

Podcast As An Affective Democratic Space: Political Framing and Youth Engagement in Mojok.Co's Putcast

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Abstrak

Perluasan media digital telah mengubah cara warga Indonesia terlibat dalam isu-isu politik. Studi ini menganalisis bagaimana *Putcast* Mojok.co berfungsi sebagai ruang demokrasi afektif sekaligus medium pembelajaran politik informal bagi audiens muda. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif yang menggabungkan analisis konten, grounded theory, dan wawancara dengan tim editorial, penelitian ini mengkaji dua episode: “Inaya Wahid: Lengsernya Gus Dur Bikin Trauma Politik Sampai Sekarang” dan “Dimas Oky Nugroho: Mereka Menghancurkan Mimpi Anak Muda Indonesia!” Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Mojok.co secara strategis memanfaatkan humor, satir, dan narasi reflektif untuk membingkai diskusi politik terkait Putusan Mahkamah Konstitusi No. 90/PUU-XXI/2023 dan partisipasi politik kaum muda. Respons audiens di YouTube mengungkap tiga bentuk keterlibatan: pembentukan makna reflektif, pembelajaran afektif-edukatif, dan reinterpretasi kritis-negosiatif terhadap bingkai politik. Dinamika ini menegaskan teori demokrasi digital dan mediatization, yang memposisikan podcast bukan sekadar saluran informasi, melainkan ruang partisipatif bagi diskursus publik. Yang terpenting, penelitian ini menawarkan implikasi praktis bagi pendidikan vokasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa media berbasis podcast dapat diintegrasikan ke dalam kurikulum komunikasi dan produksi media untuk memperkuat kemampuan digital storytelling, literasi politik kritis, serta keterampilan komunikasi afektif-deliberatif yang dibutuhkan dalam industri kreatif kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: podcast Mojok.co, demokrasi afektif, pembedakan politik, partisipasi digital, komunikasi politik

Abstract

The expansion of digital media has reshaped how Indonesian citizens engage with political issues. This study analyzes how Mojok.co's *Putcast* serves as an affective democratic space and an informal medium of political learning for young audiences. Using a qualitative approach that combines content analysis, grounded theory, and interviews with the editorial team, this research examines two episodes: “Inaya Wahid: Lengsernya Gus Dur Bikin Trauma Politik Sampai Sekarang” and “Dimas Oky Nugroho: Mereka Menghancurkan Mimpi Anak Muda Indonesia!” The findings show that Mojok.co strategically uses humor, satire, and reflective narratives to frame political discussions related to the Constitutional Court decision No. 90/PUU-XXI/2023 and youth participation in democracy. Audience responses on YouTube reveal three forms of engagement: reflective meaning-making, affective-educative learning, and critical-negotiative reinterpretation of political frames. These dynamics affirm theories of digital democracy and mediatization, positioning podcasts not merely as information channels but as participatory spaces for public discourse. Importantly, this study offers practical implications for vocational education. The results suggest that podcast-based media can be incorporated into communication and media-production curricula to strengthen students' digital storytelling abilities, critical political literacy, and affective-deliberative communication skills needed in contemporary creative industries.

Keywords: podcast Mojok.co, affective democracy, political framing, digital participation, political communication

1. INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, political communication has undergone a profound transformation, with online platforms serving as key arenas for discourse, opinion formation, and public engagement. Among these platforms, podcasts have emerged as a powerful medium for shaping political narratives and cultivating political awareness (Rae, 2023). Their accessibility and conversational nature enable deeper discussion of political issues,

making podcasts influential in contemporary political communication. This study examines how podcasts contribute to political discourse in Indonesia by analyzing Mojok's content. Mojok's podcast is an influential digital media platform known for its critical yet humorous political approach.

The rise of digital media has reshaped the landscape of political communication, shifting control away from traditional media institutions toward more decentralized and

participatory forms of discourse (J. Wood, 2016; R. Matthews & G. Hodgson, 2023). The popularity of podcasts reflects broader trends in digital media consumption, in which audiences seek content that is both informative and engaging. Unlike broadcast television or print journalism, podcasts provide an intimate and often unfiltered space for discussion, enabling in-depth analysis of political events and trends. Consequently, podcasts have become vital tools for constructing political narratives and cultivating informed citizenship (Sundari, 2022; Marbun, 2023; Fitri & Yutanti, 2024).

Technological advances change how political information is consumed and reshape the nature of political discussion. As an independent outlet, Mojok.co deploys humor and analytical depth to present political issues compellingly. Humor in political communication plays a significant role in framing narratives, shaping public perceptions, and facilitating engagement with complex issues (Tse & Shum, 2022). Historically, humor has served as a critical instrument in political discourse—both a critique tool and a mechanism for public engagement. Satirical and humorous commentary can lower barriers to political talk, making controversial or complex topics more accessible to wider audiences (Wijayanti & Nuraeni, 2020; Rahmawati, 2023; Mello & Sampaio, 2019).

In this context, Mojok.co's use of humor offers a distinctive lens for examining contemporary political discourse in Indonesia, as its satirical and reflective narrative style mirrors the dynamics of social critique in the digital age (Rohim, 2022; Hartanto & Arifianto, 2021). Political communication scholars have long recognized the power of media to shape public perceptions and influence political behavior. Traditional mass media—newspapers, television, and radio—have historically served gatekeeping functions, determining which political issues receive public attention and how those issues are framed (McCombs & Valenzuela, 2021; Firmansyah, 2020).

Digital media, however, have disrupted this model, allowing a wider diversity of voices to participate in political conversation (Sundari, 2022; Masduki & Sudibyo, 2023). Podcasts, in particular, have become significant platforms

for alternative political discourse, enabling independent journalists, commentators, and content creators to challenge dominant narratives and offer more nuanced perspectives on political events (Marbun, 2023; Fitri & Yutanti, 2024; Dobson & Knezevic, 2018). Mojok.co has established itself as a distinctive actor within Indonesia's digital media ecology, renowned for its critical yet engaging approach to political and social issues. Its podcasts—especially those under the Putcast brand—serve as platforms for in-depth discussion of current affairs, policy debates, and political controversies. Unlike mainstream news channels that often privilege formal and fact-driven delivery, Mojok.co's podcasts integrate humor, satire, and cultural references to create content that resonates with younger audiences and politically engaged citizens.

The study focuses on the political debates surrounding the Constitutional Court's decision in Case No. 90/PUU-XXI/2023, which revised the minimum age requirements for presidential and vice-presidential candidates in Law No. 7/2017 on General Elections. This legal change sparked significant public debate because of its direct implications for the eligibility of younger political figures to assume national leadership. In response, Mojok.co produced Putcast episodes on YouTube hosted by Puthut EA—the company's CEO and its so-called "tribe chief." By analyzing two specific episodes—"Inaya Wahid: Lengsernya Gus Dur Bikin Trauma Politik Sampai Sekarang" (29 November 2023) and "Dimas Oky Nugroho: Mereka Menghancurkan Mimpi Anak Muda Indonesia!" (11 December 2023)—this study explores how political issues are framed, how listeners engage with these narratives, and the role of podcasts in shaping political awareness and participation.

The analyzed Putcast episodes illuminate the role of digital media in constructing political narratives and encouraging political engagement. The discussions provide audiences with political insights and stimulate interaction through viewer comments, social-media debates, and participatory discourse. The interactive nature of digital media enables a more dynamic political communication environment in which audiences are not merely passive recipients but

active participants (Fitri & Yutanti, 2024; Siregar, 2022; Nugroho & Sukmono, 2021; Graham et al., 2020; Nasrullah, 2019).

Framing is central to political communication because it determines how the public perceives and interprets issues. Media framing involves selecting aspects of perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicative text to promote problem definitions, causal interpretations, moral evaluations, or treatment recommendations (Entman, 1993; Sobur, 2020). In Mojok.co's podcasts, framing strategies shape public understandings of political events and decisions. By blending humor with critical analysis, the podcast creates frames influencing how listeners process information and engage in political discourse (Rohim, 2022; Nugroho & Sukmono, 2021; Kurniawan & Anisa, 2023). For example, the episode featuring Inaya Wahid explores historical political trauma and its enduring effects on contemporary Indonesian politics.

The podcast frames the discussion by linking past events with present dynamics to emphasize continuity and change in Indonesia's political landscape (Siregar, 2022; Hallahan, 2020). Similarly, the episode featuring Dimas Oky Nugroho critiques political decision-making and its implications for Indonesian youth. This framing positions young political actors as key stakeholders in democratic processes, reinforcing that youth participation is crucial for national progress (Fitri & Yutanti, 2024; McCombs & Valenzuela, 2021). A defining feature of podcasts as tools of political communication is their capacity to foster public engagement. Unlike traditional news media that often operate within hierarchical structures limiting audience interaction, podcasts provide more open and participatory spaces for discussion. Engagement manifests through listener feedback, social-media debate, and direct interaction with podcast hosts (Marbun, 2023; Karunianingsih, 2021; Fitri & Yutanti, 2024). This demonstrates that podcasts are not merely one-way broadcast media but deliberative arenas that strengthen parasocial bonds between hosts and listeners.

Digital platforms such as YouTube amplify this engagement, as audiences can comment, like, and share content—thereby

contributing to the wider dissemination of political discourse (Nugroho & Sukmono, 2021; Ardiyanti, 2020). This participatory character aligns with contemporary theories of digital democracy that emphasize the role of online media in promoting civic engagement and political activism (Dahlberg, 2011; Graham et al., 2020; Nasrullah, 2019). Podcasts facilitate dialogic political communication by enabling two-way communication in which audiences are not merely consumers but active participants in shaping political narratives (Fitri & Yutanti, 2024; Siregar, 2022). Accordingly, this study explores how Mojok.co's Putcast frames political issues through humor and satire in response to significant political events—particularly the Constitutional Court's ruling on age requirements for presidential candidates. By analyzing selected episodes and audience interactions, the study aims to understand the role of podcasts in shaping political narratives and encouraging civic engagement among Indonesians, especially younger demographics (Rohim, 2022; Hartanto & Arifianto, 2021). The research contributes to broader discussions of digital political communication in Indonesia, highlighting the evolving role of alternative media platforms in democratic discourse (Masduki & Sudibyo, 2023; Graham & Wihbey, 2021).

2. METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research design to examine how podcasts as digital media platforms mediate political communication and contribute to the formation of public discourse in Indonesia. A qualitative approach is particularly appropriate because political communication in digital environments is not merely transmitted as information but is constructed, framed, and negotiated through symbols, narratives, and affective expressions (Couldry & Hepp, 2018; Nasrullah, 2019). Unlike quantitative methods that prioritize measurement and frequency, qualitative inquiry enables an in-depth exploration of meaning-making processes, discursive strategies, and contextual dynamics within mediated political content (Miles et al., 2020).

The primary analytical technique employed in this study is qualitative content

analysis, which is used to systematically interpret textual, audio, and visual elements of podcast content. This technique is chosen because it allows researchers to identify patterns of framing, rhetorical strategies, and ideological positioning embedded in political narratives (Siregar, 2022; Nugroho & Sukmono, 2021). Qualitative content analysis is especially suitable for digital political communication studies, where meaning is often conveyed through conversational styles, humor, tone, and narrative sequencing rather than formal political language (Nasrullah, 2019).

Following Sandelowski's (2000) notion of qualitative description, this study prioritizes a close, contextual reading of podcast discourse to capture the complexity of political storytelling in symbol-rich digital environments. This approach avoids excessive abstraction while maintaining analytical rigor, making it particularly relevant for studying podcasts as an emerging and relatively under-theorized form of political media in Indonesia. The objects of analysis consist of two Mojok.co podcast episodes that explicitly engage with political memory, youth politics, and democratic concerns: *"Inaya Wahid: Lengsernya Gus Dur Bikin Trauma Politik Sampai Sekarang"* (29 November 2023) and *"Dimas Oky Nugroho: Mereka Menghancurkan Mimpi Anak Muda Indonesia!"* (11 December 2023). These episodes were selected purposively because they represent critical moments of political reflection and exemplify Mojok.co's editorial style in addressing political issues through informal and affective discourse.

To deepen analytical insight beyond surface-level description, the study integrates a grounded theory approach. Grounded theory is employed to allow theoretical categories and interpretive concepts to emerge inductively from the data rather than being imposed a priori (Millette, 2011; Charmaz, 2020). This approach is particularly relevant for examining podcasts as a relatively new form of political communication, where existing theoretical frameworks may not fully capture their hybrid characteristics as both media texts and participatory spaces. In line with grounded theory principles, data coding and interpretation were conducted iteratively, enabling the

identification of recurring themes related to political framing, affective engagement, and audience positioning. This inductive strategy supports the study's aim to conceptualize how podcasts function as alternative arenas of political communication distinct from conventional mass-media formats.

The grounded analysis is complemented by a media ethnographic perspective, in which the researcher positioned themselves as an observer of Mojok.co's podcast production ecosystem. Media ethnography is employed to contextualize media texts within their production processes and institutional logics, acknowledging that political meanings are shaped not only by content but also by editorial decisions and organizational cultures (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

To strengthen analytical validity, the study incorporates in-depth interviews with key Mojok.co editorial actors: Agung Purwandono (Editor-in-Chief) and Purnawan S. Adi (Assignment Editor). Two rounds of interviews were conducted. The first interview was exploratory, aiming to understand the general editorial orientation and political positioning of Mojok.co's podcast initiatives. The second interview was semi-structured and focused more specifically on framing strategies, audience engagement considerations, and editorial decision-making in political content production. Interviews serve as a form of methodological triangulation, enabling cross-verification between textual analysis and production-side perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Siregar, 2022). This triangulation helps ensure that interpretations of podcast discourse are grounded not only in textual readings but also in the institutional and professional rationales underlying content creation.

Finally, the study adopts a multimodal analytical framework by examining textual, audio, and visual dimensions of the podcast episodes. This approach is justified by the inherently multimodal nature of podcasts distributed via digital platforms, where meaning is produced through voice intonation, conversational rhythm, facial expressions (in video formats), and visual framing, in addition to spoken language (Fitri & Yutanti, 2024; Kurniawan & Anisa, 2023). By analyzing these

modalities together, the study is able to uncover how political discourse is structured rhetorically, how hosts and guests negotiate authority and intimacy, and how interactive political discussion is performed in a platformized media environment. This multimodal reading enables a more comprehensive understanding of digital political discourse and its broader socio-political implications in contemporary Indonesia (Masduki & Sudibyo, 2023; Sang et al., 2023; Nugroho & Sukmono, 2021).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

New Media and Political Digital Space

The lens of new media, specifically political podcasts on the digitalisation of political debate online (Rae, 2023; Couldry & Hepp, 2018) is engaged here. The expansion of this culture has been in part thanks to the meteoric rise of podcasts, a popular and relatively new form of downloadable and online content which was first introduced in the early 2000s (Sang et al., 2023; Fitri & Yutanti, 2024) allowing listeners to connect with audio that is being broadcasted by professionals, as well as radio stations and amateurs. In the U.S., some 73 million people listened to a podcast in the last month, and on average, listeners consume seven podcasts a week (Edison Research, 2018). It has seen brisk growth in Indonesia. One year after its second ranking globally in 2021 (Pahlevi, 2022), Indonesia has the highest podcast penetration rate of any country worldwide: 42.5% of internet users aged 16–64 follow podcasts (GoodStats, 2025). This underlines the role of podcasts in defining the new media landscape and further developing the digital public sphere (Nugroho & Sukmono, 2021; Masduki & Sudibyo, 2023). Production has also evolved: video-podcasting on YouTube integrates visualization and audio narration to improve the audience experience (Kurniawan & Anisa, 2023; Nugroho & Sukmono, 2021). This is consistent with research published in which shows that Indonesian audiences have long negotiated social meanings through audio-based media, including online music and song lyrics (Laksono & Widiarti, 2020; Hamdani & Suranto, 2020). This tradition of *reflective listening* has enabled Mojok.co's podcast to

gain momentum as a political dialogic medium that not only disseminates information but also provides an affective space through which the public can process political memory, emotional experiences, and social anxieties.

This paper examines how platforms such as Mojok. And co-creating unique dialogic spaces, educating public engagement, and enabling creative interactions on the engagement creators (Fitri & Yutanti, 2024; Sang et al., 2023). New media such as the internet, social media, and podcasts have drastically changed how information is delivered and how people get the info (Rodino-Colocino et al., 2021; Masduki & Sudibyo, 2023). They even transform the social and political interaction, such as how the cyber realm becomes a platform for political discussion (Couldry & Hepp, 2017; Rahmawati, 2023). The sharpness of politics used to be seen through hard news and talk shows, but has turned into peer-chummy talks in digital spaces by the arrangement of cultural digital influencers (Abidin, 2018; Siregar, 2022). Political news producers are no longer confined to the mass media, and in digital spaces, "everyday people" increasingly assert their own power (Mangiò & Di Domenico, 2022; Hartanto & Arifianto, 2021).

New media stress participation and interaction. Podcasting is interactive, and listeners are involved because it's on-demand media. They form dynamic contexts where individual engagement can transform political information flows, enabling listeners to express their opinions, give feedback, and have direct contact with creators (Rae, 2023; Siregar, 2022; Kurniawan & Anisa, 2023). Body of Cross-National Evidence: Previous Patriotism/honor findings 3 (continues) research indicates that exposure to news podcasts is positively associated with online and offline political participation and that discussion provides a mediating function. Other researchers also emphasize the role of podcasts in constructing political identity and extending the capabilities of participatory public discourse (Johnson, 2025).

Political Engagement on Digital Media Platforms

In current shifts of political communication, new media have become central to how citizens engage with politics, participate in politics, and make sense of politics. The application of new-media theory is necessary to address how digital media, such as podcasts, are not only channels for information but discursive arenas that prompt dialogue and the exchange of ideas among active citizens in the democratic process (Couldry & Hepp, 2018; Sang, Park & Kim, 2023). New media open up two-way communication models, in which the audiences are treated as prosumers, transforming political communication from 'top-down' to interactive and participatory paradigms (Masduki & Sudibyo, 2023; Nugroho & Sukmono, 2021).

Podcasts occupy a unique way by merging the personalization, emotional intimacy, and narrative liberation that are hard to find in conventional media (Rae, 2023; Fitri & Yutanti, 2024). Podcasts allow citizens to fill in during political conversation reflectively and contextually through conversational, fluid formats and easy access on demand. Cross-national research demonstrates that political podcasts have fostered political knowledge and participation — particularly among young people— by providing informal yet critical public spheres (Sang, Park, & Kim 2026; Johnson 2028).

New media also help create plural and fluid digital public spheres in which political topics are negotiated openly by a direct relationship between producers and users. This extends the principle of participatory democracy, in which digital media has expanded representation and participation in everyday politics (Arendt et al., 2023; Eveland et al., 2023). Thus, a study on digital political discussion needs to account for new media dynamics' role in political communication practices and their implications for issue framing and more deliberative public engagement (Rahmawati, 2023; Siregar, 2022). In this light, Putcast Mojok. co is not just fun and games but a mini politics-agora that boosts awareness, discourse, and citizen engagement. Podcasts can serve as a means of listenership, too. Listening in digital politics is not merely about empowering or amplifying previously marginalized voices, but presumes a duty of

citizens and institutions actually to listen, in full seriousness, to political voices being raised in relation to digital publics (Dobson 2014; Arendt et al.2023). Digital media, notably podcasts, function as new deliberative venues for the generation and consumption of political talk in a participatory way (Rae, 2023; Sang et al., 2023). Podcasts are speech-oriented public spheres where multiple voices can be heard and engaged, critiquing power factions and state policies as an alternative arena for counterpublics (Fraser, 1990; Masduki & Sudibyo, 2023). In Indonesia, Putcast Mojok. co discuss how humor, satire, and reflective speech expand "political listening" in digital publics where civil society responds to institutional talk back (Rahmawati, 2023; Fitri & Yutanti, 2024). Thus, listening is an act of political subversion, a defiance of power relations that makes room for multiple voices (Bickford 1996; Johnson 2025).

Podcasts may be without extensive studio facilities or public/commercial broadcasting experience. In the contemporary digital media ecosphere, this low barrier to production means that podcasting is a democratic form of media practice where just about anyone can contribute and broadcast (Millette 2011; Markman 2015). (embedded) In a relatively open digital economy, podcasts foster symmetrical interactivity, enabling the public to create, share, and discuss content independently and without institutional barriers (Rae 2023; Nugroho & Sukmono 2021). While professionalism and crossmedia have expanded (Baioill, 2008; Kurniawan & Anisa, 2023), improvisation and spontaneity are central to podcast culture – a quality that allows informal dialogic communication, at times subversive (Sullivan, 2019; Masduki& Sudibyo, 2023). The informal, laid back and open style of speech — often peppered with humor -- has increasingly defined the genre, cementing an intimate relationship between host and listener that is now part of routine listening (Bloom & Reenen, 2021; Fitri & Yutanti, 2024) but also acting as a means of crossing cultural bridges and cultivating political empathy (Rahmawati, 2023; Sang Park et al., 2023). As such, new-media theory applied to digital politicisism must attentively consider the role of podcasts in brokering and enabling conversation through

modes of intimacy and co-reflection that foster cognitive and affective encounters (Rae, 2023; Schlütz, 2022).

In Indonesia, studies indicate that political podcasts on YouTube/Spotify adopt framing patterns, articulate argumentation, and take advantage of colloquial tones for youth, which then encourage engagement and participation (Kurniawan & Anisa, 2023; Nugroho & Sukmono, 2021). More than access, new media generate spaces for participation where the relations between creator–listener are flattened with user comments, sharing, and calls to action—transforming political communication from one-way into deliberative two-way (Fitri & Yutanti, 2024; Siregar, 2022). For a national degree, consumption of news podcasts is beneficially related to online and offline political participation—channeling the relationship through online discussion - highlighting podcasts as a digital public sphere enlarging citizenship practice (Sang, Park, & Kim, 2023). Consistent findings are also supported by egalitarian/demotic convictions in the digital public sphere that speech preterit "should be similar and/or closer to conversational style/host-listener-so on rapporti, as well as telling "everyday" sound stories which encourage participation beyond mainstream media (Bloom & Reenen, 2021; Rae, 2023). Furthermore, the findings regarding Mojok.co's audience engagement—particularly through YouTube comments and discursive participation—reinforce evidence that audio media holds substantial political potential among young voters. Firmansyah and Disyacitta (2024) demonstrate that political audio content, such as election jingles, can heighten Gen Z's voting awareness, even when disseminated through visually oriented platforms like Instagram. If a brief political jingle is able to influence political awareness, then podcasts—which offer deeper dialogic and narrative structures—naturally provide a broader space for the development of reflective political consciousness. Consequently, Mojok.co's Putcast operates not merely as political entertainment but as a *long-form political literacy tool* that aligns closely with young audiences' contemporary media consumption patterns.

Global consumption is on the rise: half of U.S. adults have listened to a podcast in the past year "to learn something, be entertained, or 'for company while multitasking,'" underscoring on-demand audio's broad appeal (Pew Research Center 2023; The Infinite Dial 2024). In Indonesia, Sinta-indexed researches connect youth adoption with political/community involvement, emphasizing flexibility for reality information and discussion (Nugroho & Sukmono, 2021; Fitri & Yutanti, 2024). According to the frequently quoted market data, Indonesia was ranked second in the world in Q3 2021 (35.6% of internet users aged 16–64 were podcast listeners; Pahlevi, 2022). The popularity of podcasts in Indonesia is also a signal of changes to public communication online. Podcasts serve as alternative discursive spaces to address the political, social, and cultural issues, such as poverty, often sidelined in mainstream media (Simanjuntak, 2025; Sompotan & Alvin, 2023). Many Indonesian podcast hosts — independent journalists and content creators — share in-depth political analysis with light-hearted banter (Prasetyo & Hidayat, 2022). Programs like Total Politik or Endgame with Gita Wirjawan can show how those conversational styles cater to the cross-generations and foster digital discourse among youths (Nugroho & Sukmono, 2021). The popularity is driven by its ease of access, flexibility, and growing connectivity (Pandusaputri et al., 2024; Rahmawati, 2023). On-demand formats support flexible urban living and the democratization of production: anyone from a student to a public figure can become a discursive producer (Masduki & Sudibyo, 2023).

Framing Political Issues in Podcasts

Framing is a core political communication process, influencing how people perceive and interpret phenomena. Traditionally, Framing does not invent reality; rather, it pulls elements of reality to the forefront for problem definition, causal interpretation (Entman 1993; Schneider and Ingram 1993), moral judgment (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007b), or even treatment endorsement (Niederdeppe et al., in press). With digital audio, a recent study has found that podcasts not only serve as an opinion conduit

but also serve to actively construct frames through choice of topics, guest viewpoint, speaking styles, and the overall design of the episode, which shapes audience comprehension (Zhao, 2024; Sang et al., 2023). Reasons to listen to others' news podcasts, information-based (convenience), companionship (social support), or task-situated reasons are also connected with how frames are established, and they alter frames. Framing has been related to political activity. Frateczak et al 180 were in-tern for an action item. Does Ad Ladling For News. Political podcasts on YouTube/Spotify, Indonesia deploy Framing to organize arguments and evidence, and mix humor with critical analysis to provide mundane access to complex content especially among the youth (Kurniawan & Anisa, 2023; Rohim, 2022). This is consistent with scholarly international work on podcasts as intimate, participatory conversational publics; host-listener interaction's intimacy and casual style supports frame reception and deliberation (Sharon, 2023). Thus, Mojok. co's podcast is a space for frame production: humorous critique that highlights problem definition, causal relationship, and moral evaluation, but also opens up room for the audience to process information and engage in acting. Framing is not only the monopoly of mainstream media. Still, it can also be propagated by independent creators in Indonesia through podcasts, who form opinions on political issues constructed for personal or independent use according to how they view reality (Zhao, 2024; Kurniawan & Anisa, 2023).

DISCUSSION

Podcasts and Political Communication

One key characteristic of podcasts as a form of political communication is their potential to mobilize the public. In contrast to the hierarchical nature of traditional news forms, podcasts have sparked conversations and interrelationships in which users not only bring comments but can also like, share, and dialogue with producers at a cross-platform level (Arone & Putra, 2024; Sompotan & Alvin, 2023). Evidence from Mojok. co's production reveals calculated orientation to YouTube and social media (aimed at the 17–35 demo) ensuring interaction and algorithms would spread around

elections: Team organized video-social, prioritizing political topics; mapped issue moments so "grade-A" episodes could produce spikes in views and comments (e.g., FX Rudy episode reported by team as nearing one million views) prompting broader public conversation. This is consistent with cross-national evidence in which listening to news podcasts is negatively related to both online/offline political participation, and the negative effect on both political activities through the mediator of online discussion (Sang, Park & Kim, 23). At the content level, conversational storytelling and host–guest–listener intimacy perform two-way communication: listeners consume and co-create meaning through feedback (commentaries, debates across platforms) on matters of public knowledge—scholars' takes. The episode with Inaya Wahid reflectively mediates historical political trauma, and provokes affective reverberation of this mode among audience responses; that with Dimas Oky critiques decision making and emphasizes the role of youth as democratic actors—both are tropes circulated by comments/shares, extending discourse beyond the video.

Figure 1: screenshot of Inaya Wahid's podcast in mojokdotco



Strategically, common political themes throughout episodes acclimate YouTube's algorithm to show Mojok in recommendations. Content for politically interested visitors generated an engagement loop (watch–comment–share–rewatch). Therefore, podcast + YouTube constitute a dialogic digital public sphere: offering interaction affordances for political dissemination; enacting egalitarian participation (listeners as meaning co-producers); and exploiting algorithmic

architectures to reach wider audience locally déployant[?] tenets of digital democracy (Arone & Putra, 2024; Sang et al., 2023; Sompotan & Alvin, 2023).

Podcast as Political Medium and Public Access

Accessibility on demand is key to how podcasts function politically as communication. Unlike appointment-based television or time-constrained print, podcasts can be taken in at any time, any place: during work, while on the road, when people are multitasking, and without compromising content-rich political discourse (Rae 2023; Sang et al., 2023). This flexibility suits digital life rhythms (especially for young people using mobile-based audio) (Bloom & Reenen, 2021). Other editorial interviews state that cross-platform promotion –particularly, YouTube and Spotify– targets the age 17-35 bracket. The "flexible, listen-anywhere, non-time-binding" format is a conscious attempt to "bring political talk into everyday life," rendering what were once "very heavy" topics understandable and portable.

The long-form structure allows deeper analysis than mainstream shows: it has permitted reflection on New Order trauma and democratic legacies (Inaya Wahid); crisis of trust and aspiration amongst the youth, with either an informal or critical but otherwise bridge between elite and public discourse tone. Structurally, by accommodating on-demand access, episodes gain a temporal/sociopolitical reach that extends far beyond the release date: re-watching older content occurs in association with election cycles and judicial about to come up because it is relevant, findings confirming podcasts' role as long-form records for consideration and political experience. Research from Indonesia backs this up: longer-form political podcasts on YouTube extend attention and retention to complex issues (Kurniawan & Anisa, 2023); the flexibility of time/space is a major draw for young people into the world of podcasts and political literacy in general (Arone & Putra, 2024). More generally, technological accessibility breeds discursive accessibility (Mojok.). co uses cross-platform design to incorporate political discussion into common public conversation, consistent with digital democracy's inclusive

philosophy (Sompotan & Alvin, 2023; Sang et al., 2023).

Figure 2: screenshot of Inaya Wahid's podcast in mojkdotco



Mojok. co's Podcast as Affective Democratic Publics and Youth Political Pedagogy

Mojok.co-core in addition to combining accessibility and depth/intimacy as a public communication strategy. Its interviews suggest the podcast is meant to "invite thinking rather than preach"; it leverages platform algorithms to reach young people. From these two formats—Podcast Mojok (with grade-A public intellectuals, and young politicians) and Langkah Kuda (informal in-house talk)—emerge double registers formal-intellectual and informal-popular that meet each other.

The Inaya Wahid episode reveals New Order trauma and the condition of susceptibility and how people are prone to be decontextualized by the state; the Dimas Oky episode discusses structural inequality, social fragmentation (translating problems such as gaps in capital ownership, participation crises) into conversational themes with analytical depth preserved. This supports Rae's (2023) contention that podcasting constructs a participatory listening environment, and Bloom & Reenen's (2021) assertion that acoustic intimacy generates trust in political stories. This study reveals that Mojok.co's Podcast constitutes a space of affective democracy, characterized by the convergence of casual communicative practices and substantive political discourse. Consistent with the study by Nurhaliza and Anggraini (2024), which posits podcasts as potent mediums for cultivating emotional engagement, this podcast effectively amalgamates educative and entertaining elements. This synergy is evident

in Mojok.co's strategic use of reflective dialogue, punctuated by humor and satire, to reframe contemporary political events.



Figure 2: screenshot of Dimas Oky Nugroho's podcast in mojokdotco

Interviews further demonstrate how Mojok knows about YouTube's algorithm-based infrastructures (topic coherence, upload frequency), by which alternative political speech scales through the recommendation system (Sang et al., 2023). In Yogyakarta, for instance, Mojok represents decentralized digital political communication: stories from the margin can compete with mainstream dominance (Sompotan & Alvin, 2023).

The results also strengthen the concept of *affective publics* within Indonesia's digital media ecology. Setyorini's (2024) reception study of the song "Runtuh" shows that Indonesian listeners build emotional connectedness with audio content through personal, reflective, and empathetic interpretive practices. A similar mechanism is evident among Putcast Mojok.co's listeners, particularly when responding to narratives of political trauma shared by Inaya Wahid or the structural frustrations articulated by Dimas Oky. Audio—whether musical or long-form conversational—invites an emotional mode of engagement that is largely absent in static visual texts. Accordingly, Mojok.co's podcast underscores the role of audio as a medium of *affective democracy* that bridges emotional experience with public political consciousness.

Moreover, the findings indicate that podcasts function as an alternative democratic medium that complements prior scholarship on Indonesia's digital audio spaces. Laksono and Widiarti (2020) emphasize that online music platforms such as YK.WKND.GIGS cultivate dialogic communities that facilitate cultural expression and social interaction. A similar phenomenon occurs in Mojok.co's Putcast, although directed toward the promotion of political literacy and deliberative engagement. By blending humor, ethnographic storytelling, and policy critique, the podcast constructs an *audio-based digital public sphere* that enables the circulation of political ideas in an accessible and egalitarian format. This reinforces the understanding that audio is not merely an extension of mass media, but a medium capable of generating counterpublics and expanding the horizons of digital democracy.

The Role of Mojok.co in Digital Political Discourse

Findings highlight Mojok.co's different range of themes (policy, elections, human rights, global politics) and informal-but-informative approach to translate complex topics into something you can easily understand (Kurniawan & Anisa, 2023; Rae, 2023; Bloom & Reenen, 2021; Rosah, 2022). The conversational style and comic humour privilege a kind of demotic voice where ordinary language renegotiates an otherwise elitist politics (Turner, 2010; Kusumadinata et al., 2023). The conversation among the audience is apparent in the discussions and arguments illustrated on Mojok's YouTube and social channels, reinforcing this podcast as a deliberative public sphere in digital life (Habermas, 2006; Sompotan & Alvin, 2023). Stories show valuable engagement in three ways: Reflective: Active participation by contributing with your own political reasoning (e.g., dynastic politics and leadership competence); Affective-educative: Sharing what you learned/evidence of empathy ("I'd never thought about that before..."); Critical-negotiative: By challenging counter-narratives to the podcasters' sympathetic Framing. These frequencies establish that Mojok.co serves as an effective democracy space where young users express emotional and critical posts—

contrary to top-down mainstream communication. Moreover, the podcast's informal and egalitarian mode of communication resonates with the observations of Sari and Handayani (2024) regarding the transformative impact of new media in normalizing informal communication styles among digital creators.

This phenomenon elucidates the transition of Putcast Mojok.co's audience from passive recipients to active interlocutors in digital political conversations. Their participation, manifested through interactive comment sections and social media platforms, underscores the evolving role of new media as a vital deliberative and collaborative arena for Indonesia's younger public. Taken together, the results of content analysis and interviews show concrete influence on public opinion formation in line with previous research that news-podcast consumption increases political awareness and civic engagement (Sang et al., 2023), whilst having various perspectives presented proves credibility and trust (Fitri & Yutanti, 2024).

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Mojok.co's Putcast operates as an effective and culturally resonant form of digital political communication for young Indonesian audiences. The podcast's informal, affective, and dialogic style enables it to function as a participatory space where political issues are interpreted, negotiated, and emotionally processed outside traditional institutional channels. These dynamics reinforce contemporary perspectives on digital democracy and mediatization by showing how locally rooted alternative media can expand civic engagement and reconfigure relationships between media, politics, and society.

The findings carry several implications for scholarship and practice. Conceptually, the study advances digital political communication theory by positioning podcasts as emerging arenas for affective and deliberative publics. Practically, the results encourage media producers and institutions to adopt storytelling approaches that emphasize empathy, humor, and reflective narration to strengthen political literacy and audience engagement. Future research may explore comparative analyses

across different podcast genres, examine longitudinal audience participation, or investigate how podcast-based political communication interacts with algorithmic platforms and other forms of digital publics in Indonesia.

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