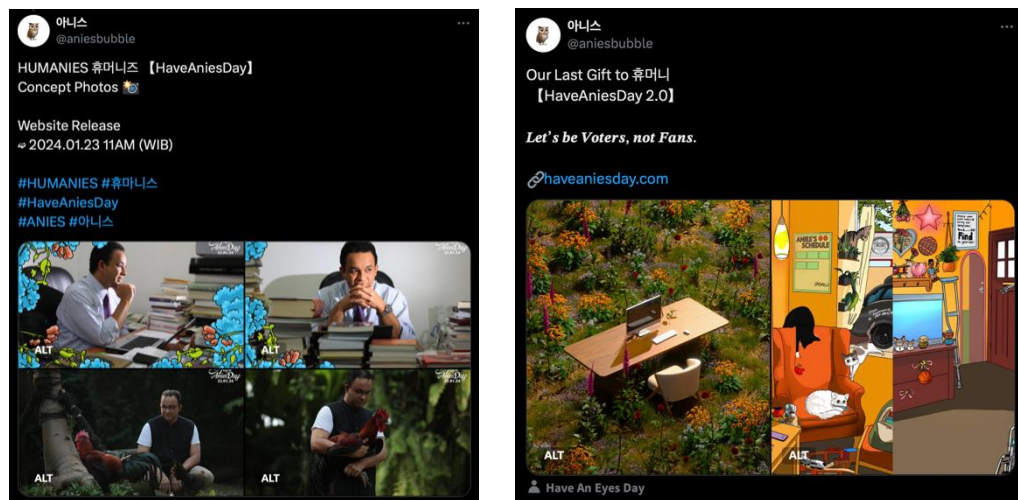
Figure 4. Videotron by Anies Bubble



Source: <https://x.com/aniesbubble?lang=en> (Secondary data, 2024)

Figure 5. Elements of K-popfication of @aniesbubble

Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

Figure 6. Design created by the Anies Bubble team

Source: <https://x.com/aniesbubble?lang=en> (Secondary data, 2024)

Furthermore, researchers analyzed the characteristics and roles of @aniesbubble using Bennett's (2014) concept of fandom. The aim was to explore the activities of the individuals or creators behind @aniesbubble to understand how they function as a fandom

or fan community for Anies Baswedan. The findings indicate that the emergence of @aniesbubble was facilitated by communication, primarily mediated through social media. This established communication enabled @aniesbubble to coordinate and create a fan account for one of the Indonesian presidential candidates that resembles a K-pop idol fan account. In addition, the @aniesbubble account also uses social media to share information about Anies Baswedan and create other accounts, namely @HaveAniesDay and @olpproject, to disseminate their activities in more detail. Although the @aniesbubble account rarely interacted with the audience, the other two accounts are the ones that actively communicate with the audience on X. Aside from X, Anies Bubble also employed other social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, and Anies Bubble itself was established because the creators were inspired by Anies' live TikTok which resembled K-pop stars live. Media convergence era has enabled people to use multiple social media platforms and to have multiple accounts which are integrated to each other. The use of social media platforms is indispensable in the Indonesian presidential election campaigns. They have played remarkable roles in disseminate campaign agenda and in reaching broader audience, especially each platform has different audience characteristics. This circumstance also aligns with how politicians manage their social media strategies as they must be having specific target audience in their campaigns.

Afterwards, @aniesbubble account also shows notable elements of creativity, starting from the @aniesbubble account itself, the process of naming and voting fandom names, the design and installation of Videotron displays, the creation and delivery of coffee trucks, the use of hashtags, the production of edited videos, the creation of concept photos, and various other creative designs. It can be noted that the campaign strategies show a combination of online activities and offline events, integrating both to gain more public awareness. The unique characteristics, detailed aspects of K-pop, use of platforms and accounts, and integrated activities are believed to be the factors that have risen Anies Bubble's popularity. The resemblance to K-pop fan account has also contributed to make political content more relatable to the audience, especially Anies Baswedan is often linked with his academic backgrounds and is seen use overly academic language. However, this situation 'comes with

a price' where more-relatable, more-familiar content can reflect a higher understanding or reduced critical thinking skills.

Figure 7. Coffee truck at “Desak Anies” event



Source: <https://x.com/aniesbubble?lang=en> (Secondary data, 2024)

Another aspect is civil organization and empowerment, demonstrated through the mobilization of supporters to collaborate, coordinate, and make collective decisions. This function aligns with the concept of participatory culture introduced by Jenkins (2006), which emphasizes active audience involvement in shared activities. Researchers also examined whether there were political elements or not in the posts of @aniesbubble, although the existence of @aniesbubble and its support for Anies Baswedan can be viewed as fandom politicization. This study found several tweets containing political elements, explicit statements of support for Anies Baswedan, and video clips during the presidential and vice-presidential debates, one of which was a video when Anies and Ganjar Pranowo countered Prabowo's statements. This account also frequently mentioned that Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar (Imin) advocate for the lower middle class in Indonesia. In addition, it

frequently features live broadcasts with Tom Lembong, the former Minister of Trade during the Jokowi era. The account engaged with trending political topics, including issues like social assistance programs (*bantuan sosial*), poverty, and rice imports, which resonated strongly with public discourse.

Some tweets that received high engagement, seen from the number of times they were quoted, replied to, retweeted, and favorite, included the following themes:

Table 1. Tweets from @aniesbubble with the highest engagement

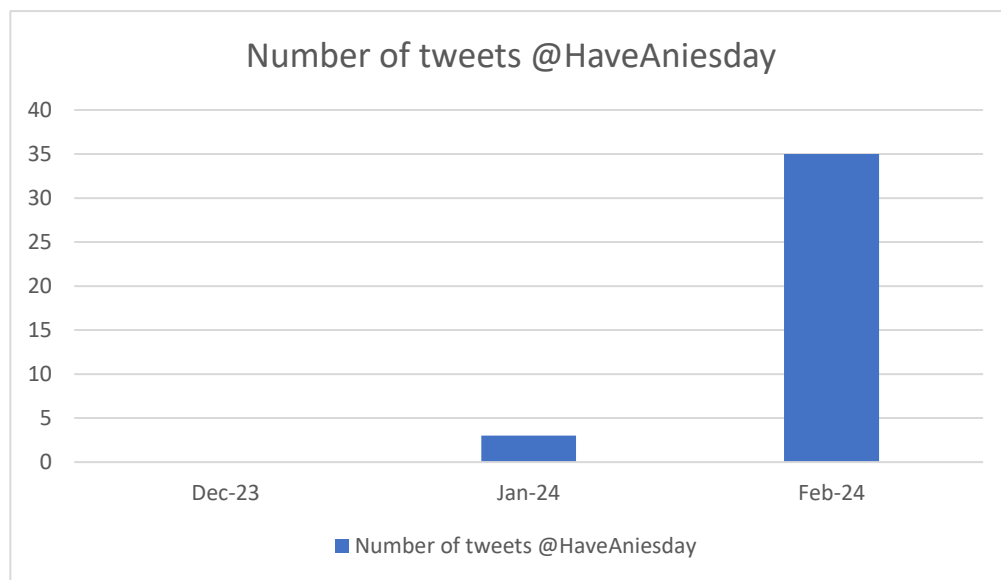
Tweets from @aniesbubble with the highest engagement
1. When the account was first launched 2. A clip of Anies' live TikTok mentioning Anies Bubble 3. A book recommendation from Anies 4. A clip of the Desak Anies video where Anies comments on politicians' promises 5. Information about Anies and Tom Lembong doing a live TikTok together 6. Information about Anies and Imin doing a live TikTok together 7. A list of Anies' achievements and calling him Daesang (a term for winning a music show) 8. A photo of Anies when he was in Desak Anies carrying the Anies Bubble light stick 9. Anies Baswedan's Videotron 10. A coffee truck sent to Anies 11. Release of the Have Anies Day website 12. A clip of Anies and Cak Imin hugging because Imin's performance in the vice-presidential debate was good 13. Information about Anies and Mutiara doing a live TikTok together 14. Information about Anies and Mikail doing a live TikTok together 15. Anies Bubble's live space on X with Anies Baswedan

Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

Have Anies Day: His Existence is Crucial, Not Just a Complement

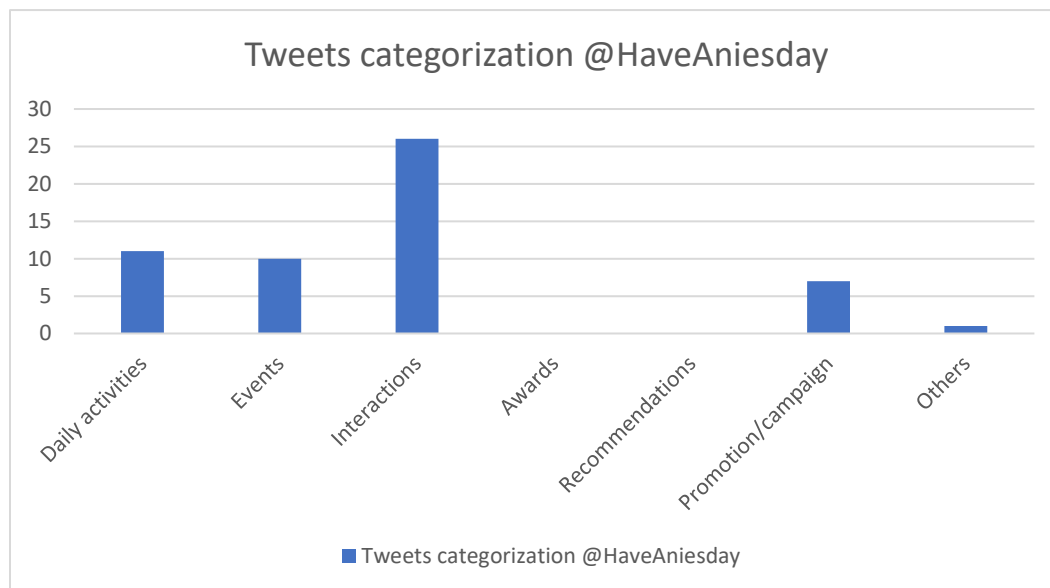
Have Anies Day was first launched in January 2024, about a month after Anies Bubble was launched. The difference in the number of tweets is not much different from Anies Bubble, but after the presidential election, this account was initially more active than before the presidential election. Unlike Anies Bubble, whose upload frequency dropped drastically after the presidential election and when the quick count showed that the AMIN pair was likely to lose to the Prabowo and Gibran pair. After February 14, 2025, the X @HaveAniesDay account posted more, especially in February. This period was the period when quick counts of presidential candidate votes began to appear in both the mass media and social media.

Figure 8. Number of tweets of @HaveAniesDay



Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

When compared to the @aniesbubble account, the @HaveAniesDay account was more active in interacting with the audience, which is indicated by more replies, retweets, and even asking the public for opinions several times and opening discussions with the audience through the features available on X.

Figure 9. Tweet categorization of @HaveAniesDay

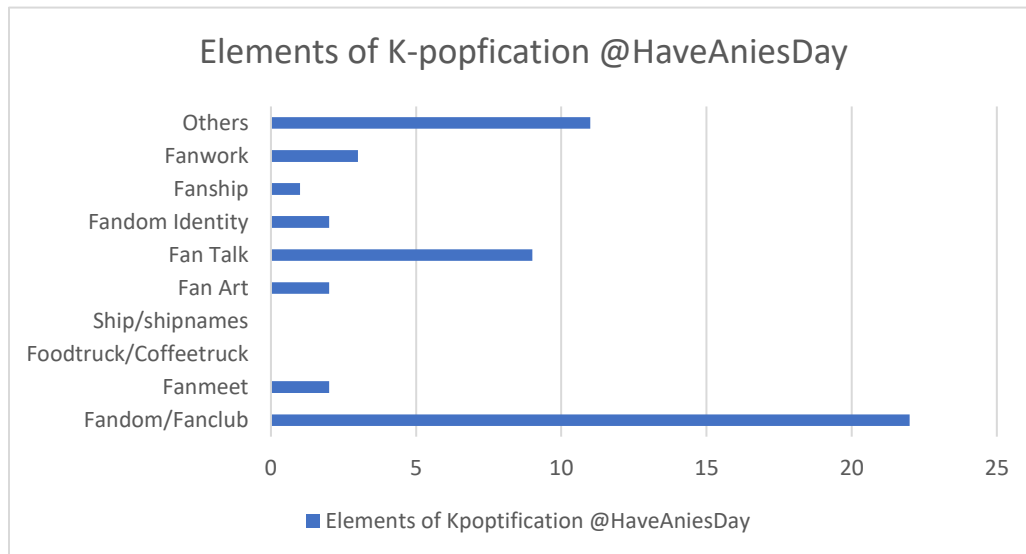
Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

The diagram above also shows that the majority of @HaveAniesDay's activities on X are interactions, covering a broad range of topics and contexts. Similar to @aniesbubble, if we look at the elements of K-poptification, account @haveaniesday also contains various elements such as fandom or fan club, fandom identity, fan art, fan meet, fan talk, fan ship, and fan work. Among these elements, fandom or fan club is the topic or element most often found on the @HaveAniesDay account. Meanwhile in the 'others' element, researchers identified several light conversations or topics raised such as the activities and identities of the admins, and interestingly, this account sparked discussions about a party (Properous Justice Party, *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*, or PKS), campaigns during the quiet period (highlighting candidate pairs who continued campaigns during this time), and support for AMIN (Anies Baswedan-Muhaimin Iskandar) pair which is conveyed explicitly. This is related to the findings of the study regarding political messages and discussions in the @HaveAniesDay content or posts. In addition to engaging with the audience, @HaveAniesDay actively mobilized followers to participate in campaigns across other platforms like Instagram and TikTok. This account also frequently encouraged followers to periodically monitor election-related data. In late February 2024, @HaveAniesDay reaffirmed its support for Anies

Baswedan for the 'change' mission campaigned by Anies while providing updates and information about him.

Drawing from Lucy Bennett's (2014) concept of fandom, the interactions carried out by @HaveAniesDay demonstrate an active communication process that was built within the account. In addition to communication, @HaveAniesDay's significant mobilization efforts, as explained earlier, also define characteristics. Furthermore, the creative aspects of @HaveAniesDay are evident in its content, mainly through posts and work it produces and its cleverly crafted name, "Have Anies Day."

Figure 10. Elements of K-popfication of @HaveAniesDay



Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

Table 2. Tweets from @HaveAniesDay with the highest engagement

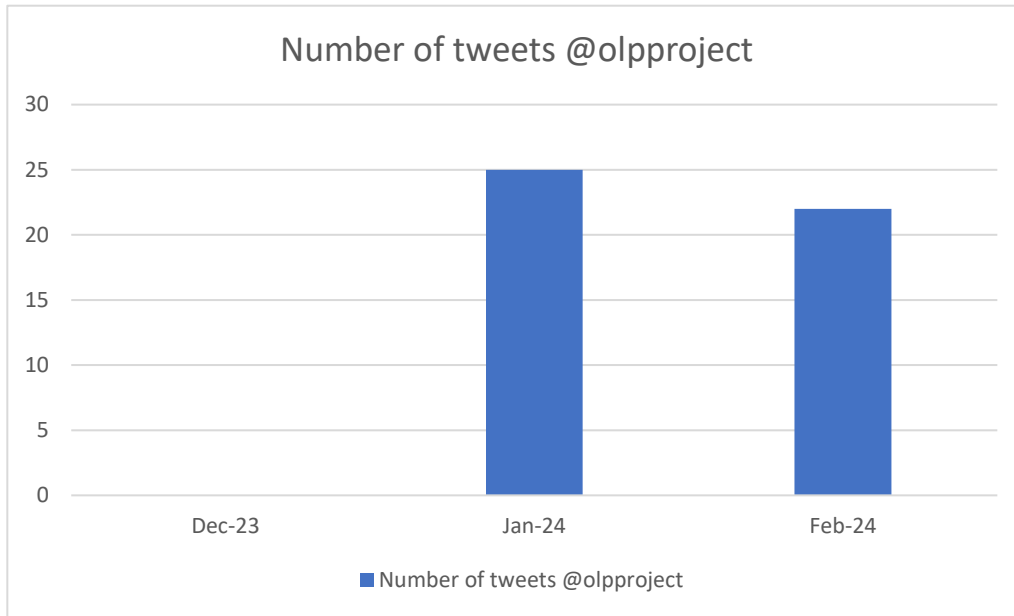
Tweets from @HaveAniesDay with the highest engagement
1. When the admin discusses his/her job description 2. Posts about Anies Baswedan who followed @HaveAniesDay 3. Invitation or projects to campaign on X, Instagram, and TikTok using the hashtag #KitaButuhPerubahan 4. Invite collaboration via Direct Message (DM) 5. Retweeting <i>meme</i> or photo of Anies and Ganjar both disagreeing with Prabowo during the presidential debate 6. Appreciation for the audience and the visuals created by Have Anies Day 7. Discussion about the 'track record' of data to monitor election results 8. Questions about Space (on X) ideas and ideas for Have Anies Day's website 9. Reasons why Have Anies Day or the people behind this account support Anies Baswedan dan his mission to 'change' 10. Looking for a graphic designer for Have Anies Day's projects

Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

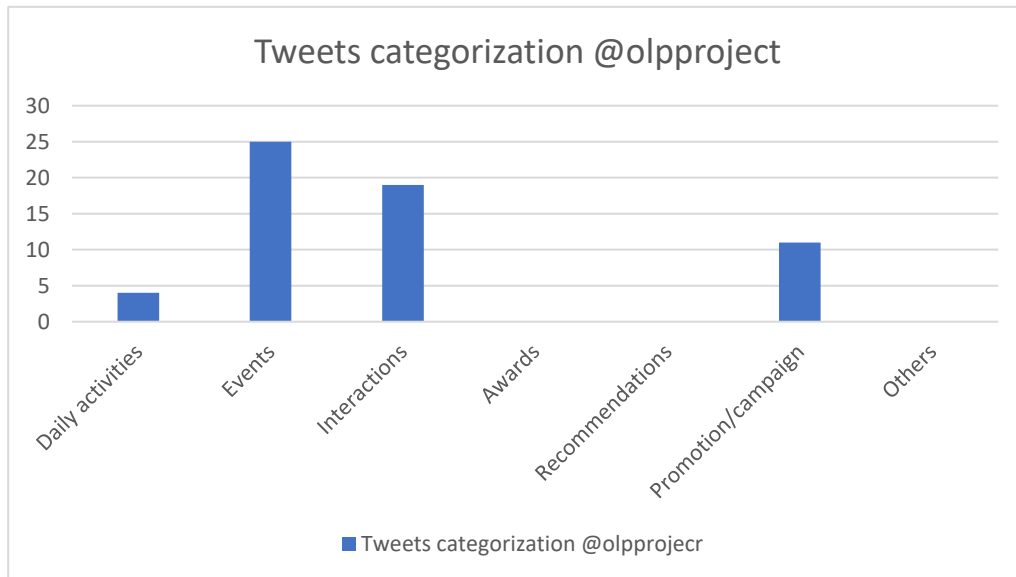
Olp Project's Activities in Online and Offline Realms

The @olpproject account on X appeared earlier than @HaveAniesDay, namely on January 4, 2024. Similar to the @aniesbubble account, the @olpproject account was not as active as before the presidential election on February 14, 2024. There were only around five posts after the 2024 election took place. However, if viewed from the posts per month, @olpproject was most active in January 2024.

Olp Project retweets more than mentions but also replies and uploads a lot. Meanwhile, when viewed from the activities, the @olpproject account organizes many events, both online and offline, especially concerning projects such as food trucks, coffee trucks, LEDs, Videotrons, and fundraising. In addition to events, @olpproject also often interacts with their audience on X.

Figure 11. Number of Tweets of @olpproject

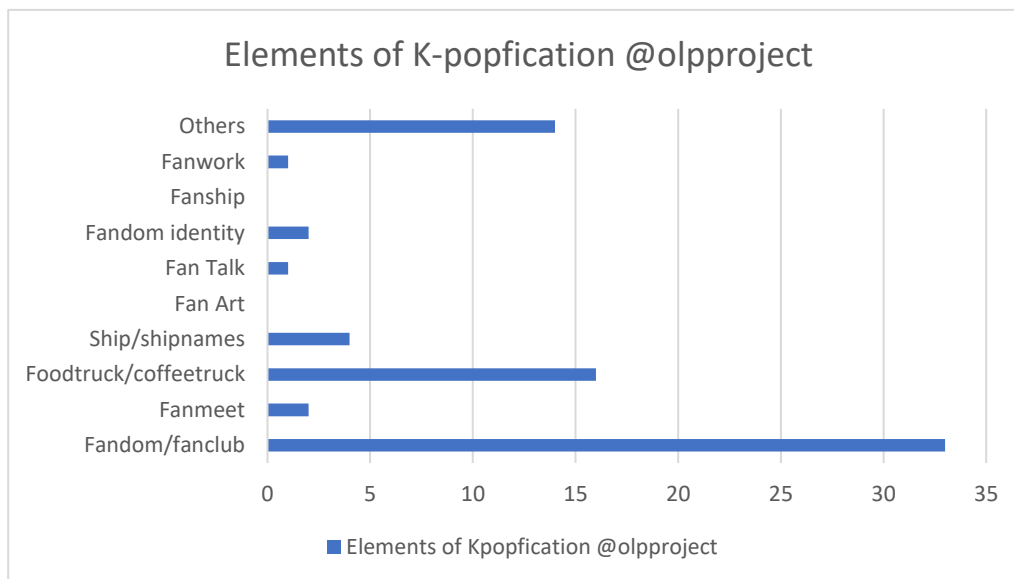
Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

Figure 12. Tweets Categorization of @olpproject

Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

The categories mentioned above are also closely tied to with the elements of K-poptification on the @olpproject account which differ from the two previous accounts. The 'others' element is primarily dominated by posts related to “Kawal Pemilu”, Tom Lembong's fan cam, and KPU (General Elections Commission) simulation videos. The fandom or fan club element is the highest element, and when viewed from Bennett's concept of fandom (2014), communication is the most prominent aspect of the account, followed by creativity, organization and civil empowerment, and knowledge. This study also found that there were activities that were classified as political, including invitations and calls to participate in the presidential debate, commentary and analysis on the debates, uploads featuring KPU simulation videos with Tom Lembong and Mutiara Baswedan, and following the election, this account actively mobilized the public to monitor the election results.

Figure 13. Elements of K-popfication of @olpproject



Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

Table 3. Tweets from @olpproject with the highest engagement

Tweets from @olpproject with the highest engagement
1. Olp Project announces his and Anies' arrival in Surabaya 2. Discussing the results of the Cak Imin debate and plans to make a Videotron for Cak Imin 3. Photo of Anies Baswedan checking the schedule and congratulating @aniesbubble on the launch of the haveaniesday.com website (mention @aniesbubble) 4. Cak Imin's Videotron (@olpproject announced that today was the last day of the Cak Imin Videotron screening at Graha Satria Fatmawati. 5. Announcement of LED Videotrons at several points (Makassar, Bandung, Semarang, BSD) 6. Conversation with the audience about whether the @olpproject account will continue to exist after the campaign period 7. Conversation with the audience regarding the Humanities Festival at JIS 8. Rules for attending the Humanities Festival at JIS 9. Announcement of the hashtag on Election Day (#HumaniesTPSDay #1VoteMatters) 10. Posts regarding the manual counting and recap process by volunteers (monitoring the Election) 11. Project Monitor the Election (#HumaniesKawalPemilu)

Source: Primary Research Data (2024)

'K -popfication', Social Media, and Politics: What Can Be Reflected?

Communicators, messages, and communicants are fundamental and interconnected components in the study of communication studies. However, technological advancements have reshaped the meaning and definition, including the definition of communicants, now more commonly referred to as audiences. John Fiske (2010) argues that the basic concept of communication lies in channels, mediums, codes, and feedback. This notion of feedback is

important, considering that in the digital era, technology allows communicants to provide feedback and become more involved in a two-way exchange of information. The issue of feedback has become a focal point in academic discussions, responding to changes in media and communication processes. Ott and Mack (2020) explain that in the past, audiences were viewed merely as 'objects', passive recipients of media content who uncritically accepted, followed, and believed whatever was presented. This perspective was reflected in the communication theories, including the theory of cultivation analysis proposed by George Gebner (1969) and agenda setting proposed by Donald Shaw and McCombs (1972). In contrast, Livingstone (2003) refers to today's audience as 'interactive media users' who are increasingly active in selecting, directing themselves, producing, and consuming texts in the digital era. Zhao (2019) adds that the old concept of perceiving the audience as passive has been replaced by an audience that desires to produce and provide information. This shift in the meaning of the audience can also be found in Jenkins' (2003) work entitled "Quentin Tarantino's Star Wars? Digital Cinema, Media Convergence, and Participatory Culture" in which Jenkins highlights the process of consumption and production of Star Wars fans, such as making remakes, creating content with clips from Star Wars films, and many others. In his article, Jenkins explains that, on the one hand, fans help promote Star Wars and earn income from it. On the other hand, fans must deal with the industry or companies that do not want to lose profits, so the company sets regulations for the audience, including copyright. Overall, digital platforms or media have created a new participatory culture where the audience actively contributes to creative and communication processes. The aspect of communication was shown through making the most of social media platforms and using social media to create and operate K-pop fan accounts-look alike for Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar. Those accounts are not merely 'ordinary' accounts supporting presidential and vice-presidential candidates but has shown creativity by running several activities including creating fandom names, installing Videotron displays, sending coffee trucks, creating hashtags, making videos, and many others. In addition, three accounts studied in this research were functioned to mobilize and to encourage participation in their activities. Moreover, these accounts played important roles in enhancing knowledge about Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar. They operated not only in the online sphere, but also in

the offline sphere. They also attended some Anies and Muhaimin's events. Thus, they were able to get information earlier and shared it to their social media accounts.

Social media has become a pivotal tool in the 2024 Indonesian election. Candidates are 'required' and expected to strategically leverage social media to communicate their visions, programs, and aspirations to gain public support. For example, 'Gemoy' dance (*joget gemoy*) popularized on TikTok and widely embraced by young people, has helped soften Prabowo's image, shifting away from that of as a militant figure. Looking back a few years, it might not have crossed the public's mind to define Prabowo as a gentle and adorable figure. Similarly, the presence of @aniesbubble, along with other accounts, @HaveAniesDay and @olpproject, has given a new 'color' to the dynamics of Indonesian politics. The creators of Anies Bubble said that they were not part of the official campaign teams of Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar. Rather, they voluntarily established and maintained the account. They also said that they do not represent all K-pop fans, it is just that their activities resemble K-pop fans. The influence of K-Pop culture has extended into Indonesian politics, giving rise to what can be termed 'K-popfication' in the political arena. Anies Bubble also reflects what Jenkins (2008, 2003) has explained about convergent culture, participatory culture, and the shift in audience patterns that were previously passive to active. Active audience has contributed to social participation where they, especially young generation have a better understanding of digital platforms and issues such as social justice and social needs (Alonso-López, Bautista, and Apablaza-Campos 2023). The nature of social media platforms that is real-time has made audience become more proactive, easier to respond to political messages, more critical to political communication, and can enhance democratic capabilities (Coleman, Moss, and Martinez-Perez 2018). Fans today are no longer mere consumers of popular culture in virtual and non-virtual spaces; they are deeply involved in political activities and use social media to voice their aspirations. Social media has become a platform for what can be described as the "politicization of fans" or "politicization of K-pop," enabling accounts like Anies Bubble to play a significant role in political events in Indonesia.

Historical perspective that consolidates the vision of mass media as concentrated, passively consumed, and unidirectional in influence has expanded into the new era where more dispersed, participatory, globalized, and peer-to-peer social media (Livingstone 2015).

Therefore, traditional media outlets have experienced platforms in response to the media dynamics and adjustments, including their audience behavior (Nielsen and Fletcher 2023). More interactive users in the present days have altered how audience engagement works: how politicians communicate with public and how public respond to them. By incorporating K-pop elements, these accounts make information about presidential and vice-presidential more relatable, particularly to young audiences. More relatable social media content can influence young voters' attitude towards the candidates (Biswas et al. 2014) as they also have better understanding of opportunities of each social media platform (Alonso-López et al. 2023). Young voters in Indonesia last year constituted 60 percent of total electorate (Prihatini, 2023). In addition to the process of delivering messages, the mobilization and coordination carried out by supporters or fans, online or offline, or from online to offline, is a new chapter in Indonesia's political landscape. The emergence of Anies Bubble underscores the possibility of future unexpected initiatives driven by societal dynamics, political transformation, and technological advancements. Although the campaign by Anies Bubble ended after the result came out, 'K-popfication' still has a potential to be replicated in the future. From this research and other prior research focusing on Anies Bubble, it can be concluded that elements of 'K-popfication' successfully captured public's attention. However, as Anies and Muhaimin did not win the election, it should be examined further about how audience reacted and decided when they were exposed with that kind of campaign. Politicians and supporters of candidates may take into account different approaches of campaign while adapting to the changing social, cultural, and political atmospheres. The phenomenon of Anies Bubble and 'K-popfication' also illustrates how political engagement involves media, culture, and technology interplay.

Conclusion

Technology development has brought significant social changes, including shifts in the relationship between social media and its audience. Traditionally, audiences were perceived as passive consumers who absorbed media-generated content in a one-directional flow. However, this assumption has gradually been disproved with the growth of interactive

media. Today's audiences not only consume content but also actively engage in its production. The emergence of Anies Bubble on X exemplified how audiences now have gained the power to initiate movements that have never existed and were unheard of before. Anies Bubble serves as a platform for disseminating information about the presidential and vice-presidential candidates, Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar, complementing mainstream media narratives. In addition, Anies Bubble has acted as a space for supporters or fans to mobilize and create a forum, interact, discuss, and coordinate. One of the notable examples was their collective call to safeguard the 2024 election (*kawal Pemilu*). What set @aniesbubble apart from other supporters was its portrayal of Anies Baswedan as an idol, like a K-pop artist, and its adoption of activities mirroring those of K-pop fandoms ('K-popfication'). These activities were supported by other accounts and teams, namely @HaveAniesDay and @olpproject. The three accounts incorporated various 'K-popfication' elements, including fandom or fan club structures, fandom identity, fan works, fan art, fan talk, fan meets, fan ships, shipping or ship names, and events like food trucks and coffee trucks. There is also an 'others' category, which contains light interactions and general information, leading to support for Anies Baswedan. Both explicitly and implicitly, the three accounts also convey political messages that indicate the blending of social, political, and cultural dynamics that will continue in the future in various forms or patterns. This study provides a foundation for future research that moves beyond textual analysis (focuses on communicators and communicants) or 'K-popfication', delving into other substantial aspects of such phenomena. Aside from that, future research can also focus on how audience reacted and made decisions during the presidential and vice-presidential election as Anies-Muhaimin did not win the election despite Anies Bubble gained popularity. The relation between campaigns at that time and disinformation during the campaign period can also be examined further to also forecast the dynamics of Indonesian politics and elections in the future.

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