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Influence of Narrative and Dramatized Political Content on 2024 Regional Election Participation

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the influence of narrative and dramatization in political content on public political participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Election (Pilkada) in Barito Timur Regency. A quantitative approach was used, with survey questionnaires distributed to 100 respondents from various demographic groups. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. The findings reveal that both narrative and dramatization in political content significantly affect political participation. Specifically, political narratives that resonate with local issues and emotionally charged dramatization elements encourage individuals to engage in political discussions and voting activities. This study contributes to the field of political communication by highlighting the role of media content in shaping political behavior. The practical implications are crucial for political campaign strategies, especially in utilizing social media platforms to influence voter engagement. The results also offer insights for further research on the impact of digital media content on political participation in contemporary electoral processes.

INTRODUCTION

The digital era has brought about major changes in various aspects of life, including political communication. Social media has now become an inseparable part of community interaction, not only as a means of personal communication but also as a strategic medium in political campaigns and mass mobilization (McQuail, 2010) . The increasingly advanced social media has drastically changed the way political communication is viewed. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp have not only become communication tools between users but have also become the main means for political campaigns and influencing public opinion. This allows the delivery of political messages that fast, interactive, and mass (Siadari, 2024) .

Based on the survey results in Figure 1. The latest from Populix, as many as 28% of Generation Z respondents rely on social media as the main source of information regarding presidential candidates for the 2024 Presidential Election (Budiyanti

Prameswari, 2024).   This finding strengthens the dominant role of social media in shaping the political opinions of the younger generation in Indonesia (Setiadi & Kolip, 2013). Social media is not only a space for information but also a means to create more relatable political narratives and dramatizations. In contrast, traditional media such as mass media publications are only used by 16% of respondents, indicating a shift to digital media. This fact also shows the importance of digital platforms to reach the younger generation who are a strategic segment in political campaigns.

Figure 1. Populix survey results regarding the tendencies of young voters in seeking information about the 2024 presidential election candidates.

Source: (Budiyanti Prameswari, 2024)
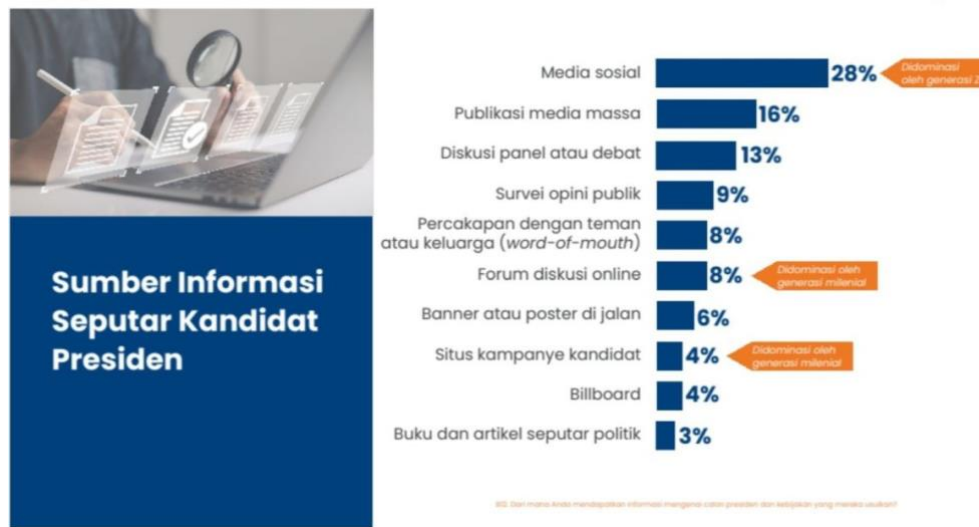
This progress is inseparable from the increasing internet access and penetration of digital devices, including in remote areas that were previously difficult to reach. This condition creates new opportunities for digital-based political communication strategies, but also poses challenges in ensuring the effectiveness and credibility of the messages conveyed. The 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections are an important moment to observe how campaign strategies through social media affect public involvement in the democratic process. These elections involve elections in many regions simultaneously, and in the midst of post-pandemic conditions, social media has become increasingly essential as a channel for political communication. Many political actors are now focusing on delivering messages that are not only informative, but also contain narrative and dramatic elements to attract public attention. Strong narratives are often integrated into political messages to build relatable stories for the public, while dramatization is used to strengthen emotional elements, which are expected to increase public involvement.

On an election scale involving many regions simultaneously and in a post-pandemic context that limits physical interaction, social media plays an increasingly central role in supporting inclusive political communication. In this context, political actors are increasingly focusing on the use of messages that are not only informative but also emotional, by integrating elements of narrative and dramatization. Strong narratives are able to build emotional connections and create relevance between political messages

and people's daily experiences, while dramatization is used to emphasize emotional elements, thereby increasing the appeal of the message. This strategy aims to encourage public involvement in the political process, both as voters and as part of a broader democratic dialogue.

Theoretically This research refers to the *Dramatism theory* of Kenneth Burke and *the Narrative Paradigm* of Walter Fisher. *Dramatism theory* views communication as a dramatic process involving actions, agents, goals, means, and settings. (Burke, 1969; Fisher, 1984) . In this context, political content on social media is considered an "action" that seeks to influence the "audience" or society, with the aim of encouraging political participation. (Blakesley, 2002) . On the other hand, *the Narrative Paradigm* proposes the view that humans are more likely to respond to messages presented in the form of narratives or stories rather than logical arguments alone. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009) . Through narratives that are relevant to everyday life experiences, people can feel more emotionally connected and motivated to participate in the political process.

Figure 2. Data on the Number of Voters East Barito 2024

Source: (KPU , 2024) .

This phenomenon is very relevant for East Barito Regency, one of the regions participating in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections. Based on the recapitulation data of the Permanent Voters List (DPT) of East Barito Regency in Figure 2, there are a total of 84,767 voters spread across 10 sub-districts, indicating the great potential for community participation in this democratic process. Community participation in East Barito Regency was also recorded as high, with a figure reaching 84% in the previous Election (MMC, 2024) . However, this region faces unique challenges, including limited access to information and varying levels of political literacy.

Along with the development of technology, the people of East Barito are increasingly accustomed to using social media as the main channel for obtaining information. According to the report "Digital Politics: Social Media Involvement in

Increasing Political Participation of the Young Generation in the 2024 Democratic Party"
(Suci Azzahri, 2024) , social media has become a strategic medium for reaching young
voters, because it is fast, interactive, and allows two-way communication. This research
is also supported by the analysis of "The Influence of Social Media on Citizens' Political
Participation: Positive and Negative Impacts" (Dwiyanti et al., 2023) , which states that
social media can increase political awareness and emotional public involvement in the
election process. Meanwhile, "Public Opinion Analysis of the 2024 Election on Social
Media X" (Larassetya et al., 2024), highlights the importance of delivering relevant,
narrative-based, and interactive political messages to build emotional connections
between candidates and voters.

This study aims to identify the influence of narrative and dramatization in political
content on social media on public participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional
Elections in East Barito Regency. Using a quantitative approach, this study measures the
extent to which narrative and dramatic elements in political content can influence
people's decisions to participate. Questionnaires were distributed to people who are
active on social media to understand their perceptions of political content and its impact
on their interest in getting involved in the Regional Elections.

This study offers novelty in two main aspects, namely theoretical and contextual
approaches. Theoretically, this study integrates Kenneth Burke's *Dramatism theory and
Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm* into the analysis of digital political communication,
especially in social media content (Griffin, 2023) . This approach is rarely applied
specifically to understand the dynamics of political participation at the local level, such
as in the context of the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections in East Barito Regency, with
a focus on narrative and dramatization, this study provides a new perspective on how
emotional elements and stories can influence people's political engagement.

Contextually, this research contributes to the literature on political
communication in Indonesia by exploring areas that are rarely the focus of studies,
namely areas with limited access to political literacy and information, such as East Barito
Regency. This research was also conducted at a crucial moment in the 2024 Simultaneous
Regional Elections, where social media became the main channel for post-pandemic
political communication. Thus, this research not only provides theoretical contributions
in understanding the application of *Dramatism* and *Narrative Paradigm* but also produces
practical recommendations for political actors (Casero-Ripollés et al., 2016) and
campaign teams to design culturally relevant communication strategies (Geise et al.,
2024) and based on emotions, which can increase community political participation
meaningfully. This study uses an approach to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the
influence of narratives and dramatization of political content on social media on
community participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections in East Barito
Regency. This approach allows the collection of numerical and statistical data through
quantitative methods.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative method approach, to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the influence of narratives and dramatization of political content on social media on public participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections in East Barito Regency (Craswell et al., 2020) . This approach allows the collection of numerical and statistical data through quantitative methods (Craswell et al., 2020; Creswell, 2012) . The quantitative approach was carried out with a research population consisting of 84,767 permanent voters in East Barito Regency. With a margin of error of 10%, the number of samples required is 100 respondents. The sample was taken using a *purposive sampling technique* with the criteria that respondents are active social media users who are often exposed to political content and are within the age range of voters. Data were collected through a closed questionnaire designed to measure perceptions of narrative and dramatization elements in political content, and their influence on voter participation levels. Questions in the questionnaire use a Likert scale of 1–5 to evaluate storyline, emotional relevance, visualization, rhetorical language, and message intensity (Wang et al., 2023) . These quantitative data were analyzed using multiple linear regression to understand the relationship between the independent variables (narrative and dramatization of political content) and the dependent variable (community participation).

Figure 3. Thinking Framework
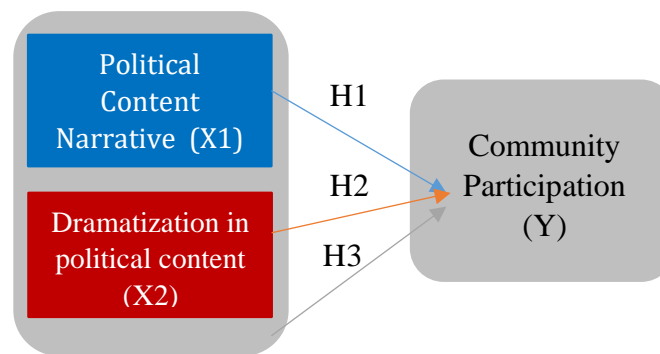
Source: Author's Process, 2024

Narratives in political content play an important role in building connections between candidates and the public. (Crow & Wolton, 2020) . Narratives that are relevant to local issues, consistent, and easy to understand can increase public understanding of the programs offered by candidates. (Wolfsfeld, 2022) . When narratives successfully reflect people's needs and relate them to their daily lives, they encourage them to become more involved in the political process. Strong narratives not only motivate people to think more critically about political issues, but also increase their sense of responsibility to participate in elections. (GarduñoG arcía & Gaziulusoy, 2021) . Therefore, a good narrative is expected to have a positive influence on community participation.

H1: Narratives in political content have a positive effect on public participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections in East Barito Regency.

Dramatization in political content utilizes visual elements, emotional language, music, and storytelling to attract public attention. (Jovanoski, 2020) . These elements are designed to create emotional engagement, which ultimately increases public interest in political issues. (Farroza et al., 2024) . Dramatic political content is able to create a heart-touching atmosphere, making people feel more connected to the message conveyed. (Abdurrohman, 2024) . This can motivate them to be more actively involved in political discussions and elections. With a more emotional appeal, dramatization is expected to have a positive influence on public participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections.

H2: Dramatization in political content has a positive effect on public participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections in East Barito Regency.

Narrative and dramatization in political content is a strategic combination to influence public participation. (Barata & Simanjuntak, 2023; Boscarino, 2022) . Relevant narratives help convey information clearly, while dramatization enhances the emotional appeal of the content. When these two elements are used together, they create political content that is not only informative but also heartfelt. This combination is expected to reach more people with diverse backgrounds, increase political awareness, and encourage their active participation in the election. (Yildirim, 2019) . Therefore, simultaneously, narrative and dramatization are believed to have a significant influence on public participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections.

H3: Narrative and dramatization in political content simultaneously have a significant influence on public participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections in East Barito Regency.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to analyze the influence of narrative and dramatization in political content on public participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections in East Barito Regency. This section will discuss the research findings obtained from the analysis of questionnaire data that has been filled out by respondents. The focus of the discussion is directed at how narrative and dramatization in political content affect public involvement, both individually and collectively, in the political process. In addition, this discussion also connects the research results with previous theories and findings to provide a more comprehensive context about the phenomenon being studied. The analysis is carried out based on the main indicators of each variable.

Table 1. Respondent Data

No.	Demographic Data	Frequency $N = 100$	No.	Demographic Data	Frequency $N = 100$
1.	**Age:**		5.	**Frequently Used Social Media**	
	18-24 years	1		Facebook	61
	25-34 years	28		Instagram	10
	35-44 years	38		TikTok	14
	45-54 years	27		Twitter	0
	55-64 years	6			
	≥ 65 years	0	6.	**Have you ever followed a political campaign on social media?**	
				Yes, actively follow and interact (like, comment, or share content).	5
2.	**Gender:**			Yes, but just look without interacting.	41
	Man	59		Never follow political campaigns on social media.	54
	Woman	41			
			7.	**How often do you see political content on social media?**	
3.	**Last education**			Every day, more than 3 hours.	6
	SD	0		Every day, less than 3 hours.	12
	JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	0		3–5 times a week.	48
	SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	40		1–2 times a week.	18
	D3	5		Very rarely (less than once a week).	16
	S1	46			
	S2/S3	9	8.	**Have you ever discussed politics online?**	
				Yes, via social media (Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp groups, etc.).	5
4.	**Subdistrict where you live:**			Yes, through discussion forums or online community platforms.	1
	East Hamlet	11		Never discuss politics online.	94
	Continent Five	6			
	The Tutui Tree	1			
	Cloud	9			
	Central Hamlet	16			
	Karau Embankment	33			
	Fast pace	2			
	Rare Stone	8			
	Nail	13			
	Janang Carousel	1			

Source: Author's Process, 2024

The findings from the demographic data in Table 1. show that the majority of respondents are in the productive age range, namely 35-44 years (38%) and 25-34 years

(28%). Respondents aged 45-54 years are also quite significant, namely 27%, while the young age group (18-24 years) only reaches 1%. In contrast, there are no respondents aged ≥65 years. This reflects the dominance of participation from the adult and productive age groups in this study, which is relevant because this group tends to have higher involvement in political issues than other age groups.

In terms of gender, male respondents dominate with a percentage of 59%, while female respondents are 41%. This difference may indicate that men have a higher tendency to engage in political discussions than women, although women also show significant contributions. In terms of education, the majority of respondents are bachelor's degree graduates (46%), followed by high school graduates (40%). This reflects that a higher level of education may be associated with greater political awareness, especially in understanding the content of political narratives and dramatizations.

The research respondents were spread across several sub-districts in East Barito Regency, with the largest concentration coming from Pematang Karau Sub-district (33%) and Dusun Tengah (16%). These two areas have a significant number of respondents, reflecting the potential for high community involvement in political campaigns and participation. Areas with fewer respondents, such as Patangkep Tutui Sub-district (1%) and Karusen Janang (1%), may indicate limited access to political information or low public interest in political content.

In terms of social media, Facebook dominates as the most frequently used platform by 61% of respondents, followed by TikTok (14%) and Instagram (10%). This shows that Facebook is the main means of spreading political narratives and dramatizations in East Barito Regency. In addition, the majority of respondents only see political campaigns on social media without interacting (41%), and as many as 54% have never even followed political campaigns online. The frequency of viewing political content is mostly done 3-5 times a week (48%), but online political discussions are very low, only done by 6% of respondents. This reflects the low level of active participation of the community in online political discussions.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
X1	100	23.54	3,060	16	35
X2	100	22.43	2,982	16	35
Y	100	24.30	3.611	13	35

Source: Author's Process, 2024

The descriptive statistics in Table 2 summarize the core variables: X1 (Narrative in Political Content), X2 (Dramatization in Political Content), and Y (Public Political Participation). With 100 respondents, X1 had a mean of 23.54 (SD = 3.060), reflecting a fairly high and consistent perception of the relevance and effectiveness of narrative in political content. X2 recorded a slightly lower mean of 22.43 (SD = 2.982), indicating that

the element of dramatization received less uniform attention from respondents compared to narrative.

Looking at the Y variable shows the highest mean of 24.30 (SD = 3.611), indicating that political participation is the most diverse aspect across the sample, potentially influenced by personal and contextual factors. Compared to other studies, the higher variance in Y is in line with findings showing the sensitivity of political participation to the level of individual involvement. Looking overall, the range of scores (13–35) across the variables reveals a diverse respondent base , it is important to explore the nuanced relationships between narrative, dramatization, and participation in influencing electoral behavior. (Heryanto, 2018) .

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing (Multiple Regression)

Variables	Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	t-statistic (t count)	t-table (df = nk)	p-value	Significance
X1	.406	.116	3.488	2,627	.001	Significant
X2	.400	.119	3.357	2,627	.001	Significant

Source: Author's Process, 2024

Table 3 shows the results of multiple regression tests to evaluate the influence of X1 (Narrative in Political Content) and X2 (Dramatization in Political Content) on Y (Community Political Participation). Variable X1 has a coefficient (B) of 0.406 with a standard error of 0.116. The t-statistic value of 3.488 is greater than the t-table value of 2.627, and the p-value of 0.001 indicates significance. This confirms that narrative in political content has a significant positive influence on community political participation. (Judijanto et al., 2024) .

Likewise, the variable X2 recorded a coefficient of 0.400 with a standard error of 0.119. The t-statistic value of 3.357 exceeds the t-table, and the p-value of 0.001 indicates a significant positive effect of dramatization in political content on public participation. Both variables show a statistically significant relationship at the 99% confidence level ($p < 0.01$), strengthening the hypothesis that narrative and dramatization in political content simultaneously contribute to increasing public political participation.

Table 4. Model Test

Model Statistics	Mark
F-statistic	26,685
p-value F	.000
Adjusted R^2	0.353

Source: Author's Process, 2024

Table 4 shows the results of the regression model test used to evaluate the relationship between the independent variables (X1 and X2) with the dependent variable (Y). The F-statistic value of 26.685 with a p-value of 0.000 indicates that the overall regression model is significant at a 99% confidence level ($p < 0.01$). This means that X1

(Narrative in Political Content) and X2 (Dramatization in Political Content) together have a significant influence on Community Political Participation (Y).

The Adjusted R^2 value of 0.353 indicates that 35.3% of the variation in people's political participation can be explained by the narrative and dramatization of political content. The remaining 64.7% is influenced by other variables outside this model. This result shows that the regression model is quite strong and valid in explaining the relationship between variables, with a significant contribution from narrative and dramatization to increasing political participation.

This research explores the influence of narrative and dramatization in political content on public political participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections in East Barito Regency. The findings show that both political narrative (X1) and dramatization in political content (X2) significantly influence public political participation (Y). With the regression coefficient of each independent variable having a positive and significant value, it can be concluded that both elements have a significant contribution in increasing public political involvement. This finding is in line with communication theories which explain that the influence of media in shaping public political participation can be explained through a narrative and dramatic approach. Thus, a strong narrative and the use of appropriate dramatization in political content have an important role in motivating the public to participate more actively in the political process like the regional elections (Halim et al., 2025) .

As a new contribution to the study of political communication, this study raises narrative and dramatization as two elements that are rarely studied together in previous studies. Most previous studies focus more on one dimension, such as the influence of information or media credibility on political participation. The media plays a role in shaping the political perception of society, or by McCombs and Shaw who emphasize the agenda-setting theory in shaping public attention to certain issues. (Tucker et al., 2018) . This study offers a new perspective by combining two important elements in complementary political communication: narratives that encourage empathy and understanding, and dramatizations that increase audience appeal and engagement.

In communication studies, this study provides an important theoretical contribution by strengthening the existence of agenda-setting theory and framing theory in the context of political communication. Agenda-setting theory emphasizes the importance of the media in determining the issues that will become the focus of public attention. (Mulyana, 2002) . Meanwhile, framing theory explains how the media presents information, which influences the audience's perspective on the issue. Narratives and dramatizations in political content can be considered as part of effective framing to direct the audience to certain issues that are relevant to their political lives. This finding further emphasizes the importance of social media in shaping perceptions and directing public attention to issues that are considered important by candidates or political parties. (Brady et al., 2020) .

In practice, the results of this study have quite broad implications, especially for political communication practitioners, such as campaign teams or government officials who want to increase public political participation. (Crow & Wolton, 2020) . According to

these findings, communication strategies that use narratives and dramatization can increase the appeal of political content, which in turn increases public engagement in the Simultaneous Regional Elections. This is especially relevant in the context of the Regional Elections, where many potential voters, especially in areas with lower levels of participation, may feel more connected to campaigns that offer narratives and dramatic elements that are relevant to their lives. Therefore, communication strategies that utilize emotional aspects and local relevance in the presentation of political information will be more effective in attracting attention and motivating the public to participate. (Feezell, 2018) .

The results of this study also show significant differences between age groups and genders in terms of interaction with political content, which is in line with previous studies that show differences in political behavior between demographic groups. The younger generation tends to be more active in interacting with political content on social media. (Tariq et al., 2022) , while older age groups consume more information without interacting directly. (Halim et al., 2025) . This shows the importance of adjusting political communication strategies for various audience segments. Therefore, campaign teams that want to reach young voters should consider using social media more intensively with content that is easily accessible and relevant to their life experiences. (Sulastri et al., 2024) , while campaigns for older voters may be more effective if conducted in a more traditional manner, but still utilizing the power of strong narratives and visuals. (Dankwah & Mensah, 2021) .

Comparison with other studies shows that these findings are not only consistent with research suggesting that narratives in political campaigns can increase voter turnout, but also broaden our understanding of how dramatic elements can play an important role in local political contexts. (Lee et al., 2022) . Serap s ah and Sevgihan highlighted the importance of narrative in influencing voter behavior in the United States, but this study adds a new dimension by including dramatization as an element that serves to strengthen political messages. (Serapşah & Sevgihan, 2023) . By including these two variables, this study provides a more complete picture of the factors influencing political participation in the context of regional elections in Indonesia, a context that has not previously been widely explored in global political communication research.

The findings also provide important insights into the multidisciplinary relevance of political communication. This research is not only relevant in communication studies, but also in sociology and political science. From a sociological perspective, the results of this study show how media, through narratives and dramatizations, can shape people's political identities and influence how they interact with political issues. (Ardipandanto, 2020) . In political science, this finding explains how political messages can be used to increase voter participation, which is very important in the context of local democracy. (Goldberg & Sciarini, 2023; Oni et al., 2024) . These findings also have relevance in the field of information technology, as they can be used to design social media algorithms that encourage public political participation in more constructive and informative discussions. (Antila, 2024) .

The implications of these findings are also very important for governments and social institutions working to encourage public political participation. By understanding how narratives and dramatizations can increase public engagement, they can design more effective campaigns to educate the public about the importance of participating in elections and other democratic processes. In addition, the results of this study open up space for further research in the field of political communication, especially related to the use of digital technology and social media in the context of local politics. Future research can delve deeper into how the use of narratives and dramatizations can be adapted to various existing social media platforms, or how these elements work on different types of voters with different social backgrounds. (Osimen & Adeyefa, 2024) .

Recommendations for further research include expanding the scope of this study to other regions in Indonesia that have different social and political contexts. Further research can use qualitative methods to dig deeper into individual perceptions of narratives and dramatizations in political content. In addition, research that utilizes big data or social media analytics can provide deeper insights into how audiences interact with political content and how narrative and dramatization elements influence their behavioral patterns. (Demirbaga et al., 2024; Mathaisel & Comm, 2021; Sahu & Gupta, 2024) .

This study successfully shows that narrative and dramatization in political content have a significant impact on public political participation. The results of this study enrich the existing literature in political communication studies and provide practical contributions to the development of more effective political communication strategies in the digital era. These findings also have broad relevance in various disciplines, and open up opportunities for further research that can explore the dynamics of political communication in a local context. Thus, the results of this study are not only relevant to academics, but also to communication practitioners and political actors who want to increase public participation in the democratic process.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to examine the influence of narrative and dramatization in political content on public political participation in the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections in East Barito Regency. The findings show that both elements have a significant effect on the level of public political participation. These results confirm the hypothesis proposed in the introduction , which states that political narrative and dramatization in political content can motivate people to participate more actively in the political process. This study provides theoretical contributions by enriching the study of political communication, especially in terms of the role of media and political communication in shaping public perception and participation. Practically, the results of this study are relevant for political communication strategies, especially in the context of regional elections and to influence political participation patterns among young voters and other community groups. Prospects for developing this research include expanding the scope

of research to other regions in Indonesia with different social characteristics, as well as the application of social media analysis to explore public interaction with political content. In addition, further research can explore how narrative and dramatization are adapted to various digital platforms to strengthen political participation in this digital era.

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