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Polarization Politics: An Analysis of Opinion Formation and Conflict Resolution in Elections

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Abstract

This research discusses how political polarization has become a hot topic of conversation and is increasingly important in the context of modern society today, the author's focus on this research also emphasizes more on the analysis of opinion formation and conflict resolution in elections. This study aims to analyze and identify how political polarization is influential so that it can have an impact on social life and examine a solution to minimize the adverse effects of political polarization that triggers conflict between community groups or between other parties who have different political views from a group. The research method used is a quantitative approach. The quantitative approach is used to analyze survey data that involves broad participation from various layers of society. The 2024 General Election presents a significant decline in tolerance due to differences in opinion, with social media becoming the main arena for political polarization and black campaigns. Candidates' vision and mission programs are also a point of political polarization, which can negatively influence public opinion. Political polarization significantly affects public opinion. This phenomenon creates divisions in society and disrupts the democratic process as a whole. Nonetheless, efforts to overcome political polarization can be made through a holistic approach involving political education, social media regulation, and a deep understanding of socio-political dynamics. Such measures are expected to strengthen democratic values and diversity in Indonesian society.

Keywords

Government, Public, Polarization, Politics, Society

Introduction

Through the internet and social media, political polarization is reflected in biased news coverage. This leads to disagreements between groups with different political views. For example, on social media, support for a particular candidate is expressed through the use of hashtags, often followed by aggressive campaigning and rhetoric in favor of that candidate. In political campaigns, social media has become a key tool for candidates and political parties to spread campaign messages and attract voters. However, the use of social media is also vulnerable to the spread of false information or hoaxes, which are often used as a black campaign strategy to bring down political opponents. This has resulted in a deepening polarization between the supporters of each candidate pair, as well as creating distrust of information conveyed through social media.

During the campaign period, political polarization in social media can create an atmosphere that is not conducive and disruptive to the democratization process. Black campaigns and personal attacks on candidates not of each camp's choice often occur, which can increase polarization and undermine the overall electoral process. Public opinion of each candidate is affected by smear campaigns and negative rhetoric. Political polarization in social media also affects people's perception of the vision and mission programs offered by each candidate pair. Different programs can be a source of polarization in society, with each camp viewing the programs from a different perspective. Debates about the policies proposed by candidate pairs can deepen political polarization and complicate the process of forming objective and fact-based public opinion.

From the problems described above, it can be seen that in a political era characterized by polarization, there is a significant challenge related to the formation of public opinion and strategies in dealing with conflict in general elections. Political polarization has a major impact on the way people or individuals form opinions related to political issues which are certainly influenced by various factors.

Therefore, this article aims to analyze and identify how political polarization is influential so that it has an impact on people's lives and presents a solution as well as minimizing the adverse effects of political polarization that can trigger conflicts between community groups or between parties that have different political views with a group. In addition, this article also aims to add insight for readers so that it is expected to provide a more holistic understanding of current political dynamics.

Methodology

This research discusses political polarization, which has become a hot topic of conversation and is increasingly important in the context of today's modern society. The research conducted by the author emphasizes more on the analysis of opinion formation and conflict resolution in elections. This study aims to analyze and identify how political polarization is influential so that it can have an impact on social life and examine a solution to minimize the adverse effects of political polarization that triggers conflict between community groups or between other parties who have different political views from a group. The research method used is a combination research method with qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative approach is used to understand individual perceptions and attitudes towards controversial political issues, while the quantitative method is used to analyze survey data that involves broad participation from various layers of society. The 2024 General Election saw a significant decrease in tolerance due to dissent, with social media becoming the main arena for political polarization and smear campaigns. Candidates' vision and mission programs are also a point of political polarization, which can negatively influence public opinion. Political polarization is significant in influencing public opinion, blaming candidates who are not of their choice, and spreading fake news. This phenomenon creates divisions in society and disrupts the democratic process as a whole. Nonetheless, efforts to overcome political polarization can be made through a holistic approach involving political education, social media regulation, and a deep understanding of socio-political dynamics. Such measures are expected to strengthen democratic values and diversity in Indonesian society.

Results and Discussions

Political Polarization Affects the Formation of Public Opinion in Today's Society

Politics is basically a phenomenon related to humans who always live in a society where humans are social creatures who always live dynamically and develop. Based on this, politics is a symptom that embodies the human self in the context of its development process (Nambo, Abdulkadir and Puluhuluwa, 2005). However, in the scope of society related to politics, polarization often occurs, so the term political polarization was born.

Political polarization is a division of society, where society is divided into several camps and refers to tensions between groups with opposing or different political views. Political polarization is a serious challenge in the dynamics of public opinion formation. The reason is that political polarization is not just talking about differences of opinion but also creating deep gaps between conflicting groups and different ideas.

This political polarization can lead to the formation of public opinion. Public opinion is defined as an activity of political communication. Opinion is an expression about a group of people regarding an issue while the public itself is defined as a group of people who have the same interests and who are attached or affected by it (Putri, 2020) so that political polarization can form a group or individual will certainly prefer to join groups that are in line with the same thoughts and viewpoints and tend to ignore groups that contain different opinions and are not in line with their political views.

As a complex socio-political phenomenon, political polarization has become an integral part of modern political systems, especially in the current democratic context. In Indonesia, the increase in political polarization in recent years, especially related to issues discussed by political academics, challenges the stability of democracy. Indonesian history records political polarization between Islamists, Nationalists, and Communists, which came to the fore again in the 2014 Presidential and Vice Presidential Elections, giving rise to political rivalries and conflicts in the democratic process (Fernando et al., 2022).

Public opinion is a democracy and freedom of opinion. Freedom of expression is enshrined in article 28E of the 1945 Constitution. As for article 28e (3) of the 1946 Constitution, everyone has the right to freedom to associate, assemble, and express opinions. However, public opinion in the midst of political polarization can lead to most conflict because of such differences.

In 2014, Joko Widodo and Prabaowo Subianto ran for the presidency of the Republic of Indonesia, and campaigning was intense and hard-hitting during the 2014 Presidential and Vice Presidential elections, in which Jokowi, backed by the PDI-P, and Prabowo Subianto, a former General from President Soeharto's established regime, competed. In the 2017 DKI Jakarta Governor election there was a sharper polarization. There was a group that supported Joko Widodo and Ahok (Basuki Cahaya Purnama) and an opposing group that opposed Joko Widodo and Ahok. The map that was initially better in 2014 resurfaced in 2017 and did not stop until political polarization continued in the 2019 Presidential and Vice Presidential elections. However, although the political battle between Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto ended with Joko Widodo's victory, political polarization continued (Fernando et al., 2022). The real impact today is that the elected President is still being bullied, even though the Presidential Election has ended because they consider that the elected President is not the President of all citizens (Usa, 2023).

In 2024, Indonesia again held a people's democratic party or what we often hear as General Elections (Pemilu), in this election people are free to choose their choices according to their conscience. In the implementation of the 2024 elections, 3 candidates were appointed, each of which was carried by several political parties. The first candidate is Anis Rasyid Baswedan and his vice

presidential candidate Muhaimin Iskandar, who is supported by 3 parties, namely Nasdem, PKB and PKS by carrying out a coalition of change. In candidate number two, Prabowo Subianto returns as a presidential candidate but with a different representative, namely Joko Widodo's first son (Gibran Rakabuming Raka) who is supported by the Gerindra party, Golkar, Democrat, PAN, and non-parliamentary parties supported by PSI, PBB, Garuda Party, Bulan Bintang and Gelora which carry the Indonesia Maju coalition. Meanwhile, at number three, there are Ganjar Pranowo and Mahfud MD who are supported by the PDI-P, PPP, Perindo and Hanura parties.

During the 2024 elections, there is political polarization that contains a lot of public opinion. In the context of the 2024 elections, there is a decrease in tolerance due to significant differences in opinion, it is clear that there are three camps that put forward their opinions and influence each other and even attack and find fault with each candidate camp.

Internet media has a central role in shaping public opinion regarding the election in 2024. However, political polarization is reflected in news coverage that tends to be biased, leading to disagreement between different groups. Social media has a major influence on various aspects of the electoral process, as candidates and political parties rely on social media as the main tool to spread campaign messages, as well as attract voters through engaging videos, graphics and text uploaded on social media. Social media can respond quickly to crises or controversies in campaigns. Controversial issues can go viral quickly, providing additional challenges for candidates to manage their image online (Nuraliza et al., 2024).

Based on the data from the survey results that have been conducted to determine public opinion on political polarization in 2024, 81 out of 100 respondents have answered the research survey.

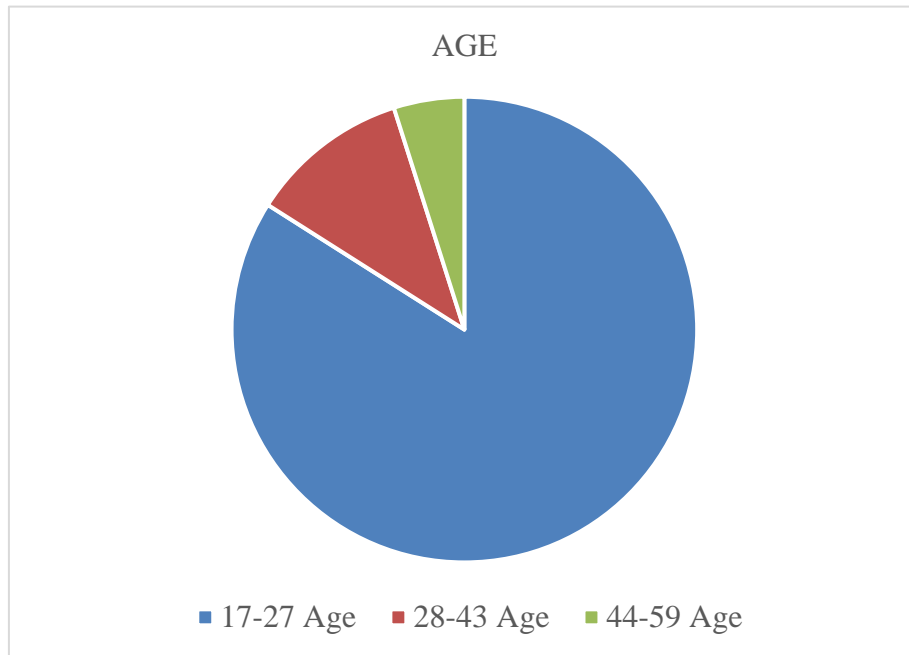


Figure 1. Survey by age

(Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

This study was dominated by ages 17-27 years with a percentage of 84%, 28-43 years as much as 11.1% and 44-59 years as much as 4.9%.

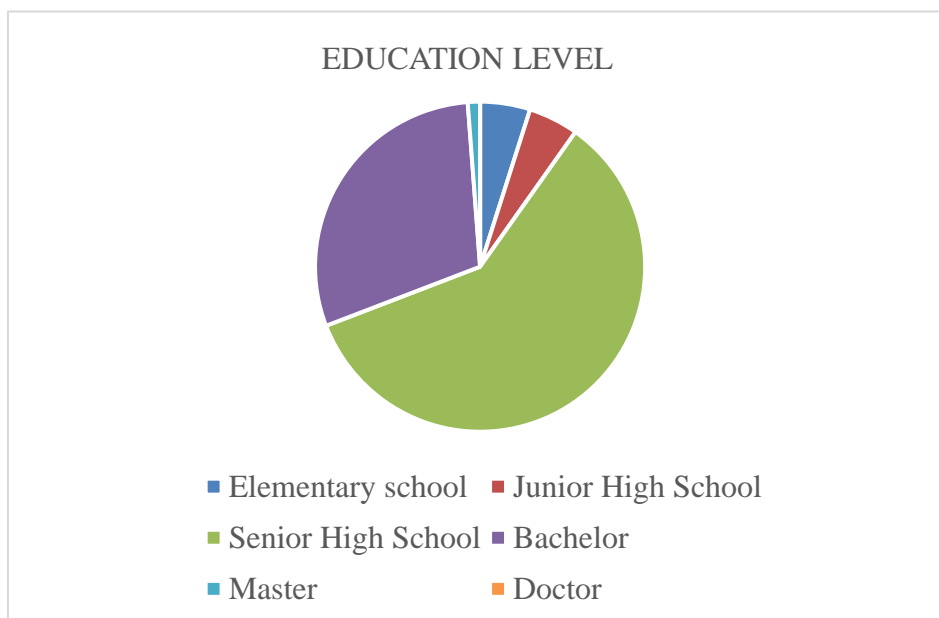


Figure 2. Survey by education level

(Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

The education level of the respondents in this study was 4.9% elementary school graduates, 4.9% junior high school graduates, 59.3% senior high school graduates, 29.6% bachelor's degree, and 1.2% master's degree.

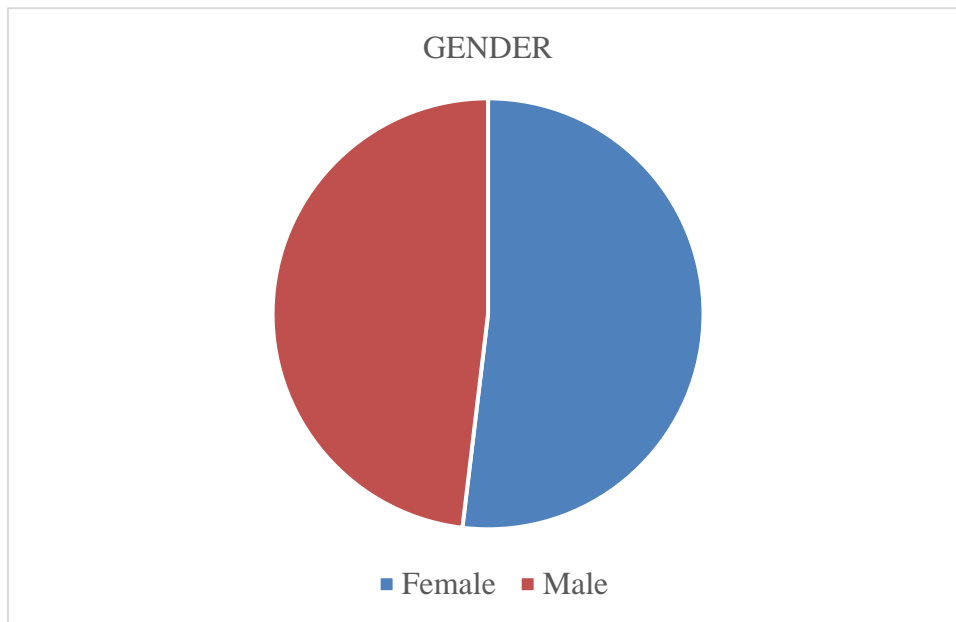


Figure 3. Survey by gender

(Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

With 81 respondents who filled out the research questionnaire with different genders, there were 51.9% women and 48.1% men.

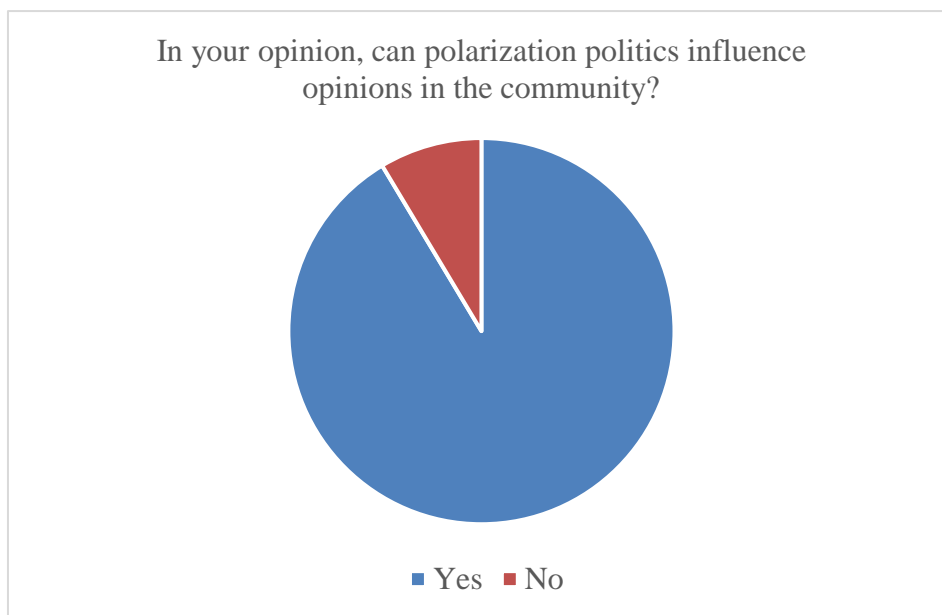


Figure 4. Survey about knowledge of political polarization
(Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

Respondents answered that 50.6% of respondents previously knew about political polarization and the remaining 49.4% did not previously know about political polarization.

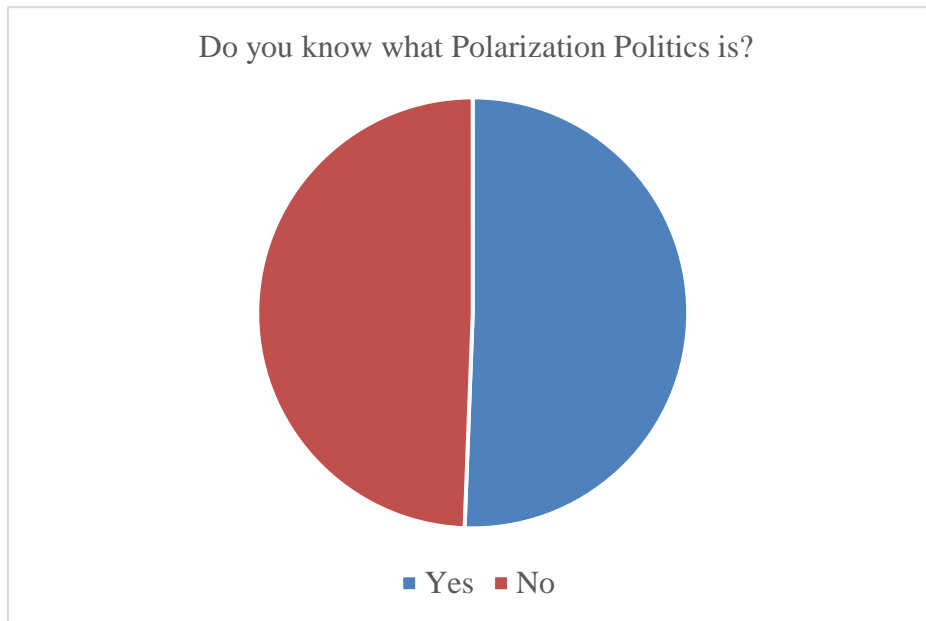


Figure 5. Survey about political polarization can influence opinions among the public in an election situation (Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

A total of 91.4% of respondents agreed that political polarization can influence opinions among the public in an election situation.

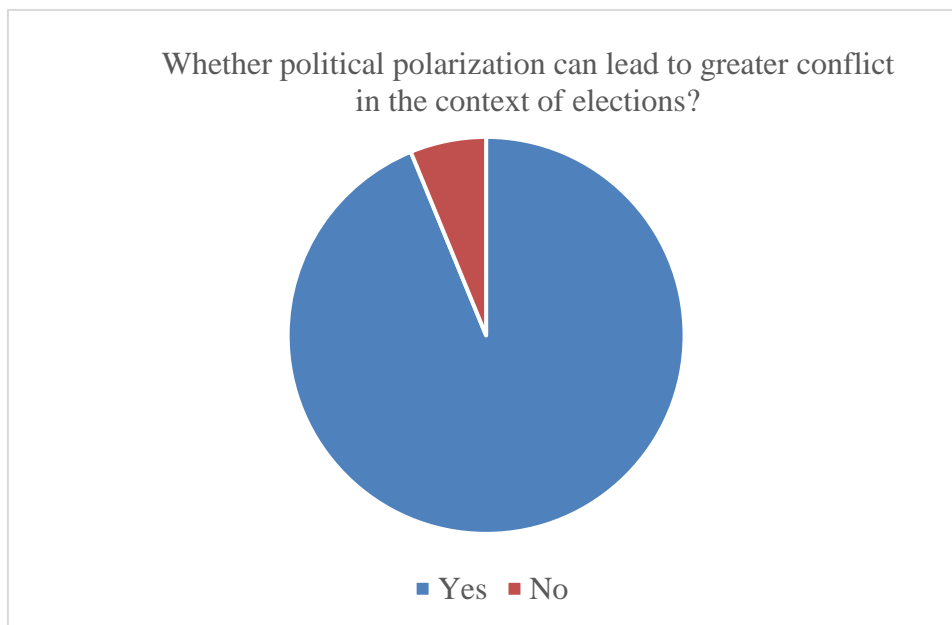


Figure 6. Survey about political polarization can lead to greater conflict (Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

Respondents in this study agreed that political polarization can lead to greater conflict in the context of elections with 93.8% and 6.2% disagreeing.

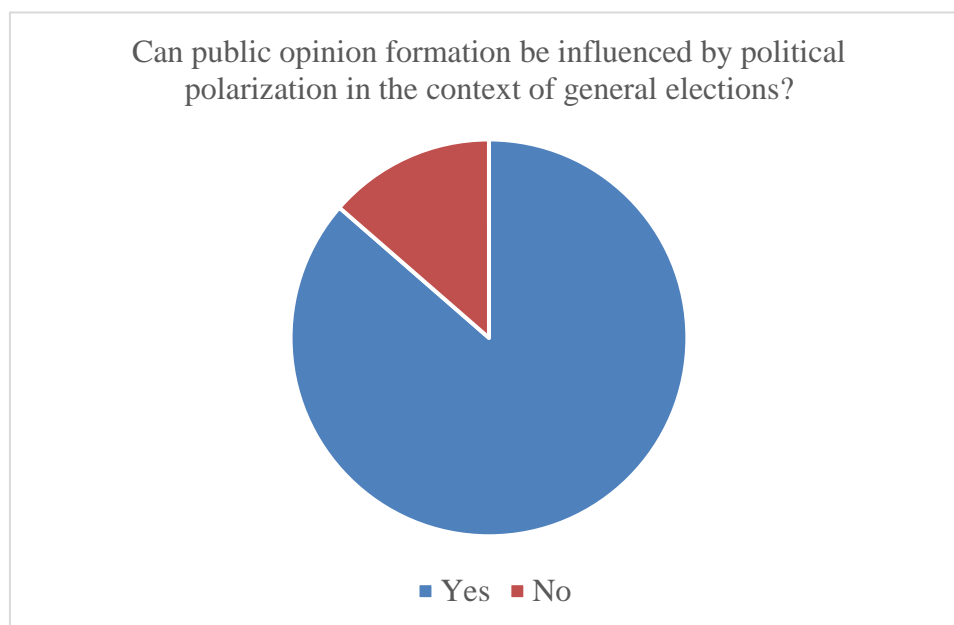


Figure 7. Survey about public opinion formation can be influenced by political polarization in elections
(Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

Of the 81 respondents, 86.4% agreed that public opinion formation can be influenced by political polarization in elections, but 13.6% disagreed with this opinion.

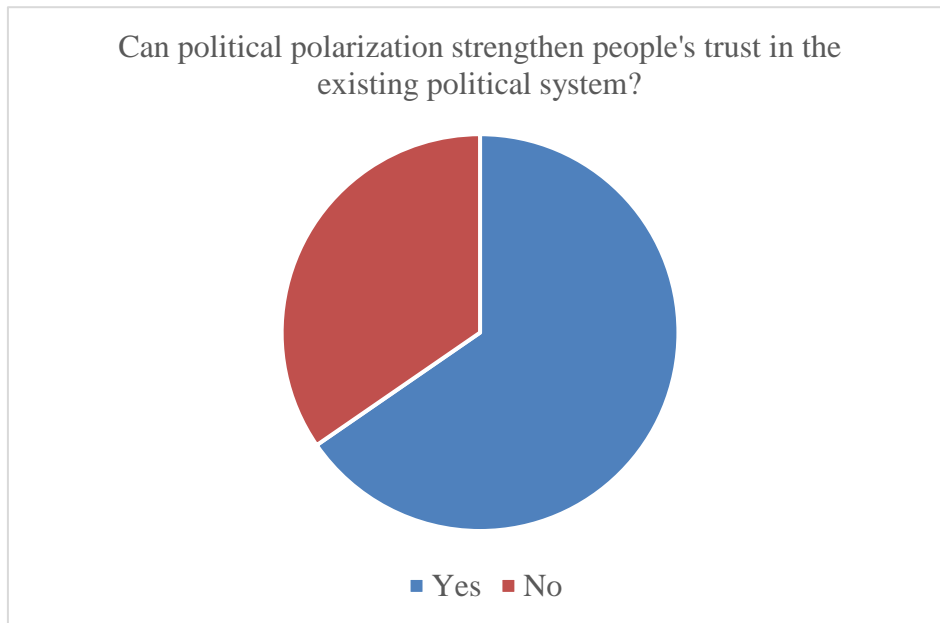


Figure 8. Survey about political polarization can strengthen public confidence in the existing political system (Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

A total of 65.4% agree with the opinion that political polarization can strengthen public confidence in the existing political system, 34.6% disagree that political polarization can strengthen public confidence in the existing political system in the context of elections.

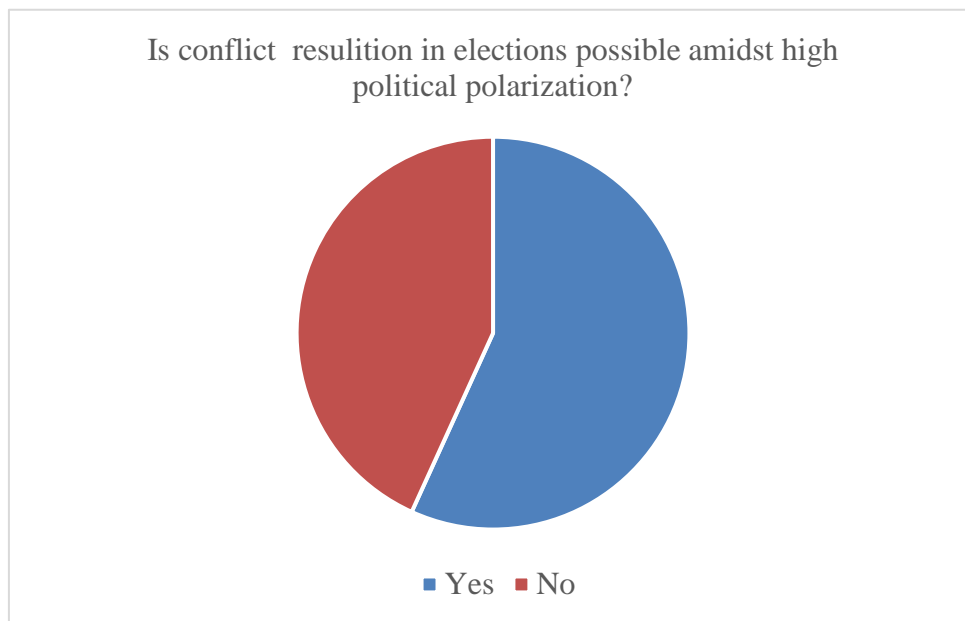


Figure 9. Survey about conflict resolution in general elections can occur well amidst high levels of political polarization

(Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

Respondents answered that 56.8% agreed that conflict resolution in general elections can occur well amidst high levels of political polarization, while 43.2% disagreed.

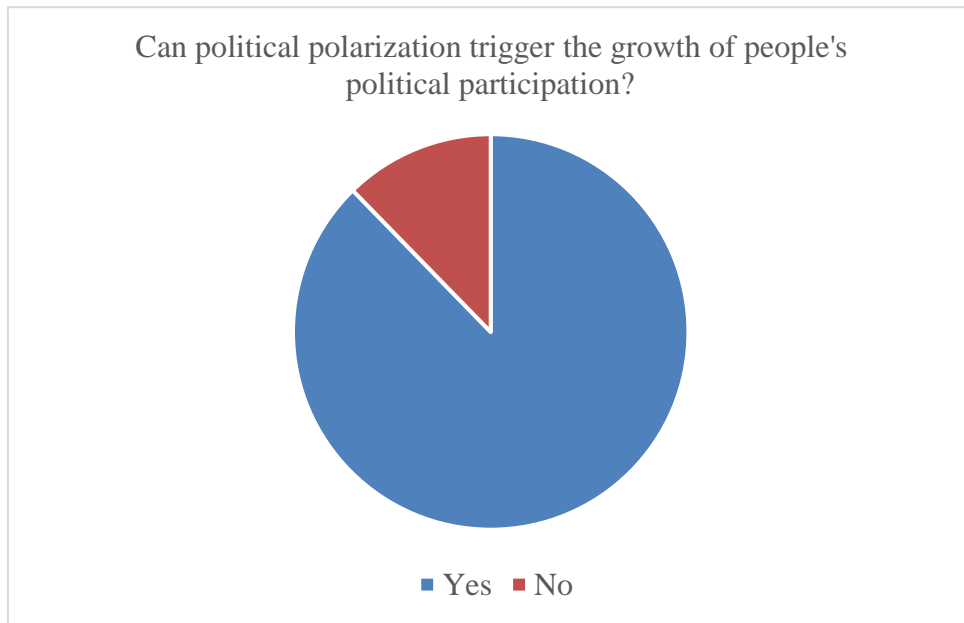


Figure 10. Survey about political polarization can trigger the growth of public participation (Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

87.7% of respondents agreed that political polarization can trigger the growth of public participation, but 12.3% disagreed with this opinion.

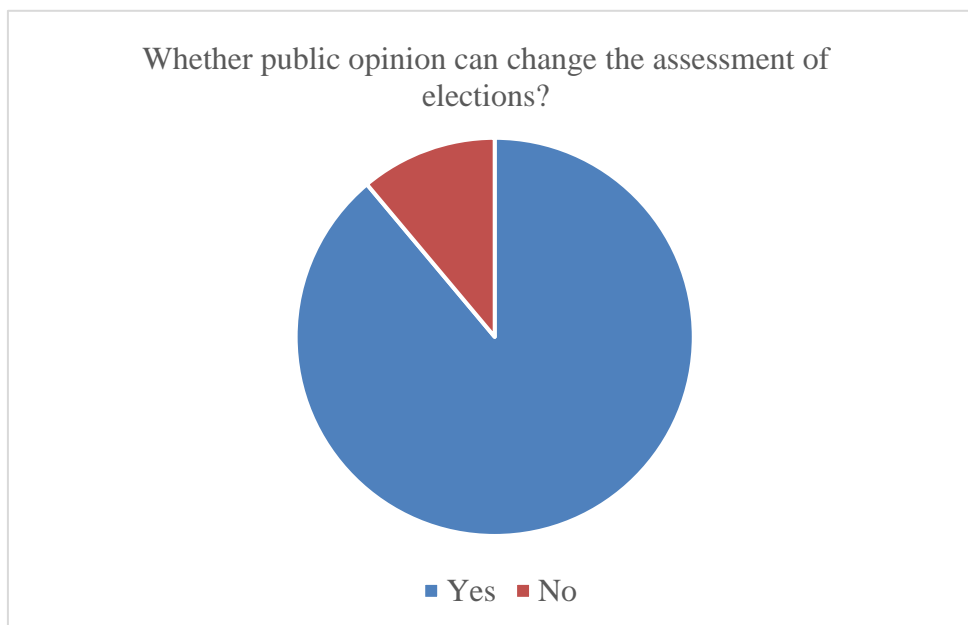


Figure 11. Survey about public opinion can change judgment in the context of elections (Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

In this field research, 89.9% of respondents agreed that public opinion can change judgment in the context of elections, and 11.1% disagreed.

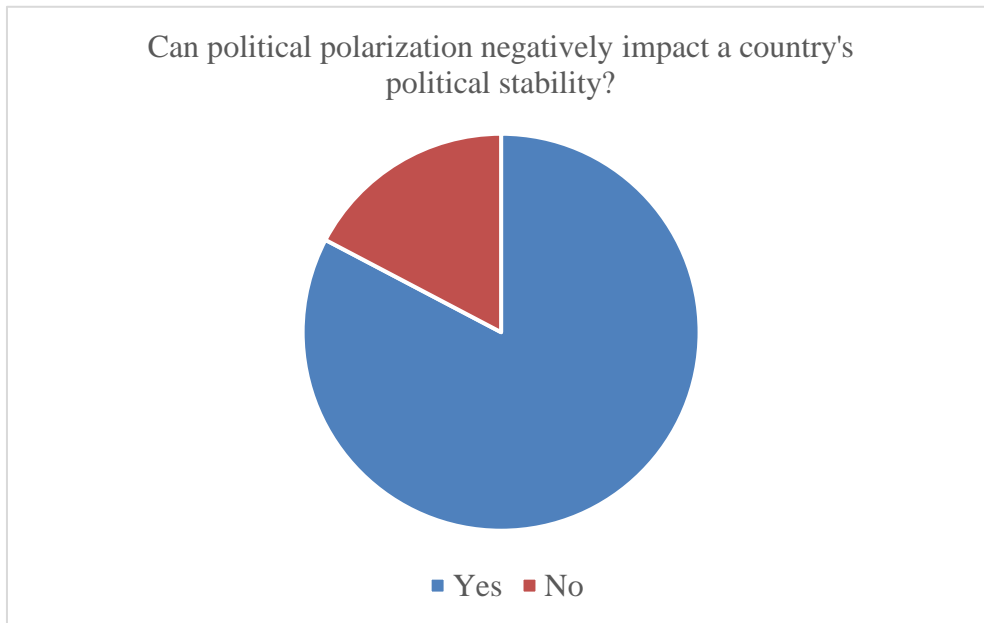


Figure 12. Survey about political polarization that occurs will have a negative impact on the stability of a country
(Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

82.7% of respondents think that the political polarization that occurs will have a negative impact on the stability of a country, but other respondents answered differently as many as 17.3% did not agree.

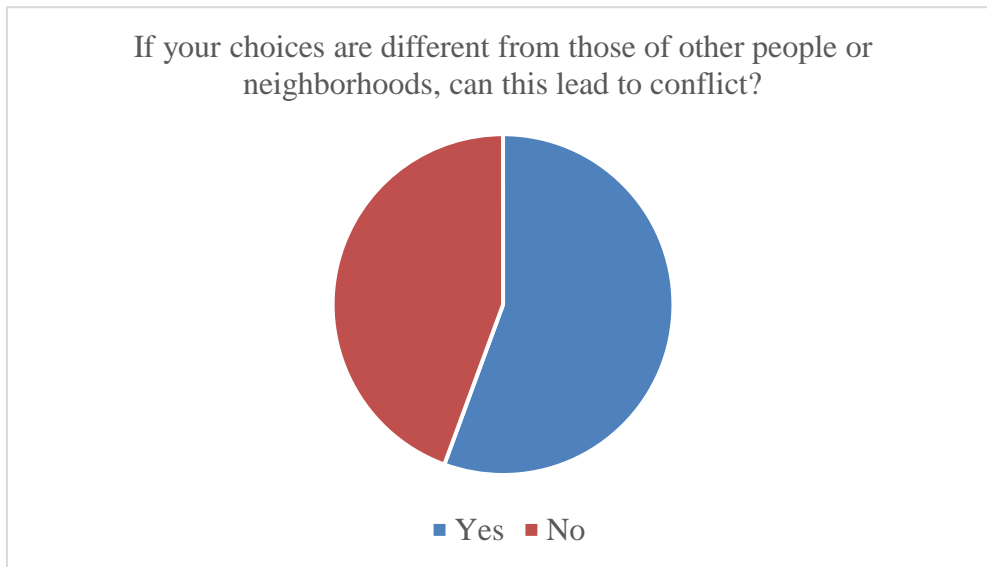


Figure 13. Survey about respondents have different choices from their surroundings can lead to conflict (Source: Research conducted personally through google form with 81 respondents)

55.6% of respondents agreed that if respondents have different choices from their surroundings, it can lead to conflict, while other respondents answered disagree with a percentage of 44.4%.

From all survey data conducted by researchers, it can be concluded that political polarization can have a major effect on public opinion or opinion on the running of a general election. And if a public opinion or opinion can be changed only by echoing a political polarization identity, then for general elections a leader can also change according to the slant of public opinion.

If seen in the case of the 2024 election, each camp of candidate supporters glorifies each other's choices, for example, on social media it is busy with the hashtag of candidate one #anispresiden which contains more than 1,000 posts on Instagram then other hashtag also appear such as #aminduluaja which contains more than 100 posts on Instagram, #change and others. On the other hand, the second camp did not want to lose by giving the hashtag #allinprabowo on the Instagram platform which loaded 45.3 thousand posts, then the hashtag #allinprabowogibran as many as 13.9 thousand posts. The third camp also enlivened the hashtag #ganjarmahfudpresiden2024 which contained more than 1,000 posts, #ganjarmahfudpresiden 500 posts and others.

In addition, in the implementation of the campaign based on Article 275 of Law No.7/2017, the campaign can be carried out one of them on social media with a period of 21 days during the campaign period. In the 2024 General Election, the implementation of the campaign was carried out from June 2, 2024 to June 22, 2024, which means that it has a 20-day implementation period

(Appendix to General Election Commission Regulation Number 3 of 2022 concerning stages and schedules for the implementation of the 2024 General Election) (Nasution et al., 2023).

But unfortunately, in campaigns on social media, the candidate camps (the public) sometimes carry out excessive campaigns so that black campaigns occur to bring down other candidates who are not their choices, even this black campaign has been carried out before the presidential and vice presidential campaigns are held. For example, before the 2024 simultaneous election campaign, each presidential candidate has received attacks in the form of hoaxes. The spread of false news is included in the black campaign carried out on social media, which of course will harm each candidate and have an impact on the votes that will be obtained in the 2024 presidential election. For example, the news that Presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto slapped the Deputy Minister of the Indonesian Ministry of Agriculture (Viska, 2023). Presidential candidate Anies Baswedan was also the target of a hoax stating that Anies had a fistfight with Ahok (Fact Check Team, n.d.). Presidential candidate number three was also a victim of fake news, as Ganjar Pranowo was subjected to a black campaign by being rumored to have drunk alcohol in public (Az-zahra, 2023).

It is clear that political polarization here greatly influences public opinion in expressing their opinions, especially to bring down other candidates in a negative way such as the black campaign action. The act of black campaigning certainly creates propaganda and divisions due to differences in the views of each camp which makes the public give a strong opinion on these actions.

In addition, personal attacks are often thrown at unelected candidates, and people sometimes do not realize the difference between opinion and blasphemy. The different vision and mission programs of each candidate have also polarized political opinion in the community, such as candidate one who promotes free fuel, candidate two who promotes free meals, and candidate three who promotes free internet. The programs of the candidate pairs received a lot of differences of opinion for the community, free fuel was considered impossible because the budget would be large, free food was considered unimportant because it was more important to have cheap staples and free internet was opposed because it was feared that it would be misused even though it was originally intended for learning.

Not enough to stop there, during the quiet period of the 2024 election, there was a documentary trailer that led public opinion to speak out again, namely Dirty Vote. This movie has been the subject of intense debate within the political sphere as well as within Indonesian society. By depicting a complex and controversial political situation, the movie has triggered diverse responses from various political groups. The movie, which claims to tell the story of fraud in the

2024 elections, has been heavily criticized. The reason is, this movie appeared during the middle of the election calm period.

Various reactions of opinion were presented by the community, some agreed with the movie but some were against it. For the camp of people who agree with the film, giving the opinion that it is true that the 2024 elections will definitely experience fraud because it is believed to have been carried out by one candidate pair. However, people who disagree also have the opinion that the film is just a slant on public opinion so that people change their choice to one of the candidate pairs because the community had learned that one of the candidate pairs also promoted the film which was believed to be Dirty Vote from his camp even though the filmmaker said that it was neutral and did not take sides with any camp.

When viewed from the research data, respondents answering about expectations in the upcoming election can be concluded that the upcoming election is the realization of clean, transparent and fair elections, where all parties can participate smoothly without facing fraud or abuse of power. They hope that the elected candidates can keep their promises and listen to the voices of the common people, as well as work to eradicate corruption and move the country forward. Peaceful elections are expected to reduce conflicts due to political polarization, while people are urged to think wisely in making choices without being swayed by public opinion or negative campaigns. It is important for law enforcement to take action against the spread of hoaxes that can lead public opinion. People are expected to respect each other's choices, put aside differences of opinion, and maintain harmony together. Security, fairness and honesty in elections are the main expectations, followed by the need for law enforcement and socialization on how to vote correctly so that people's votes are fairly valued. The desired election is one that is peaceful, safe, prosperous, and filled with a sense of responsibility from the elected leaders, who are able to realize the aspirations of the people.

The Impact of Political Polarization on the Decision-Making Process in Democratic Governance

Democracy is a system of government in which the people hold all the power. Democracy in Indonesia has undergone a transformation in terms of public participation as a result of globalization and advances in information technology. Public participation is essential for democracy in Indonesia to survive. Active public participation can increase government legitimacy, strengthen human rights demands, and encourage responsible and transparent political decision-making (Fitriani et al., 2023).

However, political parties have a very important position or status, and role, in a democratic system. Political parties serve as an important link between citizens and the government process. Many people or groups say that it is political parties that determine democracy. Therefore, political parties are a very important component to increase the level of institutionalization of any democratic political system. Political parties function as intermediaries in the national decision-making process, connecting citizens with state institutions (Susilawati, 2023). However, the political polarization that often occurs in a country, especially Indonesia, can affect the democratic system.

According to an article written by Emilia Palonen, political polarization is defined as a political tool used to protect communities that are considered a moral order and delimit the boundaries between "us" and "them". Basically, political polarization refers to how strongly a society has a moral and strong attitude towards political and social issues. Strong attitudes can be more resistant to social influence and more resilient to social change, which impacts cognition and behavior (Fernando et al., 2022).

Thus political beliefs supported by groups or individuals who have strong moral principles are quite difficult to change and quite difficult to drive significant behavior and form the basis for intolerance of different views. Political polarization can manifest itself in a variety of ways and political extremism is one example, which refers to how polarized people are and how well they fit into the general left- or right-wing ideology of society.

Nowadays, the state of democracy is increasingly being questioned. It seems that democracy has become stronger in recent years, and oligarchy and elitism have become more visible. However, the 2024 General Election (PEMILU) is still an ideal part of the democratic process, although it is prone to political polarization. Starting from the political aspect, which serves as a measure of the success of the government and the organization of elections in building democracy, then the socio-cultural aspect, which serves as a platform for political education, the Hankam aspect, which ensures security and order, and the legal aspect, which serves as a way to elect the president.

Political polarization in democratic governance is a phenomenon that can influence the decision-making process in a variety of complex and often dangerous and risky ways. Basically, polarization refers to a process in which differences of opinion between supporters and political parties become more pronounced (Utomo, 2023). Since both sides tend to defend their positions rigorously and are not willing to budge to reach a mutual agreement, in a highly polarized situation, it is difficult to talk or reach an agreement.

Legislative gridlock is one of the main impacts of political polarization on the decision-making process in a democratic government. It occurs when parliament or other legislative bodies cannot reach agreement on a new law or policy. This deadlock can lead to the government being unable to deal with pressing social, economic or crisis issues as the legislative process is stalled (Abadi & Arsil, 2022).

In Indonesia, political party polarization causes damage to democratic institutions. Political polarization that is too extreme can lead to adverse consequences, although it often occurs in countries and within the scope of general society (Susilawati, 2023). With the presence of political polarization, it can cause problems that cannot be underestimated, one example is that it can destroy democracy by hampering the decision-making process and strengthening the position of the parties involved in polarization. This can lead to dictatorial actions and decisions that harm society. This disagreement of interests can result in decisions that favor one of the polarizing parties over the interests of society.

In addition, the law-making process becomes slower and less effective. Political polarization can hinder the legislative process by making it difficult for legislators to reach agreement. Thus, people may lose trust in the government and political parties because they cannot solve real problems.

Political polarization can also disrupt presidential elections by encouraging extreme candidates and strengthening the role of political parties in presidential elections. This can lead to presidential institutions not being able to represent the needs of society as a whole and being more concerned with the agenda of each political polarization camp.

Furthermore, political polarization can lead to the loss of credibility of political parties, which makes political parties less credible and increases public distrust of the political system. This can lead to dissatisfaction and encourage more demonstrations and protests. With political polarization, people's attitudes towards foreign policy-related issues can also be affected. In certain cases, political polarization can make people reluctant to support foreign policies that are important for national security and interests. So it can also be seen that political polarization can worsen the social situation by increasing intolerance and violence in society. It can cause conflicts between groups and create propaganda or divisions in society, which can lead to arguments and fights between groups.

Continued polarization can also harm democracy itself. When politicians and their supporters or voters are more likely to interact only within social circles or media that support their beliefs, there will be an echo chamber in which one party's beliefs are reinforced without

considering the views or thoughts of the other party, which can be a contributing factor to a decline in trust in the democratic system and its processes and reduce opportunities for mutual understanding and empathy for those with different views.

In the long run, very high polarization can lead to political instability. Public dissatisfaction with the political system and government can increase if important issues are not addressed and progress is not made. This dissatisfaction can lead to mass protests, social disruption, or even political violence, especially in cases where certain groups feel they no longer have a voice in the democratic process or their interests are systematically ignored (Warjio, 2020).

Democratic governments and civil society institutions should therefore seek to promote cross-party discussion and understanding to reduce the negative effects of political polarization. To reduce polarization and strengthen decision-making processes in democratic governance, measures such as improvements to the electoral system to increase representation, increased civic education that emphasizes the importance of political cooperation, and efforts to reduce media and information bias. Indonesia is a special country that has the ideology of Pancasila, if the values in Pancasila are applied any political polarization, including political polarization, will not have a bad impact and lead to actions prohibited by law.

The 2024 presidential election has created political polarization due to antagonistic political competition. Political polarization, like conflict in society, is an inherent phenomenon in the democratic process. Political polarization, which arises from differences in political preferences, persists even after the elections are over, thriving at both the national and local levels. Symbolic conflicts, such as "cebong" versus "kampret," which emerged during the 2019 Presidential Election, turned into "kadrun" versus "togog." President Jokowi-Ma'ruf Amin's efforts to reduce these symbolic conflicts have been unsuccessful. The inclusion of Prabowo Subianto and Gerindra Party in the Advanced Indonesia Cabinet failed to quell this symbolic conflict at the grassroots level (Mentor, 2024).

The danger of political polarization lies in the emergence of extreme political divisions, which can cause political damage to democracy. In most democratic systems, political divisions arise from differences in ideology, representation and interests. However, the problem lies not in the existence of political divisions, but in the transformation of party ideologies into continuous antagonistic conflicts for power (March et al., 2024).

Direct elections provide space for ideological differences to materialize, but political ideologies tend to be directed towards propaganda, opposition, and the cultivation of hatred. Political party platforms should be based on concrete political ideas and programs. However, in Indonesian democracy, party platforms often lose importance to electoral interests, leading to narrow

and short-term political struggles. Political identity, although a natural aspect of democracy, becomes weaponized and politicized, exacerbating polarization in practical politics. While democracy enables the expression of political identity, the instrumentalization of identity-based politics exacerbates polarization (Almeida et al., 2020).

From these case study example, political polarization tends to hinder the process of consensus and cooperation between political parties in formulating public policies. When political views and agendas are sharply divided between opposing camps, there is difficulty in reaching sufficient agreement to govern effectively. The inability to reach agreement can hinder the government in facing challenges and meeting the needs of society.

Furthermore, political polarization can lead to gridlock, where the decision-making process is impeded or stalled due to conflicts between opposing political parties. This gridlock can hinder the implementation of policies needed to respond to important problems faced by the state and society. In addition, policy gridlock can also lead to political instability and uncertainty in the governance environment. Political polarization can undermine the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of the public because it gives the impression that policies are based on political considerations rather than the public interest. When government decisions are perceived as stemming from partisan battles and do not reflect the needs and aspirations of the people, it will reduce public trust in government institutions and democracy as a whole. This can lead to a decline in political participation and a crisis of confidence in the political system.

Factors that reinforce political polarization, especially in the use of social media and digital technology

Of course, in the practice of implementing political polarization, there are factors that influence political polarization. Ideological differences between political groups are one of the sources of political polarization. Different ideologies in terms of political, economic and social views create deep divisions in society. Political polarization heats up when political groups defend their own beliefs and refuse to accept different perspectives (Khasanah & Wawuan, 2023).

Along with the times, the world of politics has become increasingly complex because it has been connected to the era of globalization dominated by digital technology and social media. BRIN Political Research Center researcher in the field of Political Communication, Nina Andriana, said that since the official campaign period began, the teams of each presidential candidate are now competing to shape their image through social media content (Sulistiono, 2023). But in the midst of this progress, polarization has emerged as a major challenge that disrupts political

stability. This phenomenon is increasingly striking, especially due to the widespread use of digital technology and social media. Some of the factors that significantly drive political polarization through these platforms change social and political dynamics, shape public views, and enable information inequality.

Some of the factors that reinforce political polarization include: The existence of algorithms and filter bubbles, social media algorithms and digital platforms are shaped or structured to bring up and display various content that matches the preferences or searches that are often seen by its users. For example, Google Search implements personalized content recommendations, Google News also has a For You feature for the same purpose, namely the presentation of content tailored to the results of analysis of search records and activity history from users (Sudibyo, 2022) as well as social media such as Instagram, Tiktok and Facebook.

With this algorithm, various content will appear that is relevant and considered interesting to users, where the content presents views that are in line with certain individuals or groups so as to strengthen their belief in their choices. For example, if a user continuously likes the content of one of the candidate pairs, it will not be far away, the content presented will be in line with what he likes. If a user supports candidate one, content related to presidential and vice-presidential candidate one will appear if he likes candidate two or three, it will be the same.

However, it is not uncommon for algorithms to produce provocative content that can provoke emotions, including controversial political content and candidates. This can lead to increased political polarization by strengthening attitudes and views so that they tend to ignore and can also attack other groups with different thoughts.

Social media or the internet can also create an environment called an echo chamber. An echo chamber, also known as an echo chamber is a place where a person only finds information or opinions that support their own opinions. This can lead to misinformation and distort one's views, which prevents people from considering opposing viewpoints and talking about complex issues. To a large extent, it is driven by confirmation bias, which is the tendency to favor information that reinforces existing beliefs. A study in the journal *The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* points to echo chambers as an effect that arises from human tendencies, such as selective exposure, contagion, and group polarization (Soejoethi, 2022).

Echo chambers can be influenced or formed due to several things such as homophily, which is the tendency of individuals or groups to only want to associate and interact with a group whose nature and thoughts and views are the same. It is the same when camps one, two and three only want to join the same camp because if not, it can cause differences of opinion. The next point is confirmation bias which is defined as a person's psychological tendency to seek information that

confirms what is already known but if presented with evidence to the contrary, a person or group refutes and ignores it.

The spread of fake news or hoaxes can also strengthen polarization by creating distrust of facts. The spread of hoaxes in elections can have a detrimental impact on society and democracy in general, such as:

- a. The spread of hoaxes can lead to polarization among different groups of people who have different political views. Political conflicts can lead to more divisions in society. Since the society is polarized, people tend to accept inaccurate information.
- b. Fueling distrust of democratic institutions and processes: Spreading hoaxes can make people lose trust in democratic institutions and processes. People will feel that elections are not fair or transparent, and that the authorities cannot be trusted. For example, in the 2024 election, the quick count results were considered public lies, which led to demonstrations from the camp that had a lower percentage.
- c. Increases the risk of political violence: Hoaxes can lead to conflict and political violence. People who are provoked by misinformation may protest or retaliate with violence.
- d. Increase vulnerability to foreign influence: The spread of hoaxes can also make countries more vulnerable to foreign influences that try to affect election results or political policies (Febriansyah Putra & Patra, 2023).

Other than that, online communities can be places where people gather with others with similar views. Existing political beliefs and perspectives can be reinforced by these intense community interactions. For example, many online groups or communities have joined forces to become success teams for candidates and their political parties to create content and increase electability to stay on top. The use of hashtags and political symbols in content can help reinforce group identity. This use often creates division between different groups, reinforcing polarization.

To overcome the tension of political polarization in the community, a holistic approach must be created. The holistic approach to tackling political polarization is a strategy that takes into account the various social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions comprehensively, aiming at achieving a comprehensive solution, centered on the understanding that political polarisation is a complex phenomenon influenced by many factors. Besides, in a holistic approach to push it is important to always push for independent, accurate, and balanced media. Supporting honest media can help reduce the effect of information bubbles and prevent the spread of disinformation that could deepen political polarization.

An education or political education that focuses on the values of democracy, tolerance, and pluralism must also be encouraged so that a greater public understanding of the importance of appreciating different views and respecting diversity of opinion can help reduce perceptual gaps and break down misunderstandings that can trigger polarization.

Facilitation of dialogue between social groups, including political parties, government agencies, and civil society groups, needs to be enhanced. An organized dialogue forum can facilitate exchanges of views, differences of understanding, and a common search for solutions. In a way like this can help people better understand differences and build a foundation for better political co-operation. Furthermore, the development of inclusive policies that encourage the participation of all groups in the political process is essential which is expected to reduce political tensions and create a more stable electoral base by creating an environment that supports pluralism and appreciates differences. Indonesia is a nation of tribes, races, cultures, ethnicities, languages and religions that make Indonesia known for its compact people and called multiculturalism. It makes Indonesia a rich and diverse nation, but in fact it is a pride and a challenge for the Indonesian nation. With the discoveries in Indonesia, it is not surprising that there are so many differences, thoughts, purposes and views about the seemingly significant political differences.

But Indonesia has the Pancasila which is the guideline of the nation's life and is the foundation of the state as well as the source of all sources of law as is the Act (Law) No. 12 of 2011 on the Creation of Regulations Legislative affirms that Pancasila is the sources of all state legal sources. Indonesia also has a remarkable name, *Bhinneka Singh Ika*, which has different meanings but remains the same.

Even in an official welcome to the opening of the Community of Sant'Egidio conference in Barcelona, Pope Benedict XVI of Spain referred to the two pillars of the Indonesian nation as ideology relevant to today's global society. With international recognition, as an Indonesian nation, we must realize that Pancasila is the right foundation for the life of nations and nations (Wahanu Prabandani, 2022).

Thus, Pancasila can be used as a strategy and solution in dealing with and overcoming political polarization in society. The attitude of *gotong royong* is one of the characteristic features of the Indonesian nation that is strongly rooted in the behavior of social life, as well as the value of harmony, which shows the attitudes of harmonious Indonesians in the life of society, the nation, and the country, as a result of the heterogeneity of Indonesia's people, including tribal, cultural, ethnic, racial, religious, and beliefs to realize a just, orderly, secure, and peaceful state. According to Nukman, A., and Romadhon, D. (2021), carrying out the principle of harmonious *Bhinneka Single Ika* is very important during the election.

The values of harmony help maintain unity, reduce polarization, and prevent conflicts that may arise from identity politics, hoax, and hate speeches. Studies of literature also show that politics of identity, hoax, and hate speech greatly influenced the elections (Maryono, 2023).

The values contained in Pancasila must be applied in everyday life. Please first teach society to live according to the norms of religion and polarization many causes division and is not in harmony with the values of Divinity. Second, humanity teaches to respect each other's rights, including political differences, so that with respect there will be no polarization, third, Unity and Unity, teaches that the Indonesian people are one nation, although different choices, but still the Indian people are the nation itself. The Fourth Prayer, a Nation led by the Wisdom of Wisdom in the Proclamation of Representatives teaches the Indonesian people to always be democratic and free to choose their own choices but still divisions must be avoided. Please fifth, social justice is conceived as an effort to create equality, fair distribution, and equal rights to all members of society. In the context of solutions to political polarization, the values of social justice can help overcome conflicts that occur within the political spectrum (Fernando et al., 2022).

Social media usage in Indonesia is growing rapidly, reaching 167 million users by 2023, with the majority being adults over the age of 18. In the context of the 2024 elections, social media is becoming a major platform for disseminating political information, with platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok. Social media plays a significant role in shaping public opinion about presidential candidates and political parties, as well as being an important tool in political campaigns (Nasional et al., 2023).

Social media plays a strategic role in expanding the reach of political messages and enhancing interaction between candidates and voters. However, the use of social media in political campaigns also carries risks, such as the spread of uncontrolled political messages and aggressive tactics that can damage the candidate's image. Moreover, challenges arise when social media becomes a medium of dissemination of false information, polarisation of opinion, and manipulation, which can undermine the process of democratisation.

While social media has a positive impact in increasing political participation and political awareness amongst the public, it also presents risks that need to be cautious. Unverified or emotional and provocative content can strengthen polarization and affect public opinion in an unbalanced way. It is therefore important for the public to be vigilant about the information received from social media and to check the validity and accuracy of the information before forming an opinion or making political decisions.

In essence, a difference is not a problem but a description of diversity. Polarization is a form of differences but it is accompanied by divisions that do not correspond to the purposes of the Indonesian nation as contained in the Pancasila. Therefore, it is necessary to instill in one another an attitude of mutual respect and respect in the face of differences of opinion so that political polarization does not occur continuously within the Indonesian nation.

Conclusion

In this article, it is concluded that the increasing political polarization in society is mainly influenced by social media and digital technology. Political polarization can affect the formation of public opinion, trigger conflict, and even harm the democratic process. Factors such as algorithms and filter bubbles, echo chambers, and the spread of hoaxes also strengthen political polarization. Therefore, a holistic approach involving political education, dialogue facilitation, independent media, and implementation of Pancasila values is needed to overcome political polarization.

In addition, political polarization can also negatively impact a country's political stability and affect the decision-making process in a democratic government. Black campaigns, the spread of hoaxes, and public dissatisfaction with the government are negative impacts of political polarization. It is important for people to think wisely in making political choices and maintain mutual harmony to prevent social conflict and political instability.

Finally, efforts to reduce political polarization also include improving the electoral system, civic education, and reducing media and information bias. People also need to be wary of information received from social media, and check the validity of information before forming opinions or making political decisions. With these steps, it is hoped that political polarization can be minimized, people can better understand the importance of inclusive political cooperation, and the political stability of a country can be well maintained.

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