

# Analysis of political reciprocity in the coalition strategy of Prabowo-Gibran in the 2024 general election

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**Abstract:** This study aims to examine the political coalition between Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka in the 2024 Presidential Election, using the concepts of political reciprocity and social exchange theory. The coalition brings together two figures with distinct characteristics and voter bases: Prabowo, an experienced political figure with a conservative voter base, and Gibran, a younger figure targeting progressive voters, particularly from the millennial and Gen Z generations. This research highlights the relationship between the two figures in forming a mutually beneficial coalition through strategic political resource exchanges. The introduction outlines the importance of political coalitions in the 2024 election as a key factor for victory. The coalition between Prabowo and Gibran aims to combine their political strengths and maximize electoral opportunities. The social exchange theory applied in this study reveals that the coalition is essentially a transaction involving the exchange of political resources between the involved parties. This includes political support, legitimacy, and access to a wider voter network. Additionally, the study investigates the role of media in introducing and shaping the political image of both figures. Mass media, both traditional and social, plays a crucial role in shaping public perception of the political alliance and influencing voter opinions ahead of the election. The analysis also examines how the coalition impacts the dynamics of political parties, with Gerindra and Golkar playing pivotal roles in supporting the pair. By applying political reciprocity and social exchange theories, this study offers insights into how political alliance strategies function in the context of Indonesia's 2024 election.

**Keywords:** Political coalition, Prabowo Subianto, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, political reciprocity, 2024 presidential election.

## INTRODUCTION

The 2024 presidential election in Indonesia represents a pivotal moment in the nation's political development, not only due to the stakes involved in securing executive and legislative power, but also because the political coalitions formed reflect a significant shift in Indonesia's political structure. In the ongoing democratic process, coalition dynamics play a critical role in shaping the political power map. One of the most interesting coalitions to analyze in the context of the 2024 election is the alliance between Prabowo Subianto, the presidential candidate from the Gerindra Party, and Gibran Rakabuming Raka, the vice-presidential candidate endorsed by the Golongan Karya Party, despite his affiliation with the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P). This coalition does not only aim to maximize political strength leading up to the election, but it also exemplifies how the concept of political reciprocity operates in the practice of Indonesian politics.

Political reciprocity in the context of the Prabowo-Gibran coalition refers to the mutual relationship between two political figures who give and receive benefits in pursuit of common goals. This concept involves careful consideration in aligning differing political interests and establishing agreements to

secure greater power within Indonesia's political system. The coalition is not just ideologically driven, but also based on strategic considerations that involve the political gains for both parties. Thus, political reciprocity encompasses not just the exchange of support, but also agreements on power-sharing, access to resources, and strengthening their bargaining positions within the broader political structure.

In the 2024 election, the Prabowo-Gibran coalition is seen as a strong contender for power. Prabowo, supported by Gerindra and several other major parties, has a solid support base, particularly among military elements, former officials, and segments of society seeking leadership change. Meanwhile, Gibran, as the son of President Joko Widodo, brings political advantages through his popularity and strong appeal among young voters and the President's loyal supporters. Gibran's presence in this coalition broadens Prabowo's support base, which was previously stronger among conservative and nationalist voters. On the other hand, for Gibran, this alliance offers strong political legitimacy from Prabowo, a figure with substantial influence in national politics, while also introducing him to voters who might not have been significantly impacted by his family's presidential legacy.

In this context, political reciprocity serves as the underlying principle that fosters the coalition. Despite their differing political backgrounds, Prabowo and Gibran leverage each other's strengths to enhance their positions in the 2024 political landscape. For Prabowo, Gibran's support is a strategic step to attract young voters and the influential backing of the President's family. Conversely, for Gibran, Prabowo's support enables him to forge stronger alliances with major political parties and access critical political resources needed for electoral success.

From this perspective, the Prabowo-Gibran alliance is not merely a pragmatic political agreement but a reciprocal relationship that benefits both parties. This underscores that in politics, particularly within a multiparty system like Indonesia's, coalition relationships are often formed out of strategic needs that complement one another. According to Meara (2017), in modern politics, reciprocal relationships between political actors are often key to building strong, sustainable coalitions. A successful coalition is not only evaluated by ideological or programmatic similarities, but also by the ability of each party to meet mutual needs and strengthen their respective bargaining positions.

Analyzing political reciprocity in the Prabowo-Gibran coalition is crucial to understanding the dynamics of Indonesian politics in the 2024 election. One of the intriguing aspects of this coalition is how the two leaders have successfully created synergy despite their different backgrounds. Prabowo, with his extensive political experience and influence among nationalist and conservative voters, is able to leverage Gibran's political capital as the President's son, while Gibran's youth and popularity provide a new dimension of support to Prabowo's base.

This coalition further demonstrates that in Indonesia's political landscape, alliances are not solely based on shared ideologies or values. The Prabowo-Gibran partnership reflects a rational strategic calculation

where both parties utilize each other's potential to secure power. According to Smith (2021), in a competitive political system like Indonesia, coalition strategies are vital to determining electoral outcomes. By forming an effective coalition and considering available potentials, political actors can significantly enhance their chances of winning in an increasingly competitive political environment.

In this analysis, a relevant theory to explain the dynamics of the Prabowo-Gibran coalition is Social Exchange Theory. As explained by George C. Homans (1958), this theory views social relationships as transactions involving the exchange of resources that benefit both parties. In politics, this social exchange manifests in forms of political support, power, and legitimacy provided by each party to achieve a greater collective goal. The Prabowo-Gibran coalition, in this context, can be seen as a political transaction where Prabowo offers support from a major party and political experience, while Gibran provides appeal among young voters and the positive image of the President's family. Both parties offer complementary benefits, creating a mutually advantageous reciprocal relationship.

Social Exchange Theory also emphasizes the importance of sustained interaction between the parties involved. In the case of the Prabowo-Gibran coalition, this relationship does not end with the formation of the alliance but continues throughout the election campaign. Each party must maintain and strengthen this relationship to ensure the coalition remains effective and capable of facing the political challenges that arise during the campaign period. By continuously maintaining mutual benefits, the coalition can ensure political stability and strengthen Prabowo and Gibran's positions in the eyes of the public.

Sari, Syafitri Yona, and Adlin Adlin. (2018) researched the political coalition that established good relations with political parties in the 2015 regional elections and they were defeated in the regional elections, this research shows that there was no good reciprocal relationship between the coalition of candidates Indra and Putra and saw the difference in votes in the regional elections which was only slightly raised by 389 votes. Next, the research conducted by Aulian (2024) discusses the 2020 regional elections in West Tanjung Jabung Regency, which have 3 candidate candidates, one of which is Anwar Sadat and Hairan who are supported by the PAN Gerindra and PKS parties which are members of the "Berkah" coalition, although both of them are pure cadres of the PAN party, there are two other parties that also support them, the researcher sees how the role of these two parties is in supporting and determining candidates, and it turns out that there is political agitation and internal agreements and prioritizing a sense of rationality in uniting candidates and political propaganda demanding that Hairun leave PAN and join Gerindra.

Previous research discussed how coalitions occur without further analysis of the strategies used, in this study, the researcher emphasizes the reciprocal relationship of the political strategies implemented, the Advanced Indonesia Coalition (KIM) which supports Prabowo-Gibran provides support both formally and materially in making candidate pair number 02 a success as President and Vice President of

Indonesia, this study also shows how the strategy used to achieve the goals of the reciprocal relationship is by coordinating with the entire coalition.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with content analysis to understand the political coalition dynamics between Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election, focusing on the concept of political reciprocity within their alliance. A qualitative approach was chosen because the study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the coalition formation process, the exchanges between both parties, and their political strategies, without relying on interviews or surveys.

The qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the social phenomena within the political context, offering a holistic understanding of the relationship between political actors. It examines the formation of the Prabowo-Gibran coalition, considering factors such as shared goals, political needs, and mutual political support. This approach avoids the reliance on quantitative data, such as numbers or statistics, and instead focuses on the interaction patterns involved in coalition building (Creswell, 2014).

The method used is content analysis, which aims to extract relevant information from various written sources, such as media reports, campaign speeches, political declarations, and official documents from the parties involved. Content analysis helps identify patterns or themes in political communication, revealing the reciprocal relationships between the two actors. By analyzing recorded political texts from media coverage, the study can assess how Prabowo and Gibran exchange support in terms of electability, political image, and party strength, shedding light on how their political communication shapes the direction of their 2024 coalition (Krippendorff, 2018).

Additionally, document analysis is used to further explore the context and background of the Prabowo-Gibran coalition. Documents like official statements from political parties, media reports, and campaign materials provide deeper insight into how the political actors position themselves in the alliance and strategize to win the 2024 election. Bowen (2009) asserts that document analysis is an effective method for evaluating data from written sources, especially in exploring the political narratives conveyed by Prabowo and Gibran through official communication channels.

The study applies Social Exchange Theory to understand the reciprocal relationships within the Prabowo-Gibran coalition. This theory posits that social relationships, including political ones, are based on reciprocal transactions where both parties give and receive benefits. In the context of this coalition, these exchanges take the form of political support, including electability and other political resources such as party strength and each actor's political image. Using Social Exchange Theory, the

study analyzes how both parties weigh the benefits and risks of the coalition and manage this relationship to ensure mutual gain throughout the 2024 campaign.

Through a qualitative approach and content analysis, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the political strategies employed by Prabowo and Gibran in forming a mutually beneficial alliance. This study not only examines their reciprocal relationship but also offers insights into how they designed a coalition that strengthens their positions for the 2024 election. By analyzing political communication in media and official documents, this research contributes to a better understanding of the political dynamics in Indonesia, particularly in relation to coalition strategies during the 2024 election.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Prabowo-Gibran Coalition and Political Reciprocity

The coalition between Prabowo Subianto, the presidential candidate from the Gerindra Party, and Gibran Rakabuming Raka, the vice-presidential candidate endorsed by the Golkar Party, serves as a concrete example of the application of the concept of political reciprocity in Indonesian politics. Political reciprocity refers to political relationships based on mutual benefit, where each party gains advantages from the alliance. In this context, the coalition between Prabowo and Gibran reflects a mutually beneficial relationship, with both parties leveraging their unique political resources to enhance their chances of success in the 2024 Presidential Election.

This coalition becomes even more significant given the contrasting yet complementary backgrounds of the two figures. Prabowo Subianto is known as a nationalist figure with extensive political experience, while Gibran Rakabuming Raka, though relatively new to politics, brings appeal as a young and innovative leader who connects well with the millennial and Gen Z generations. Initially seen as an unconventional pairing, this alliance has become an interesting political strategy because it effectively reaches a broader voter base.

As a presidential candidate, Prabowo Subianto has a strong support base, particularly among conservative voters. With his military background and political experience, Prabowo has established himself as a firm nationalist leader focused on national stability. This is reflected in the January 2024 electability survey by Indikator Politik Indonesia, where Prabowo holds the top position with 35.6% support. This figure indicates that Prabowo holds significant appeal among traditional voters, including supporters from the Gerindra Party, the National Mandate Party (PAN), and other parties in his coalition.

However, despite having a strong support base, Prabowo faces the challenge of reaching young and progressive voters. This group tends to seek out younger, dynamic figures who bring forward-thinking

visions relevant to future needs. In this context, Gibran Rakabuming Raka's role as the vice-presidential candidate becomes crucial in expanding Prabowo's political appeal.

Gibran Rakabuming Raka adds distinct value to this coalition. As the Mayor of Solo, Gibran has built a reputation as a progressive and innovative young leader. Additionally, his status as the son of President Joko Widodo brings the added advantage of popularity and political legitimacy in the eyes of the public. In a survey by Litbang Kompas at the end of 2023, Gibran recorded an electability rate of 28% among voters aged 18-34, higher than other young political figures running in the 2024 election.

Gibran's strength in attracting young voters is particularly relevant in the current political dynamics of Indonesia, where more than 50% of voters are from the millennial and Gen Z generations. This group has different political preferences from traditional voters, focusing on issues like sustainability, inclusivity, and technology-driven policies. Therefore, Gibran's presence as a vice-presidential candidate not only broadens the coalition's voter base but also offers Prabowo a chance to become more relevant to the younger generation.

The Prabowo-Gibran coalition reflects the practical application of the political reciprocity theory in politics. In this relationship, both political actors offer support that matches the resources and strengths they possess. Prabowo brings political experience, an extensive network, and a conservative support base, while Gibran offers appeal among young and progressive voters. This relationship embodies the principle of reciprocity as explained in George Homans' social exchange theory (1958), where each party strives to maximize the benefits of the relationship while minimizing costs or losses.

According to Homans, social relationships, including political relationships, are based on the principle of reciprocity, where each party seeks to gain benefits that are comparable or greater than the contributions they make. In the case of this coalition, Prabowo gains access to a younger voter segment more supportive of Gibran, while Gibran gains political legitimacy from Prabowo's experience and network. As such, this coalition not only benefits both parties but also creates a synergy that strengthens their competitiveness in the 2024 Presidential Election.

In the context of Indonesian politics, political reciprocity often serves as the foundation for forming strategic coalitions. According to Meara (2017), political relationships based on political reciprocity involve exchanges of mutually beneficial resources, where both parties ensure that their contributions are valued equally. In the case of the Prabowo-Gibran coalition, the benefits gained by each party are clear. Prabowo gains increased popularity among younger voters, a segment that has historically been a challenge for him. On the other hand, Gibran benefits from political support from the large parties in Prabowo's coalition, which enhances his legitimacy and strengthens his national position.



This coalition also reflects a shift in political strategy in Indonesia, where alliances are no longer based solely on ideological similarity but also on pragmatic considerations such as popularity, electability, and the ability to attract voters from various segments. In other words, political reciprocity not only reflects cooperation between two political figures but also serves as a tool for achieving broader political goals through the synergy of resources.

While this coalition has great potential, there are challenges that both parties must face. One of the main challenges is aligning their different visions and missions, considering their contrasting ideological backgrounds and leadership styles. Additionally, the coalition must address public skepticism regarding Gibran's political legitimacy, as some view his political career as relying solely on his status as the son of President Joko Widodo.

However, if these challenges are overcome, the Prabowo-Gibran coalition has promising prospects for the 2024 election. With the combination of experience and popularity, this coalition has the potential to create a broader and more diverse support base. According to a February 2024 survey by Saiful Mujani Research and Consulting (SMRC), the Prabowo-Gibran pair has a combined electability rate of 45.2%, positioning them as one of the strongest candidates in the political contest this year.

The coalition between Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka is a concrete example of the application of the concept of political reciprocity in Indonesian politics. By leveraging the political resources each possesses, this coalition not only reflects a mutually beneficial relationship but also demonstrates how pragmatic strategies can be the key to success in modern political contests despite facing various challenges, including criticism of dynastic political practices and issues of democracy settling, the combination of Prabowo Subianto's military-political experience and Gibran Rakabuming Raka's appeal among young voters provides a significant strategic advantage in the 2024 Election contest. Data from the General Elections Commission (KPU) shows that voters from the millennial and Gen Z generations reach more than 56% of the total fixed voter list, making this group the main determinant of the election results. In the latest survey by Indikator Politik Indonesia, the Prabowo-Gibran pair gained dominant support from the 17–30 age group, namely 52.4% from Gen Z and 40% from millennials, outperforming other pairs.

This combination creates a blend of political stability and renewal—Prabowo offers national political experience and networks, while Gibran represents the hope for a fresher, digital-native political regeneration that is responsive to issues such as digital transformation, the creative economy, and climate change. If managed professionally and inclusively, this condition not only has the potential to win the election, but it can also set a new precedent in Indonesian politics, namely an alliance model that is not only pragmatic, but also progressive—combining seniority and popularity with a mutually

beneficial distribution of roles. This can open up a space format that contains a future that is more adaptive to the dynamics of demographics and the expectations of young people in the digital era.

### **Political Resource Exchange in the Prabowo-Gibran Coalition**

The coalition between Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka in the 2024 Presidential Election reflects a strategic and mutually beneficial exchange of political resources. This collaboration is not merely a meeting of two political figures, but also a representation of an alliance that allows both sides to complement each other by leveraging their respective strengths. In the dynamic and competitive political context of Indonesia, this coalition represents a significant step with profound implications for the national political landscape.

As a presidential candidate from the Gerindra Party, Prabowo Subianto brings a wealth of political resources. Prabowo has extensive experience in Indonesian politics, ranging from his military background to serving as a minister. His political network spans major political parties, conservative voter communities, and military groups, making him an influential figure. Known for his firm stance and experience, Prabowo has built a reputation as a strong leader, particularly among older and conservative voters. According to a 2023 Litbang Kompas survey, Prabowo's electability among conservative voters reaches over 45%, reflecting his political dominance in this segment.

On the other hand, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, the son of President Joko Widodo, brings a different kind of political strength. His popularity is particularly high among younger voters and the millennial generation. As the mayor of Solo, Gibran is known as an innovative, progressive leader who is close to the people. His status as part of the presidential family enhances his appeal, especially in areas that support the Jokowi administration. According to a 2023 Charta Politika survey, Gibran's name recognition stands at 82% among young voters, with 60% of them viewing Gibran as a symbol of change.

This coalition leverages each party's unique strengths to complement one another. Prabowo offers political stability and a broad organizational power base, while Gibran offers popularity among younger, more progressive voters. This combination provides a competitive advantage in facing the tight race of the 2024 election. For example, Prabowo, who might not be as appealing to younger voters, can utilize Gibran's attraction to engage that demographic. Conversely, Gibran can strengthen his political position by tapping into Prabowo's networks and experience.

Beyond the individual level, this coalition also involves the exchange of political resources from the major parties involved. Gerindra, led by Prabowo, has strong influence in the legislature and among conservative voters in various regions. Meanwhile, Golkar, Gibran's primary supporting party, has a wide network among loyal Jokowi supporters. The combination of Gerindra and other supporting



parties creates a solid political platform, uniting support from various segments of society. In political analysis, this is referred to as “strategic coalition building”, where major parties work together to strengthen their bargaining position amid growing competition.

The exchange of political resources is also reflected in the campaign strategy. Gerindra, with its logistical capabilities and mass mobilization strength, can help expand Gibran's reach to conservative regions. On the other hand, Golkar, as the primary backer, can capitalize on Gibran's image to attract progressive voters in urban areas. In this context, the Prabowo-Gibran coalition aims not only to win the election but also to create a larger synergy for building a more solid political base in the future.

In the context of the 2024 election, this coalition faces significant challenges due to Indonesia's highly competitive democratic system. The election uses an open proportional system. The open proportional general system is an election system in which voters not only choose political parties, but can also directly choose legislative candidates (caleg) from the party. This means that the voter's vote will determine the number of seats obtained by the party and which legislative candidates are elected based on the most votes among the party's legislative candidates. which requires parties and candidates to compete for votes in each region. In this system, individual popularity is a critical factor in determining success. Therefore, the combination of Prabowo's experience and wide networks with Gibran's popularity among young voters becomes a highly effective strategy. According to social exchange theory, the coalition is based on mutual benefit, where both sides exchange resources to achieve common goals (Blau, 1964).

Moreover, this coalition underscores the importance of adapting to the national political dynamics. Today, the youth generation is one of the largest voter segments in Indonesian history, with more than 53 million voters under the age of 40 in the 2024 election (General Election Commission, 2023). In this context, Gibran becomes a strategic asset for Prabowo to tap into this segment. Conversely, Prabowo provides the legitimacy and stability that Gibran needs to strengthen his position in the national political arena.

However, the coalition also faces criticism Prabowo and Gibran. Some view the collaboration between Prabowo and Gibran as a pragmatic effort focused more on short-term political interests rather than long-term vision. For example, opposition groups criticize the coalition as primarily aiming to maintain political elite power, without addressing substantive issues such as economic reform and anti-corruption measures. This criticism presents a challenge for the Prabowo-Gibran coalition to prove that their alliance is not just a political tool but also a platform for driving greater change.

From a political sociology perspective, the coalition between Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka reflects a profound shift in the dynamics of Indonesian politics. For decades,

Indonesian politics has been dominated by senior figures with military backgrounds or large political parties operating in a patronage system. This dominance has created a political structure that tends to be closed and centered on exclusive power networks. However, with the entry of the millennial generation and Gen Z as the majority voter group, the political landscape has changed significantly. The latest data from the KPU shows that more than 56% of voters in the 2024 Election come from this generation, which is known for its more inclusive, progressive, and technology-based political preferences. This shows that Indonesian politics is entering a transition phase, where leadership is no longer determined solely by seniority or experience, but also by the ability to respond to social and cultural changes brought about by the younger generation.

In this context, Gibran emerges as a symbol of political regeneration that brings a breath of fresh air to young voters. As Seymour Martin Lipset (1959) put it, changes in political structures often occur when new generations with different political values and orientations enter the political space. Gibran, as a young figure who is closer to the mindset and aspirations of the millennial and Gen Z generations, represents new values that are more open, transparent, and technology-based. By utilizing social media to the fullest, Gibran has succeeded in building a political image that is more familiar and acceptable to young voters who are increasingly critical of traditional politics. On the other hand, Prabowo Subianto, as a figure rooted in old political power, offers continuity that is seen as a guarantee of stability and experience. The alliance between the two creates an interesting contradiction—a combination of innovation and stability, which has the potential to accommodate diverse aspirations in the Indonesian political body.

However, the success of this coalition is not only determined by the electoral appeal brought by Gibran, but also by the coalition's ability to manage the complex exchange of political resources. Gerindra and its supporting parties, such as Golkar and PAN, have ideological bases and interests that are not always aligned, which can cause internal tensions within the alliance. These differences reflect the tension between the need to maintain short-term political stability and the need to respond to broader socio-political dynamics. Within the framework of Peter Blau's theory of political resource exchange, this coalition relies on mutually beneficial transactions between parties with different ideologies and interests. Gerindra contributes political strength through its solid party infrastructure and influence among conservative voters, while Gibran brings broader appeal to young, progressive voters.

As a coalition that combines elements from two ideological poles, Prabowo-Gibran's success in overcoming these differences will depend largely on their ability to align their political visions. Gibran's role as a bridge between the old and new generations is crucial in creating a synergy between stability and renewal. Without proper management of these differences, the coalition risks disintegrating, as has often happened to previous Indonesian political coalitions that failed to

overcome internal tensions.

From a long-term perspective, the Prabowo-Gibran coalition has the potential to reshape Indonesia's political landscape. Their success will not only depend on winning elections, but also on their capacity to offer solutions to the structural problems facing the country, such as social inequality, corruption, and the failure of the government system to provide equitable welfare. In this sense, this coalition can serve as an interesting political experiment, testing the extent to which the exchange of political resources and synergies between different generations can create meaningful change in Indonesia's political system.

However, to achieve this goal, the coalition must be able to overcome criticism from politicians and observers who question whether the relationship between Prabowo and Gibran is driven more by electoral pragmatism or has a stronger ideological foundation. Are they able to overcome the increasingly sharp polarization in society? Can they formulate and implement policies that can unite the various fragmented groups in Indonesian politics? These questions are key to the future of the Prabowo-Gibran coalition and whether they are truly able to create significant political change, or simply follow old political patterns that focus more on gaining power without the substance of deep change.

### **The Role of Media in the Prabowo-Gibran Coalition**

Mass media plays a crucial role in shaping political dynamics, especially in the context of the coalition between Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka for the 2024 Presidential Election. Media is not only a tool for disseminating information but also serves as an arena for shaping political image and influence, significantly affecting public opinion. In this coalition, the media acts as a bridge connecting both political figures to their supporters and introduces the dynamics of the alliance they have built. By utilizing various platforms, from print media to television and social media, the political messages related to this coalition can be conveyed to the public more broadly and effectively. Moreover, the media plays a role in interpreting the relationship between Prabowo and Gibran, offering a narrative that can shape public perception of the coalition's benefits for the welfare of society.

Mass media not only functions as a political information spreader but also as an opinion-shaper that can influence voters' perceptions of the coalition. According to data from the General Election Commission (KPU) and research institutions like Indikator Politik Indonesia (2023), more than 70% of voters in Indonesia access political information through mass media, with the majority using digital platforms such as social media and online news portals. This data highlights the powerful influence media has in shaping public opinion, particularly among younger voters and millennials who are more frequently exposed to political news online. Therefore, how the media portrays the Prabowo-Gibran alliance will significantly affect how voters assess this coalition, whether positively or negatively.

News that promotes positive images of both political figures and highlights their strengths, such as Prabowo's experience in leading a major party and Gibran's ability to reach the younger voter segment, can strengthen support for the coalition. On the other hand, critical or negative reporting, which may focus on ideological tensions or differences in their backgrounds, could lower public trust in the coalition. In this regard, the media plays a central role in balancing between presenting a favorable narrative and ensuring sustained voter support. As noted in a survey report by the Lembaga Survei Indonesia (2023), media coverage can increase voter interest in a candidate pair if the media contextualizes the coalition with issues relevant to public needs, such as economic development, reducing social inequality, and bureaucratic reform.

Additionally, media influence is proven to be significant in raising political awareness among voters, which in turn impacts their electoral decisions. With the rise of social media, particularly platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok, political communication has become more direct and interactive. Social media allows both parties in the coalition to communicate directly with their supporters, build political narratives tailored to their target audiences, and respond to rapidly developing issues. According to a report by We Are Social (2023), over 65% of Indonesia's population is active on social media, with the majority of users under 40 years old. This fact underscores the importance of social media as a strategic tool in shaping Prabowo and Gibran's political image among young voters.

However, managing relationships with the media is not without challenges. Mass media, whether pro or against the coalition, can easily influence voters' perceptions of both figures. In this case, it is crucial for both parties to maintain a consistent narrative and avoid controversies that could damage their image in the eyes of the public. For example, a survey conducted by Saiful Mujani Research and Consulting (2023) showed that uncertainty in media management could impact electability levels, as voters dissatisfied with negative reporting may become less confident in the integrity and credibility of the candidates.

In practice, media often becomes an arena for an opinion battle between supporters and opponents of the coalition. Biased or one-sided coverage can worsen the situation and trigger polarization in society. For instance, some media outlets pro-Prabowo-Gibran may emphasize the success of the programs proposed by these two figures, while opposing media could focus on criticisms or controversial issues involving them. This phenomenon shows how mass media can become an effective propaganda tool if used strategically, but it also has the potential to be a source of harmful disinformation.

In the context of social media, Prabowo and Gibran face the challenge of the spread of hoaxes and misleading information. According to a report from the Indonesian Anti-Hoax Society (2023), political hoaxes sharply increased as the 2024 elections approach, targeting political figures deemed to have a strong chance of winning. Such hoaxes can easily spread through platforms like WhatsApp and

Facebook, which remain the most widely used social media in Indonesia. To address this challenge, a well-planned communication strategy is required, including collaboration with digital platforms to track and remove misleading content.

Moreover, it is also important for both figures to use mass media as a tool for political education for the public. Rather than solely focusing on self-promotion, Prabowo and Gibran can use media to communicate their vision, mission, and detailed work programs to the public. This way, voters are not only exposed to the image or narrative constructed by the media but also gain a deeper understanding of what the coalition offers. As political communication expert McNair (2018) suggests, when used wisely, media can serve as a tool to increase public political literacy, ultimately resulting in more rational and critical voters.

However, the effectiveness of media in building the coalition's image heavily depends on the ability of both figures to handle interviews, public debates, and direct interactions with journalists. In this regard, it is important for Prabowo and Gibran to demonstrate cohesion and alignment in their vision in front of the public. Every statement they make through the media must be carefully crafted to reflect the values they wish to promote, such as integrity, justice, and the well-being of society. Communication errors, such as ambiguous or contradictory statements, can be exploited by political opponents to undermine the coalition's image.

In the long-term context, the mass media not only functions as a channel of information, but also as an agent of political reality construction that helps determine the form and direction of the Prabowo-Gibran coalition's political legacy. The pair's victory in the 2024 election marks the beginning of the formation of political legitimacy that is highly dependent on the extent to which their campaign promises are realized and effectively communicated to the public. The media has the capacity to document and frame the achievements of this government as historical legitimacy or, conversely, as structural failure. If public expectations are not met, the media has the potential to become an informal opposition actor that vocally criticizes the government's performance, questions accountability, and challenges claims of success that are not supported by empirical evidence. Thus, the media is not just a conveyor of information, but an integral part of the political process that can strengthen or undermine the credibility of power.

The Prabowo-Gibran coalition in the 2024 Election shows how mass media is used strategically as a tool for political campaigns and strengthening public image. The media not only functions as a channel for disseminating information, but also as an arena for symbolic negotiation, where images, narratives, and political legitimacy are formed and contested. Through the use of various platforms—both print media, television, and social media—this coalition actively shapes public perception of the candidate pair, by highlighting their respective strengths: Prabowo's experience and assertiveness and Gibran's

connection to the younger generation and President Jokowi's leadership legacy.

In the context of social exchange theory, the political communication strategies implemented by Prabowo and Gibran reflect a form of reciprocal relationship, where both figures provide complementary political resources: Gibran gains legitimacy and structural support from Prabowo, while Prabowo accesses a young voter base that tends to be progressive through Gibran. The media becomes the main instrument in bringing together this exchange value with the wider audience, making political information a "commodity" that can be traded in the public opinion market.

However, the effectiveness of the media in supporting the success of this coalition is highly dependent on the consistency of the narrative, the ability to manage public issues, and the ability to anticipate widespread disinformation, especially on digital platforms. Failure to manage political communication, including inconsistent messages or involvement in controversies, has the potential to reduce credibility and erode public trust in this pair. In the long term, the media is not just a campaign tool, but becomes part of the structure that forms political legitimacy and the legacy of power. Thus, the success of the Prabowo-Gibran coalition is not only determined by the election results, but also by how they build positive reciprocal relations with the media and the public in a sustainable manner.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study analyzes the political coalition between Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka in the context of the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election, using the frameworks of political reciprocity and social exchange theory. The coalition represents a strategic alliance between two political figures with distinct profiles and support bases—Prabowo as an established military and political leader with a strong conservative and nationalist voter base, and Gibran as a young political actor with significant appeal among millennial and Gen Z voters, supported by his status as the son of President Joko Widodo. This coalition is designed to be mutually reinforcing: Prabowo seeks to broaden his appeal among younger and more progressive demographics, while Gibran benefits from Prabowo's expansive political network and institutional legitimacy.

From a political reciprocity standpoint, the coalition reflects a calculated exchange of resources: voter support, legitimacy, and access to party structures. Prabowo, backed by Gerindra and other established parties, contributes political capital, national recognition, and stability. In return, Gibran offers increased visibility among young voters and a symbolic continuity with Jokowi's administration, which retains widespread popularity. This reciprocal relationship allows both actors to overcome their respective electoral limitations and present a unified front in a highly competitive political landscape.

The social exchange theory deepens this analysis by framing the coalition as a transactional relationship where both actors aim to maximize mutual benefit. Political alliances, like social relationships, are



sustained by the perceived value of what each party contributes. In this context, Gibran's youthful image and connection to Jokowi enhance the coalition's appeal to emerging voter blocs, while Prabowo's established authority and institutional experience reinforce its credibility. The combination creates a hybrid political persona that blends tradition with renewal, conservatism with progressivism.

Media plays an instrumental role in shaping public perceptions of this coalition. Traditional and digital media platforms serve as tools for political branding, narrative control, and voter engagement. Particularly, social media has enabled Gibran and Prabowo to communicate directly with the electorate, bypassing conventional media filters and appealing to younger voters who primarily access political content online. The framing of their partnership—either as a pragmatic alliance or a political compromise—has been largely influenced by how media narratives are constructed and circulated.

Nonetheless, the coalition has its challenges. Ideological discrepancies between Prabowo's conservative stance and Gibran's progressive, youth-oriented image may present obstacles to internal cohesion and consistent messaging. Additionally, the reliance on media exposure, especially through social media, makes the coalition vulnerable to misinformation, hoaxes, and targeted disinformation campaigns that can distort public perception. Maintaining a unified image while managing divergent expectations across voter segments will be critical for the coalition's sustainability and legitimacy moving forward.

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