

Cues that Matter: The Potential for black campaigns in the 2024 general election

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Abstract

Black campaigns that occurred in 2014 and 2019 also have the potential to emerge in the 2024 general elections in Indonesia. Not only does black campaigning have the potential to create public distrust of a fair electoral process, but it also has the potential to polarize society. This phenomenon has not been scientifically considered in previous studies. This study focuses on the question, "What is the potential for black campaigns that occurred in 2014 and 2019 to emerge in the 2024 general election in Indonesia?" This qualitative study investigates the forms and patterns of black campaign narratives disseminated through online media coverage. The findings of this study show that the black campaign that occurred in 2014 has the same pattern and narrative in 2019. Issues such as the involvement of the Indonesian Communist Party, Race, Human Rights, Radicalism, and Religion became issues that did not appear in the black campaign in the 2014 and 2019 general elections. The patterns and narratives of black campaigns that occurred in 2014 and 2019 can be used as references and preferences in looking at black campaign issues that have the potential to appear in the 2024 general elections. This study also recommends the importance of analyzing the factors that influence the emergence of black campaigns with the same patterns and narratives in 2014 and 2019 that have the potential to appear in the 2024 general elections in Indonesia.

Keywords: Cues that matter; Black campaigns; General election; Political Communication.

Abstrak

Kampanye hitam yang terjadi tahun 2014 dan 2019 juga berpotensi muncul pada pemilihan umum tahun 2024 di Indonesia. Kampanye hitam selain berpotensi memunculkan ketidakpercayaan publik terhadap proses pemilihan umum yang adil, juga berpotensi membentuk polarisasi di dalam masyarakat. Fenomena tersebut belum diperhatikan secara ilmiah dalam studi-studi terdahulu. Studi ini fokus pada pertanyaan "Bagaimana potensi kampanye hitam yang terjadi tahun 2014 dan 2019 muncul pada pemilihan umum tahun 2024 di Indonesia?" Untuk menjawab pertanyaan tersebut, studi ini bersifat deskriptif kualitatif dalam menginvestigasi bentuk dan pola dari narasi kampanye hitam yang diseminasikan melalui pemberitaan media online. Temuan dalam studi ini memperlihatkan bahwa kampanye hitam yang terjadi tahun 2014 memiliki pola dan narasi yang sama di tahun 2019. Isu-isu seperti keterlibatan Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI), Ras, Hak Asasi Manusia (HAM), Radikalisme, dan Agama, menjadi isu yang tidak sedikit muncul dalam kampanye hitam di pemilihan umum tahun 2014 dan 2019. Pola dan narasi kampanye hitam yang terjadi tahun 2014 dan 2019 tersebut dapat dijadikan referensi dan preferensi dalam melihat isu-isu kampanye hitam yang berpotensi muncul pada pemilihan umum tahun 2024. Studi ini juga merekomendasikan pentingnya menganalisis faktor yang memengaruhi muncul nya kampanye hitam dengan pola dan narasi yang sama tahun 2014 dan 2019 yang berpotensi muncul pada pemilihan umum tahun 2024 di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Islam; Cues that metter; Kampanye hitam; Pemilihan umum; Komunikasi politik

INTRODUCTION

Black campaigns that occurred in 2014 and 2019 also have the potential to appear in the 2024 general elections in Indonesia. Tapsell (2021) says that the black campaign is a political tactic aiming to impact groups and individuals negatively. In Indonesia, black campaigns also occurred in the 2014 and 2019 general elections with the same patterns and narratives, such as the involvement of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), Race, Human Rights (HAM), Radicalism, and Religion (Fahmi, 2014; Candra, 2014; Siswanto, 2017; Carina, 2019; Rio, 2019). Abdullah et al. (2019) also said that the patterns and narratives of black campaigns often occur continuously from period to period, as happened in the 2014 and 2019 general elections. This context indicates that black campaign patterns and narratives are static and consistent in political contestation (Gaidzanwa, 2020). Therefore, the continuity of black campaign patterns and narratives that occurred in 2014 and 2019 can be used as a preference in seeing the potential for black campaigns that arise in the 2024 general elections (Galuh Larasati et al., 2023).

The patterns and narratives of black campaigns that occurred in 2014 and 2019 have the potential to emerge in the 2024 general elections. However, studies that discuss black campaigns in the electoral process only focus on three contexts including; First, studies that discuss black campaigns in the context of negative implications (Arifin, 2019; Sirait, 2020; Ngenget, 2022). Second, studies that discuss black campaigns in the context of law enforcement (Doly, 2020; Dewanti, 2022; Lubis, 2020). Third, studies that discuss black campaigns in the context of motivation (Juditha, 2019; Faulina et al., 2020; Riany et al., 2022). Studies that discuss black campaign narratives in general elections focus on three dominant contexts: implications, regulations, and motives for the emergence of black campaigns. However, discussions about black campaigns in the future electoral process tend to be neglected in previous studies. Discussing black campaigns' continuity and potential emergence in future general elections is a critical study (Abdullah et al., 2019).

The potential emergence of black campaigns in 2024 can be reflected through the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that both occurred continuously in the 2014 and 2019 general elections. This context is also in line with what was said by Abdullah et al. (2019) that the patterns and narratives of black campaigns in general elections are continuous from period to period. Hence, the phenomenon becomes very crucial to explain and reflect on. However, so far, studies that discuss the phenomenon of black campaigns in the general election process have not been conducted comprehensively, especially those that analyze the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that have the potential to appear in future general elections. Given that there has been no discussion of the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that have the potential to emerge in the 2024 general elections. Therefore, this study not only responds to the shortcomings of studies that have explained the patterns and narratives of the 2014 and 2019 black campaigns but also reflects the potential for black campaigns to emerge in the 2024 general elections (Galuh Larasati et al., 2023).

The patterns and narratives of black campaigns that occurred in 2014 and 2019 can be used as references and preferences in explaining the potential for black campaigns to emerge in the 2024 general elections. Therefore, the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that have the potential to emerge in the 2024 general elections are critical phenomena to analyze. This study focuses on two questions. First, what were the patterns and narratives of the black campaign 2014, which also continuously occurred in the 2019 general election? Second, what are the potential patterns and narratives of campaigns that occurred in 2014 and 2019 to emerge in the 2024 general elections? In line with these questions, this study is also based on the argument that the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that appeared in continuity in 2014 and 2019 have the potential to appear in the 2024 general elections. In other words,

the patterns and narratives of the black campaign that emerged in 2024 are not much different from the 2014 and 2019 general elections, which contained issues related to politics, ideology, and identity.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study was conducted during rampant online media coverage that disseminated black campaign actions ahead of the 2024 general election process. The black campaign in this study refers to the concept of Abdullah et al. (2019). This negative labelling aims to damage the good name or reputation of individuals or groups participating in the general election process. However, this study only focuses on analyzing the patterns and narratives of black campaigns in 2014 and 2019 in order to see the potential emergence of black campaigns in the 2024 general elections through online news that has been disseminated. This study is also based on three considerations including; First, black campaign patterns and narratives are central phenomena that previous studies have not comprehensively considered. Second, black campaign patterns and narratives have characteristics that are very important to reflect on. Third, the patterns and narratives of black campaigns disseminated through online news in 2014 and 2019 can be used to explain the potential of black campaigns that will emerge in the 2024 general elections.

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach based on primary and secondary data. Primary data in this study was obtained through an in-depth reading process of 1,000 online news texts using two search keywords, namely, "Black campaigns in the 2014 and 2019 general elections" and "Negative issues ahead of the 2024 general elections" through the Google search engine. Searching and reading the online news texts started from May 3 to 31, 2023. The online news texts were searched and read quickly, focusing on the news titles that were disseminated via Google. The process resulted in five dominant issues regarding the patterns and narratives of the 2014 and 2019 black campaigns regarding identity, race, radicalism, human rights, and religious sentiments. These issues also have the potential to emerge and develop in the general election process in 2024. In line with that, secondary data in this study was obtained by reading books, websites, and journal articles relevant to the focus of this study's discussion.

Data analysis in this study refers to the process conducted by Fernando et al. (2023) by focusing on three analysis processes, including: First, the data reduction process, which is the process of reorganizing data into a more systematic form based on the tendency of the data that has been obtained following the shapes, patterns, and narratives that exist in the data. Second, the data verification process summarizes data thematically after the reduction process. Third, displaying data is a process of presenting the data that has been obtained and then described in the form of a table containing quotes from online news texts that have been verified following the focus of the discussion. From these three processes, the next step is to analyze the data inductively as a basis for interpreting the data that has been collected. The interpretation stage of the data is carried out by restating and reflecting on the data following the ideas, patterns, and socio-cultural conditions described by the data (Fernando, Larasati, et al., 2023). The process and stages of analysis made it possible to conclude the phenomenon discussed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The patterns and narratives of black campaigns that occurred in 2014 and 2019 can be used as references and preferences in explaining the potential for black campaigns to emerge in the 2024 general elections. This context can be reflected through two significant findings below.

Black Campaigns in the 2014 and 2019 general elections: A Reflection

The patterns and narratives of the black campaign that occurred in 2014 also occurred in the 2019 general election. Issues such as the involvement of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party), Race, Hak Asasi Manusia (Human Rights), Radicalism, and Religion, did not appear in the 2014 and 2019 general elections. The continuity of the black campaign in the view of Abdullah et al. (2019) can be seen through reports published by online news in the 2014 and 2019 general election process. The context can be seen through the display in Table 1.

Table 1 Black campaigns in 2014 and 2019

The issue	Election in 2014	Election in 2019
Indonesian Communist Party (Partai Komunis Indonesia)	“Jokowi said that the first issue that often attacked him during the 2014 presidential election is that he is a member of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party). According to him, this issue is still often played by political opponents today.” (Ihsanduddin, 2018).	“Various issues targeted Joko Widodo during the contestation of the 2019 Presidential Election. However, one of the issues that bothered him was the rumor that he was part of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party).” (Carina, 2019).
Racial Sentiment	“Since the 2014 presidential election, until the next election period, Jokowi is still rumored to be of Chinese descent. Jokowi’s friend Chairum emphasized that all these issues are slander to bring down Jokowi’s good name.” (Siswanto, 2017).	“China sentiment will be used by politicians in the general election. Based on an LSI survey in July 2019, the reason is that as many as 39 percent of the Indonesian public still considers China the most influential country in Asia.” (Sani, 2020).
Human Rights Violations	“The presidential candidates in the 2014 elections, Wiranto and Prabowo, are unlikely to escape allegations of human rights violations. The issue of human rights violations will still linger when one of them wins the 2014 general election.” (Candra, 2013).	“Even though the president has been backed up by the former MUI Chairman, Rais 'Aam Shuriah of Nahdlatul Ulama. Meanwhile, Prabowo again had to deal with the issue of human rights violations and the abduction of activists in 1988.” (Ikhwanul Habibi, 2019).
Radical group involvement	“Head of the Badan Intellegan Negara (National Intelligence Agency) Marciano Norman said there are indications that radical groups will utilize the momentum of the 2014 elections as a means of revenge. The group actively voiced rejection of the election.” (Suhendi, 2014).	“The 2019 simultaneous elections to be held on April 17, 2019, are still considered very vulnerable to threats from radical and intolerant groups.” (Rio, 2019).

Religion	“The competition in the 2014 elections will be fierce. Religious issues are very vulnerable to being fomented. The Minister of Religious Affairs revealed that conflicts with religious backgrounds in the election process always arise occasionally.” (Fahmi, 2014).	“The candidates and their supporters are busier "attacking" their opponents with radical issues that are far from the substance of the campaign. The issue of religious primordialism attacks Jokowi again.” (Ikhwanul Habibi, 2019).
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Source: Online news.

Table 1 shows the patterns and narratives of the black campaign in 2014, which also continuously occurred in the 2019 general election. In line with that, Table 1 also shows three critical contexts regarding the patterns and narratives of the black campaign that occurred in the 2014 and 2019 general elections:

First, the patterns and narratives of black campaigns disseminated through online news in the 2014 and 2019 general elections both appeared in a political context. The context can be seen through the display of Table 1, which shows that the patterns and narratives of the black campaign in the 2014 and 2019 general elections contained the same issues, such as the involvement of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party) or PKI. The Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party) is a party that is vehemently opposed to its existence by the state and society, so the symbols of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party) are not the least used as a black campaign narrative in the 2014 and 2019 general elections. Narayan (2019) also said that black campaigns that appear in political contestation aim to bring down political opponents. Hence, the patterns and narratives of black campaigns are not least used to bring down the good names of political parties and individuals who participate in political contestation. Therefore, the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that emerged in the 2014 and 2019 general elections did not narrate the issue of the involvement of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party) or PKI in influencing the perceptions of supporters (Drakulich et al., 2020).

Second, the patterns and narratives of black campaigns disseminated through online news in the 2014 and 2019 general elections also appear racially. This context can be seen through the display of Table 1, which shows that the patterns and narratives of the black campaign in the 2014 and 2019 general elections contain the same issues as racial sentiments. Many groups and individuals involved in political contestation were labeled as Chinese descendants. Black campaigns in the form of racial sentiment by Bunyasi and Smith (2019) are not least used to gain the support of local communities, so the issue of migrants and natives is not uncommon as a black campaign narrative in political contestation. Patterns and narratives of black campaigns that appear in the form of racial sentiment, according to Grumbach and Sahn (2020), often cause polarization of supporters in political contestation, so that groups and individuals often use this polarization to get supporting votes or even use as a tactic to bring down groups and individuals in the general election process.

Third, the patterns and narratives of black campaigns disseminated through online news in the 2014 and 2019 general elections also appeared in the context of religion. This context can be seen through the display in Table 1, which shows the patterns and narratives of black campaigns in the 2014 and 2019 general elections that contain the same issues as the politicization of religious identity. The politicization of religious identity became an issue not slightly narrated in the 2014 and 2019 general elections. The

politicization of religious identity from groups and individuals involved in the general election process did not appear as negative narratives in online news in 2014 and 2019. This context by Green et al. (2019) occurred because religious identity is a potential issue to gain support and influence mass perception. Hence, the issue is not little utilized by groups and individuals according to their interests in political contestation. Therefore, Frenki (2021) said that the politicization of religious identity could be used to gain support or bring down opponents in political contestation.

The patterns and narratives of the black campaign that occurred in 2014 also occurred in the 2019 general election with the same patterns and narratives. These contexts can be reflected through three critical contexts seen through the display in Table 1. Issues such as the involvement of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party) or PKI, Race, Hak Asasi Manusia (Human Rights), Radicalism, and Religion, which appeared in 2014, also appeared in the 2019 general election. These three issues not only signify the continuity of the pattern of the smear campaign but also show that the narrative of the smear campaign that appeared in 2014 also appeared in the 2019 general election with the same narrative. The continuity of the patterns and narratives of the black campaign, in the view of Abdullah et al. (2019), is not least influenced by ideological factors, identity, and symbols believed in a country and society, not least utilized by politicians to gain support. Wirman and Sari (2020) also said that the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that appear in political contestation refer to the community's ongoing socio-cultural context.

Black campaigns in the 2024 general election: A potential

The patterns and narratives of the 2014 and 2019 black campaigns also have the potential to emerge in the 2024 general elections. Issues such as the involvement of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), Race, Human Rights (HAM), Radicalism, and Religion, are issues that have the potential to appear in the 2024 general election. In the view of Biegon and Watts (2020), this context can be seen through the issues developing before the general election. This context can be seen through the display in Table 2.

Table 2 Emerging issues before the 2024 Elections

The issue	Narrative
Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party)	"Former members of the banned organization the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party) or PKI are allowed to run for the House of Representatives in the upcoming 2024 general election. However, former PKI members cannot run as presidential and vice presidential candidates." (Fida, 2022).
Racial Sentiment	"Presidential candidate Anis Baswedan is not a native but a foreigner from Arabia. This is based on the BPUPKI session where Anis Baswedan's grandfather AR Baswedan only fought for Arab citizens to become Indonesian citizens." (Maksum, 2023).
Human Rights Violations	"The Lingkaran Survei Indonesia (Indonesian Survey Circle) or LSI Denny JA said that some things will block Gerindra Chairman Prabowo if he returns to the presidential election in 2024. The 1998 human rights case will continue to hamper Prabowo from the 2009 presidential election to 2024." (Makki, 2021).

Radical group involvement	“Former terrorism convict Munir Kartono said radical groups have the potential to surface and take advantage of the momentum of the 2024 simultaneous elections.” (Triatmojo, 2023).
The Politicization of Religion	“The leaders of Indonesia's two largest organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, delivered important messages regarding the 2024 elections. Both organizations agreed that the issue of community polarization and the practice of identity politics are important issues that should not be ignored.” (Sucahyo, 2023).

Source. Online news.

Table 2 shows the issues that are currently developing and have the potential to lead to black campaigns in the general elections that will be held in 2024. In line with that, Table 2 also shows three critical contexts regarding potential issues that could lead to black campaigns in the general elections that will be held in 2024:

First, potential issues that could lead to black campaigns in the 2024 general elections have appeared in online news in a political context. This context can be reflected through the display in Table 2, which shows that potential issues that could lead to black campaigns in the 2024 general elections have been disseminated through online news through the issue of the involvement of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party) or PKI. Black campaigns that narrate the issue of the involvement of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party) or PKI in the 2014 and 2019 general elections also have the potential to appear in the 2024 general elections. In Africa's view (2019), it does not appear in a continuous pattern and narrative, so the patterns and narratives of the black campaign can occur repeatedly in future general elections. In other words, the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that have the potential to appear in general elections in the next period can also be dominantly influenced by the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that have emerged in the general election process in the past (Adamsky, 2020).

Second, potential issues that could lead to a black campaign in the 2024 general election have appeared in online news in a racial context. This context can be reflected through the display in Table 2, which shows that potential issues that could lead to black campaigns in the 2024 general elections have been disseminated through online news through the issue of racial sentiment. Black campaigns that narrate the issue of racial sentiment in the 2014 and 2019 general elections also have the potential to appear in the 2024 general elections. The black campaign, in the view of Reny et al. (2020), indicates that racial issues are a context that does not appear a little in political contestation that is continuously reproduced by groups and individuals so that racial issues in political contestation have the potential to give rise to black campaigns in the next general election. Therefore, racial issues that have the potential to give rise to black campaigns in future general elections (Wineinger, 2021) are the continuity of racial issues that have emerged as black campaigns in past general elections.

Third, potential issues that could lead to black campaigns in the 2024 general elections have also emerged in the context of religious polarization. This context can be reflected through the display in Table 2, which shows that potential issues that could lead to black campaigns in the 2024 general elections have been disseminated through online news through the issue of religious polarization. Black campaigns that narrate the issue of religious polarization in the 2014 and 2019 general elections also have the potential

to appear in the 2024 general elections. The black campaign by Green et al. (2019) is a tactic by political parties and individuals to gain support from the majority vote in political contestation. However, according to Bourchier (2019), religious polarization is not only aimed at obtaining majority votes, but it is also done to bring down the good name of political parties and individuals in political contestation. Therefore, religious polarization as a black campaign issue not only appeared in 2014 and 2019 but also could appear in the 2024 general election.

The black campaign issues that emerged in 2014 and 2019 also have the potential to emerge in the 2024 general elections with similar patterns and narratives. These contexts can be reflected through three critical contexts seen through the display in Table 2. Issues such as the involvement of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party) or PKI, Race, Hak Asasi Manusia (Human Rights) or HAM, Radicalism, and Religion, which appeared in 2014 and 2019 also have the potential to appear in the 2024 general elections. These three issues not only signify a continuation of the patterns and narratives of campaigns in 2014 and 2019 consistently but can also be used as references and preferences in looking at issues that have the potential to give rise to black campaigns in the 2024 general elections. The patterns and narratives of black campaigns in past general elections by Abdullah et al. (2019) are influenced by ideological factors, identity, and symbols believed in a country and society. This context indicates that the patterns and narratives of the black campaign have continued between periods of political contestation (Wirman and Sari, 2020).

This study shows that the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that have the potential to emerge in the 2024 general elections are not much different from the issues of black campaigns that emerged and existed in the 2014 and 2019 general elections, both in terms of identity and ideology. In line with that, two significant findings in this study also reflect that the black campaign that exists and has the potential to emerge in the general election process in Indonesia is an issue that has complex and contextual characteristics. Black campaigns are a form of propaganda and an ideological movement that can affect the quality of elections in a democratic country. Black campaigns must be seen as a fundamental problem in the process of realizing a political system with integrity in a democratic country. The issues represented in black campaigns contain political and ideological content, which can affect public confidence in an effective and efficient electoral process in the future.

CONCLUSIONS

The patterns and narratives of black campaigns that emerged in 2014 and 2019 also have the potential to emerge in the 2024 general elections. This context can be seen through two critical findings in this study including; First, the patterns and narratives of the black campaign that emerged in 2014 continuously also appeared in 2019 with patterns and narratives that were not much different. Black campaign patterns and narratives such as the involvement of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party) or PKI, Race, Hak Asasi Manusia (Human Rights) or HAM, Radicalism, and Religion, which appeared in 2014 also appeared in the 2019 general elections. The patterns and narratives of black campaigns that emerged in 2014 and 2019 also have the potential to emerge in the 2024 general elections with the same patterns and narratives. From these two findings, it can be concluded that the patterns and narratives of the 2014 and 2019 black campaigns have the potential to emerge in the 2024 general elections.

The findings in this study differ from previous studies. Studies that discuss the patterns and narratives of black campaigns in general elections in Indonesia focus on the emerging black campaigns' implications, regulations, and motives. However, the findings in this study show a futuristic signification

of the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that could potentially emerge in the 2024 general elections by reflecting on the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that emerged in 2014 and 2019. The findings in this study are not only expected to be able to become a dialogical basis for futuristic political communication studies. However, they are also expected to be a reference and preference in reflecting the patterns and narratives of black campaigns that have the potential to appear in future general elections.

This study also has weaknesses in the data collection process, which is only conducted through an investigation process on online media coverage disseminated through the Google platform. Therefore, the data obtained and displayed in this study only refer to the archive of online news text descriptions. However, the weaknesses in this study are expected to be able to become the basis or reference for further studies, especially for studies that want to explain the factors of the emergence of black campaign patterns and narratives that occurred continuously in 2014 and 2019, in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the preferences of cultural patterns and black campaign narratives that have the potential to emerge in the general election process that will be held in Indonesia in 2024.

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