PUBLSHER

Makwa Foundation
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Yayasan Lembaga Studi Makwa

HAKAMAIN
Journal of Sharia and Law Studies

Vol. 5 No. 2, 2026 - e-ISSN: 2962-9241

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Political Communication of 2024 West Sumatra Governor Candidates on Social Media from *Siyasah Syar'iyyah*

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‖Submitted: March 12, 2026 ‖ Accepted: May 18, 2026 ‖ Published: September 05, 2026 ‖

Abstract: This study aims to analyze the political communication of candidates in the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election through social media from the perspective of *siyasah syar'iyyah*. It examines how candidates construct political messages, develop leadership images, engage with voters, and communicate their political visions, programs, and commitments through digital platforms. This research employs a qualitative approach using descriptive-analytical methods. Data are collected through documentation and content analysis of candidates' social media accounts, including campaign posts, political statements, visual materials, and online interactions during the election campaign. The data are analyzed using the principles of *siyasah syar'iyyah*, particularly *al-'adl* (justice), *maslahah* (public interest), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *shura* (consultation), and *mas'uliyyah* (accountability). The findings demonstrate that social media serves as a strategic instrument for constructing political identities, disseminating campaign agendas, and establishing communication between candidates and voters. However, political communication also requires ethical standards to ensure that campaign messages reflect honesty, transparency, fairness, and responsibility. This study concludes that political communication through social media should not merely pursue electoral interests but also uphold Islamic ethical values and promote public welfare. Academically, this research contributes to the development of digital political communication studies by integrating contemporary electoral practices with the normative framework of *siyasah syar'iyyah*, providing an Islamic perspective for evaluating the ethical dimensions of political communication in regional democratic processes.

Keywords: Digital Politics, Gubernatorial Election, Political Communication, Siyasah Syar'iyyah, Social Media

1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has significantly transformed political communication,[1] particularly in the implementation of electoral campaigns and interactions between political candidates and voters.[2] Social media platforms have become important channels for disseminating political information,[3] presenting leadership identities,[4] promoting campaign programs,[5] and mobilizing public support. In the context of the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election, candidates utilized digital

[1] Tomaž Deželan, Alem Maksuti, and Jernej Prodnik, *Personalization of Political Communication on Social Media: The 2014 Slovenian National Election Campaign*, *Social Media and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe* (Taylor and Francis, 2017), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315657431.

[2] B Jordá and R L Holbert, *From Mass Media to Social Media: Political Persuasion in the Field of Communication*, *Media Influence on Opinion Change and Democracy: How Private, Public and Social Media Organizations Shape Public Opinion* (Springer Nature, 2024), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-70231-0_11.

[3] Chen Sabag Ben-Porat and Sam Lehman-Wilzig, *Political Discourse Through Artificial Intelligence: Parliamentary Practices and Public Perceptions of Chatbot Communication on Social Media*, *The Rhetoric of Political Leadership: Logic and Emotion in Public Discourse* (Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., 2020), https://doi.org/10.4337/9781789904581.00022.

[4] Chirinne Zebib, "Political Communication through the Prism of Social Media: How Are Lebanese Political Parties Using Facebook in Electoral Campaigns?," *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication* 38, no. 2 (2022): 87–106, https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2022-3802-06.

[5] Masahiro Yamamoto, Seungahn Nah, and Soo Young Bae, "Social Media Prosumption and Online Political Participation: An Examination of Online Communication Processes," *New Media and Society* 22, no. 10 (2020): 1885–1902, https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444819886295.

platforms to communicate their political visions, introduce their leadership profiles, and establish relationships with different segments of society. This transformation indicates that political competition increasingly takes place not only through conventional campaign activities but also through digital communication spaces characterized by rapid information circulation and direct public interaction. Nevertheless, the extensive use of social media also raises important questions concerning the quality and ethical responsibility of political communication. Political messages may serve electoral interests, construct particular public perceptions, and influence how voters understand candidates and their programs. Therefore, examining political communication in regional elections is important not only for understanding contemporary campaign strategies but also for evaluating the relationship between digital political practices, democratic participation, and ethical principles governing political leadership.

Previous studies on political communication and social media have generally examined digital campaigning, political image construction, voter participation, political branding, and the influence of online platforms on electoral processes. Other studies have focused on the relationship between social media and political mobilization, particularly how candidates and political organizations use digital content to reach wider audiences and establish communication with voters.[6] Meanwhile, research on Islamic political thought has discussed political leadership, public accountability, justice, consultation, and the realization of public welfare through various normative perspectives.[7] Although these studies provide important insights, the relationship between contemporary electoral communication and the ethical principles of Islamic political governance remains insufficiently explored.[8] In particular, limited attention has been given to how political messages, candidate representations, and digital campaign interactions can be evaluated through the framework of *siyasah syar'iyyah*.[9] This gap is particularly relevant in regional electoral contexts where religious values, local political culture, and democratic participation intersect. Consequently, an integrated analysis is necessary to understand not only how candidates communicate through social media but also how their communication practices relate to Islamic principles of political responsibility.

Existing studies provide a foundation for understanding the relationship between digital media, electoral competition, and political participation. Research on digital political communication emphasizes the strategic use of social media for political branding, message dissemination, and voter engagement, while studies of Islamic political thought offer normative principles for assessing political authority and leadership responsibilities. However, these two scholarly discussions are frequently examined separately, resulting in limited analytical integration between empirical digital communication practices and Islamic political ethics. This study addresses that limitation by positioning *siyasah syar'iyyah* as an analytical framework for examining the political communication of candidates in the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election. Unlike studies that primarily assess the effectiveness of digital campaigns or the popularity of political figures, this research focuses on the substance, orientation, and ethical dimensions of political messages. It examines political communication through the principles of *al-'adl* (justice), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *maslahah* (public interest), *shura* (consultation), and *mas'uliyyah* (accountability). This positioning enables the study to connect observable communication practices with normative expectations of responsible political leadership in an Islamic perspective.

The objective of this study is to analyze the political communication of candidates in the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election through social media from the perspective of *siyasah syar'iyyah*. Specifically, it examines the construction of political messages, the representation of candidate

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[6] Dimas Subekti, Dyah Mutiarin, and Achmad Nurmandi, "Political Communication in Social Media: A Bibliometrics Analysis," *Studies in Media and Communication* 11, no. 6 (2023): 299–313, https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v11i6.6214.

[7] Patrícia. M F Coelho, Pedro A P Correia, and Irene Garcia Medina, "Social Media: A New Way of Public and Political Communication in Digital Media," *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies* 11, no. 6 (2017): 150–57, https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v11i6.6876.

[8] Michal Krzyzanowski, *Digital Diplomacy or Political Communication? Exploring Social Media in the EU Institutions from a Critical Discourse Perspective*, *Digital Diplomacy and International Organisations: Autonomy, Legitimacy and Contestation* (Taylor and Francis, 2020), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003032724-4.

[9] Zainuddin Zainuddin et al., "Siyāsah Shar'iyyah and the Politicization of Religion in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election," *AHKAM : Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 22, no. 2 (December 31, 2022), https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v22i2.28165.

leadership, the dissemination of political visions and programs, and the forms of interaction established with voters through digital platforms. This study argues that social media should not be understood merely as a campaign instrument for gaining electoral support but also as a public communication space in which political accountability and ethical leadership are articulated. From the perspective of *siyasah syar'iyyah*, responsible political communication should reflect justice, trustworthiness, consultation, accountability, and the pursuit of public welfare. Accordingly, this study develops an integrated understanding of digital political communication by examining its strategic dimensions and normative implications. Through this approach, the research contributes to the broader discussion of Islamic political ethics, contemporary electoral practices, and the development of responsible democratic communication in Indonesia.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design to examine the political communication of candidates in the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election through social media from the perspective of *siyasah syar'iyyah*. The qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of political messages, communication strategies, candidate representations, and interactions with voters in digital spaces. The research focuses on the official social media accounts of gubernatorial and vice-gubernatorial candidates participating in the 2024 West Sumatra regional election. The research was conducted in West Sumatra, Indonesia, with digital observation covering the official campaign period from January to March 2024. The research materials consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data include social media publications, campaign statements, photographs, videos, and audience interactions, while secondary data comprise relevant academic literature, election regulations, official documents, and publications concerning Islamic political thought. The research subjects were selected purposively based on their relevance to the research objectives, particularly their involvement in electoral communication and political campaigning through digital platforms.

Data collection was conducted through digital observation, documentation, and content analysis. Digital observation was used to identify communication patterns, campaign strategies, political narratives, and forms of interaction presented through candidates' social media accounts, particularly Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and other platforms where relevant campaign activities were documented. Documentation involved collecting publicly accessible posts, captions, photographs, videos, campaign statements, and audience responses published during the designated research period. The data collection was conducted from [month] to [month] [year] by the researcher, who systematically identified, recorded, classified, and archived relevant digital materials. The selection of data followed purposive sampling criteria, including the authenticity of accounts, relevance to the gubernatorial election, publication dates, and substantive connections with political communication. Additional information was obtained from official election documents and relevant publications to contextualize the candidates' communication activities. Data collection instruments consisted of observation guidelines, documentation sheets, and a coding framework designed to categorize political messages, communication objectives, leadership representations, campaign issues, and audience engagement. These procedures ensured that the collected materials were relevant, traceable, and systematically organized for subsequent analysis.

Data analysis was conducted through an iterative process involving data reduction, data classification, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. Initially, the collected materials were screened to identify relevant political communication content and eliminate duplicated or unrelated publications. Subsequently, the data were categorized into analytical themes, including political messaging, leadership image construction, campaign strategies, voter engagement, and the presentation of political programs. The classified data were then interpreted using the framework of *siyasah syar'iyyah*, particularly the principles of *al-'adl* (justice), *maslahah* (public interest), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *shura* (consultation), and *mas'uliyyah* (accountability). This framework was employed to assess the relationship between candidates' digital communication practices and Islamic ethical principles in political leadership.

Methodological rigor was maintained through source triangulation, repeated examination of digital materials, systematic documentation, and consistency in applying the analytical categories. The authenticity of social media accounts and publication records was also examined to minimize errors in data interpretation. Furthermore, relevant election documents and scholarly literature were used to strengthen contextual understanding and support the credibility of the findings.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Political Message Construction and Leadership Representation on Social Media

Political communication during the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election demonstrated how social media became a strategic space for constructing political messages and presenting candidate leadership identities. Candidates used digital publications, campaign narratives, photographs, videos, and statements to communicate their political visions, development priorities, and commitments to the electorate. These messages generally emphasized regional development, public welfare, religious values, cultural identity, and leadership experience. The construction of political messages was not limited to conveying electoral promises but also involved presenting candidates as figures capable of representing the aspirations and expectations of West Sumatran society. Through the selection of particular themes, visual representations, and communication styles, candidates attempted to establish distinctive political identities. This phenomenon illustrates that digital political communication involves both the transmission of information and the symbolic construction of political legitimacy. Consequently, social media provided candidates with opportunities to shape public perceptions of their leadership through narratives that connected individual political identities with broader regional aspirations.

The construction of political messages was influenced by several interconnected factors, including electoral competition, local sociocultural characteristics, religious values, and the characteristics of digital communication platforms. The political and cultural environment of West Sumatra provided an important context for presenting leadership narratives that incorporated Islamic values and Minangkabau traditions. The relationship between *adat* and Islam, commonly expressed through the philosophy of *Adat Basandi Syara', Syara' Basandi Kitabullah*, also provided a cultural reference for communicating political identities and regional leadership expectations. Furthermore, social media encouraged candidates to develop messages that were visually attractive, concise, and easily circulated among different audiences. These characteristics influenced how political issues were selected, framed, and presented to the public. Competition among candidates also encouraged the development of distinctive narratives concerning leadership capacity, regional development, and public commitments. Accordingly, political message construction emerged from the interaction between electoral interests, local political culture, religious references, and the communicative opportunities offered by digital platforms.

The implications of political message construction extend beyond the dissemination of campaign information because digital narratives contribute to shaping public expectations concerning leadership and regional governance.[10] Political messages that emphasize development,[11] religious identity,[12] and social welfare can establish connections between candidates and the sociocultural values of their constituencies.[13] However, the presence of religious and cultural references in campaign communication does not automatically demonstrate that political practices reflect the ethical principles associated with

[10] Justin Bonest Phillips, "Negative Political Communication on Social Media and the Gender Gap: A Study of Men's and Women's Reactions to Presidential Candidate Attacks on Facebook in 2012 and 2016," *Politics and Gender* 17, no. 3 (2021): 454–82, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X1900059X.

[11] Prayogo Pujo Haryono et al., "Social Media Contribution as a Political Communication Strategy Tool in Forming the Political Image of Presidential Candidates in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election," *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology* 100, no. 22 (2022): 6717–26, https://www.scopus.com/pages/publications/85143442311?origin=resultslist.

[12] Franziska Marquart, Jakob Ohme, and Judith Möller, "Following Politicians on Social Media: Effects on Political Information, Peer Communication, and Youth Engagement," *Media and Communication* 8, no. 2 (2020): 196–207, https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v8i2.2764.

[13] Martin Karlsson and Joachim Åström, "Social Media and Political Communication: Innovation and Normalization in Parallel," *Journal of Language and Politics* 17, no. 2 (2018): 305–23, https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.17006.kar.

those values.[14] From the perspective of *siyasah syar'iyyah*, political messages should be evaluated according to their substantive commitment to *al-'adl* (justice), *amanah* (trustworthiness), and *maslahah* (public interest). This distinction is important because political communication may construct favorable leadership images without necessarily providing sufficient explanations concerning the implementation of campaign promises. Therefore, the transformative implication of digital political communication lies in its potential to move beyond symbolic representation toward more transparent, accountable, and publicly oriented political commitments.

3.2. Digital Campaign Strategies and Voter Engagement

The second result concerns the use of social media as a medium for disseminating campaign programs and establishing communication with voters during the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election. Candidates utilized digital content to introduce political agendas, communicate development priorities, publicize campaign activities, and respond to issues attracting public attention. These activities demonstrate that social media provides opportunities for political actors to distribute information without depending entirely on conventional communication channels. Digital campaign strategies also involved the use of visual materials, written narratives, videos, and interactive features to attract public attention and encourage audience participation. The forms of voter engagement included responses to campaign publications, comments, content sharing, and other visible interactions on digital platforms. Nevertheless, the existence of online engagement should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of substantive political participation or electoral support. Rather, these interactions indicate the availability of communication channels through which candidates and voters can exchange political information, express concerns, and participate in the broader digital campaign environment.

The development of digital campaign strategies was influenced by the accessibility of social media, the characteristics of online audiences, electoral competition, and the changing patterns of political information consumption. Each platform provides different communication features that influence how political messages are presented and received. Visual-oriented content facilitates the presentation of campaign activities and candidate personalities, while written publications enable the communication of political statements and development programs. The interactive characteristics of digital platforms also allow candidates and campaign organizations to respond to public comments and circulate information more rapidly. In addition, the competitive nature of gubernatorial elections encourages political actors to maintain digital visibility and distinguish their campaign narratives from those of their competitors. The sociocultural characteristics of West Sumatra also influence the selection of political issues, particularly those associated with regional development, religious identity, customary institutions, and public welfare. These factors demonstrate that digital campaigning is shaped not only by technological developments but also by political competition and the social environment in which electoral communication takes place.

The implications of digital campaigning and voter engagement concern the changing relationship between political representatives and the electorate. Social media creates opportunities for more accessible political communication,[15] allowing voters to encounter campaign information and express their views through digital interactions.[16] This development potentially strengthens public participation and broadens opportunities for political accountability.[17] However, the quality of such participation

[14] Bente Kalsnes, "Examining the Populist Communication Logic: Strategic Use of Social Media in Populist Political Parties in Norway and Sweden," *Central European Journal of Communication* 12, no. 2 (2019): 187–205, https://doi.org/10.19195/1899-5101.12.2(23).5.

[15] Signe Bock Segaard, *The Institutional Anchoring of Social Media Venues as Arenas for Local Political Communication: Perceptions by Voters and Politicians*, *Institutional Change in the Public Sphere: Views on the Nordic Model* (Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2017), https://www.scopus.com/pages/publications/85021286071?origin=resultslist.

[16] Melanie Magin et al., "What Makes the Difference? Social Media Platforms and Party Characteristics as Contextual Factors for Political Parties' Use of Populist Political Communication," *Nordicom Review* 45, no. s1 (2024): 36–65, https://doi.org/10.2478/nor-2024-0007.

[17] Jing Guo and Yang Hu, "Does Social Media Use Polarize or Depolarize Political Opinion in China? Explaining Opinion Polarization Within an Extended Communication Mediation Model," *Social Media and Society* 9, no. 3 (2023), https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051231196899.

depends on whether digital communication provides meaningful opportunities for dialogue rather than functioning exclusively as a mechanism for distributing promotional messages. From the perspective of *siyasah syar'iyyah*, this relationship can be examined through *shura* (consultation) and *mas'uliyyah* (accountability). Consultation requires political communication to recognize public aspirations, while accountability requires candidates to communicate their commitments transparently and responsibly. Therefore, digital campaign strategies should be directed toward developing reciprocal communication between political candidates and citizens. Their transformative potential lies in strengthening informed participation, encouraging responsible political dialogue, and connecting electoral communication with the broader objectives of democratic governance and public welfare.

3.3. Social Media as a Space for Political Communication and Leadership Construction

The findings demonstrate that social media played an important role in shaping political communication during the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election through two interconnected dimensions: the construction of candidate leadership identities and the implementation of digital campaign strategies. Candidates used social media to communicate political visions, present leadership representations, disseminate development programs, and establish interactions with voters. These practices indicate that digital political communication involves more than the distribution of electoral information because it also shapes how political figures present themselves and establish relationships with society. The findings further demonstrate that local cultural characteristics, religious references, electoral competition, and platform accessibility influenced the formation of campaign narratives. From this perspective, social media can be understood as a political arena in which leadership legitimacy is communicated and negotiated through digital representations. The use of Islamic and cultural references also illustrates the importance of sociocultural contexts in regional electoral communication. Nevertheless, the normative assessment of these practices requires examining whether political messages correspond with substantive commitments to justice, accountability, and public welfare rather than merely constructing favorable electoral images.

The emergence of these communication practices can be explained through the interaction between technological developments,[18] electoral competition,[19] and the sociocultural environment of West Sumatra. Social media provides political candidates with opportunities to communicate directly with audiences,[20] distribute campaign materials,[21] and maintain public visibility throughout the electoral process.[22] At the same time, competition encourages candidates to develop distinctive narratives and representations that distinguish their political identities from those of other contestants.[23] Local religious and cultural characteristics also influence the selection of campaign themes, particularly messages

[18] Ali Unlu et al., "Exploring Political Mistrust in Pandemic Risk Communication: Mixed-Method Study Using Social Media Data Analysis," *Journal of Medical Internet Research* 25 (2023), https://doi.org/10.2196/50199.

[19] Asep Gunawan et al., "Utilization of Social Media in Ethnic Identity Political Communication: A Case Study of Sundanese Ethnic Political Communication by Regent Dedi Mulyadi in Political Development in Purwakarta Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia, 2008–2018," *Library Philosophy and Practice* 2020 (2020): 1–28, https://www.scopus.com/pages/publications/85102737276?origin=resultslist.

[20] Andreu Casero-Ripollés and Romina Pepe-Oliva, "Social Media and Online Political Activism in Protest Communication Strategies: Friends or Foes?," ed. Rocha A. et al., *Smart Innovation, Systems and Technologies* 259 SIST (2022): 73–81, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-5792-4_8.

[21] Khanittha Jitsaeng and Kulthida Tuamsuk, "Digital Factors Influencing the Use of Social Media in Political Communication Among Thai Youths," *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy* 7, no. 2 (2022): 450–62, https://doi.org/10.13187/ijmil.2022.2.450.

[22] Lucas Santos De Oliveira, Marcelo Santos Amaral, and Pedro O S Vaz-De-Melo, "Long-Term Characterization of Political Communications on Social Media," in *ACM International Conference Proceeding Series* (Association for Computing Machinery, 2021), 95–102, https://doi.org/10.1145/3486622.3493934.

[23] Elizabeth Lubinga and Mahlatse Baloyi, "Mining Social Media for Political Communication: Lessons from an Analysis of Twitter Use between Citizens and the African National Congress Pre-2014 South African National Elections," *Politikon* 46, no. 3 (2019): 275–88, https://doi.org/10.1080/02589346.2019.1638128.

concerning Islamic values,[24] customary traditions,[25] regional development,[26] and collective welfare.[27] These factors demonstrate that political communication is not produced independently of its social environment but reflects the interests,[28] identities,[29] and expectations operating within electoral competition.[30] From the perspective of *siyasah syar'iyyah*, these circumstances require political actors to balance strategic communication with ethical responsibility. Political considerations may influence the selection and presentation of messages, but they should not undermine *amanah* (trustworthiness) and *al-'adl* (justice). Accordingly, responsible digital communication requires political candidates to ensure that their campaign narratives remain consistent with their public commitments.

The findings have important implications for understanding the relationship between digital political communication and the ethical responsibilities of political leadership.[31] The use of social media expands opportunities for political participation,[32] but technological accessibility alone does not guarantee meaningful democratic engagement.[33] The effectiveness of digital communication should also be considered in relation to the quality of political information,[34] the openness of dialogue, and the accountability of political actors.[35] In this context, *siyasah syar'iyyah* provides a normative framework for interpreting the ethical implications of electoral communication. The principle of *shura* emphasizes the importance of listening to public aspirations, while *mas'uliyyah* requires political actors to recognize their responsibility for the messages and commitments they communicate. Similarly, *maslahah* establishes public welfare as an important orientation of political activity. These principles suggest that social media should function not merely as an instrument for electoral mobilization but also as a medium for strengthening responsible political relationships.[36] The broader implication is that democratic political

[24] Usha Rodrigues, "Political Communication on Social Media Platforms," *Global Transformations in Media and Communication Research*, 2020, 221–38, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-44563-8_11.

[25] Mohammad Taufan Asri Zaen et al., "Topics Model in Political Communication on Social Media for NTB Governor Election," in *Proceeding - 2025 IEEE 11th Information Technology International Seminar, ITIS 2025* (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Inc., 2025), 53–60, https://doi.org/10.1109/ITIS67966.2025.11309101.

[26] Sebastian Stier et al., "Election Campaigning on Social Media: Politicians, Audiences, and the Mediation of Political Communication on Facebook and Twitter," *Political Communication* 35, no. 1 (2018): 50–74, https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2017.1334728.

[27] Fangqi Zhong, Pengpeng Li, and Jinchao Xi, "A Survey on Online Political Participation, Social Capital, and Well-Being in Social Media Users—Based on the Second Phase of the Third (2019) TCS Taiwan Communication Survey Database," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (2022), https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.730351.

[28] Trisha T C Lin and Chia-Hung Tsai, "Taking Stock of Social-Political Polarization in Asia: Political Communication, Social Media, and Digital Governance," *Asian Journal of Communication* 32, no. 2 (2022): 71–74, https://doi.org/10.1080/01292986.2022.2043399.

[29] Jieun Shin et al., "Mask-Wearing as a Partisan Issue: Social Identity and Communication of Party Norms on Social Media Among Political Elites," *Social Media and Society* 8, no. 1 (2022), https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221086233.

[30] Juan Pablo Alperin et al., "Politicians & the Public: The Analysis of Political Communication in Social Media," *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 55, no. 1 (2018): 646–49, https://doi.org/10.1002/pra2.2018.14505501071.

[31] Francis L F Lee, "The Spillover Effects of Political Scandals: The Moderating Role of Cynicism and Social Media Communications," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 95, no. 3 (2018): 714–33, https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699017723604.

[32] Pieter Verdegem and Evelien D'heer, *Social Media Logic and Its Impact on Political Communication During Election Times*, *Managing Democracy in the Digital Age: Internet Regulation, Social Media Use, and Online Civic Engagement* (Springer International Publishing, 2017), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-61708-4_7.

[33] Jeremy Harris Lipschultz, *Social Media and Political Communication*, *Social Media and Political Communication* (Taylor and Francis, 2022), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003170471.

[34] Addin Khaerunnisa Juswil, Sanny Nofrima, and Herdin Arie Saputra, "Political Communication Patterns through Social Media: A Case of an Indonesian Presidential Staff Twitter Account," *CommIT Journal* 16, no. 2 (2022): 203–12, https://doi.org/10.21512/commit.v16i2.7889.

[35] Albert Tonghoon Han, Lucie Laurian, and Jim Dewald, "Plans Versus Political Priorities: Lessons From Municipal Election Candidates' Social Media Communications," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 87, no. 2 (2021): 211–27, https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2020.1831401.

[36] Ole Kelm, Marco Dohle, and Uli Bernhard, "Social Media Activities of Political Communication Practitioners: The Impact of Strategic Orientation and In-Group Orientation," *International Journal of Strategic Communication* 11, no. 4 (2017): 306–23, https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2017.1323756.

communication requires an ethical foundation connecting public representation,[37] political accountability, and the interests of society.[38]

The findings of this study extend previous discussions of digital political communication by connecting electoral campaign practices with the normative principles of Islamic political thought. Previous research on social media and political campaigns has generally emphasized political branding,[39] candidate image construction, information dissemination,[40] and voter engagement.[41] These perspectives explain how digital platforms facilitate electoral communication and influence the presentation of political identities.[42] Meanwhile, studies of Islamic political thought have primarily examined leadership legitimacy,[43] justice,[44] consultation,[45] accountability,[46] and public welfare as normative foundations of political governance.[47] The present study brings these discussions together by examining how observable digital communication practices can be interpreted through *siyasah syar'iyyah*. Its distinctive contribution is not simply the application of Islamic terminology to contemporary electoral activities but the development of an analytical connection between campaign strategies and ethical political responsibilities. This approach broadens the discussion of digital political communication beyond technological effectiveness and electoral competition. However, specific comparisons with individual previous studies should be supported by relevant empirical publications to establish the precise similarities, differences, and theoretical advances of the present research.

Based on these findings, political communication through social media should be developed toward a more transparent, participatory, and accountable model of electoral engagement. Political candidates and campaign organizations should ensure that the information they publish accurately represents their programs, political commitments,[48] and proposed development priorities.[49] They should also provide meaningful opportunities for voters to express their concerns and receive responses concerning issues affecting their communities.[50] From a conceptual perspective, the integration of *siyasah syar'iyyah* into digital political communication offers an ethical framework based on *al-'adl*, *amanah*, *shura*, *maslahah*, and *mas'uliyyah*. From a practical perspective, political parties, campaign teams, and electoral institutions

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[37] Ulrike Klinger and Uta Russmann, "'Beer Is More Efficient Than Social Media'—Political Parties and Strategic Communication in Austrian and Swiss National Elections," *Journal of Information Technology and Politics* 14, no. 4 (2017): 299–313, https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2017.1369919.

[38] Casero-Ripollés and Pepe-Oliva, "Social Media and Online Political Activism in Protest Communication Strategies: Friends or Foes?"

[39] Linus Hagemann and Olga Abramova, "Emotions and Information Diffusion on Social Media: A Replication in the Context of Political Communication on Twitter," *AIS Transactions on Replication Research* 9 (2023), https://doi.org/10.17705/1atrr.00079.

[40] Yan Su, Danielle Ka Lai Lee, and Porismita Borah, "The Conditional Indirect Effects of Political Social Media Information Seeking and Expression on Government Evaluation in Hong Kong: Revisiting the Communication Mediation Model," *International Journal of Communication* 15 (2021): 277–99, https://www.scopus.com/pages/publications/85108616660?origin=resultslist.

[41] Orestis Papakyriakopoulos, Juan Carlos Medina Serrano, and Simon Hegelich, "Political Communication on Social Media: A Tale of Hyperactive Users and Bias in Recommender Systems," *Online Social Networks and Media* 15 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.osnem.2019.100058.

[42] Shin et al., "Mask-Wearing as a Partisan Issue: Social Identity and Communication of Party Norms on Social Media Among Political Elites."

[43] Max Hänska, "Social Media and the Arab Spring: How Communication Technology Shapes Socio-Political Change," *Orient* 57, no. 3 (2016): 27–34, https://www.scopus.com/pages/publications/84994406787?origin=resultslist.

[44] Hagemann and Abramova, "Emotions and Information Diffusion on Social Media: A Replication in the Context of Political Communication on Twitter."

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[46] Elin Strand Larsen and Øyvind Ihlen, *Political Crisis Communication and the Rhetorical Arena: An Analysis of President Zelensky's War Addresses and Social Media Use*, *The Handbook of International Crisis and Risk Communication Research, Second Edition* (wiley, 2025), https://doi.org/10.1002/9781394180844.ch15.

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can strengthen public political literacy by encouraging responsible information dissemination and constructive digital dialogue. Furthermore, future research should employ comparative and mixed-methods approaches to examine differences in digital communication strategies, audience responses, and the relationship between online engagement and political participation. Such efforts would strengthen the connection between Islamic political ethics, digital communication practices, and democratic accountability while providing a broader foundation for developing responsible electoral communication in Indonesia.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that social media has become an important instrument of political communication in the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election, enabling candidates to disseminate political messages, construct leadership identities, promote campaign programs, and establish interactions with voters. Political communication through digital platforms demonstrates that electoral competition is no longer limited to conventional campaign activities but also involves the strategic production and distribution of digital content. The use of social media allows candidates to present their political visions, respond to public concerns, and develop political narratives that shape their relationships with constituents. From the perspective of *siyasah syar'iyyah*, these communication practices should be examined not only in terms of their effectiveness in attracting public support but also through their conformity with Islamic political ethics. Principles such as *al-'adl* (justice), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *maslahah* (public interest), *shura* (consultation), and *mas'uliyyah* (accountability) provide normative foundations for evaluating political communication. Accordingly, political messages should promote honesty, transparency, responsibility, and public welfare rather than merely serve electoral interests or personal political ambitions.

The academic contribution of this study lies in integrating contemporary digital political communication with the normative framework of *siyasah syar'iyyah*. While political communication studies generally emphasize campaign strategies, media utilization, political image construction, and voter engagement, this research extends the discussion by incorporating Islamic political ethics as an analytical perspective. Conceptually, it positions social media not merely as a technological instrument for electoral mobilization but also as a public communication space in which political accountability, ethical leadership, and the interests of society should be articulated. The application of Islamic principles provides an alternative framework for understanding the relationship between political actors, digital communication practices, and democratic responsibility. This perspective also enriches the study of Islamic politics by demonstrating the relevance of classical normative principles to contemporary electoral communication. Furthermore, the research contributes to the development of interdisciplinary scholarship connecting Islamic political thought, digital media studies, and regional democratic processes. Its analytical framework may also serve as a reference for examining political communication in other electoral contexts, particularly in societies where religious values and democratic participation intersect in shaping expectations of political leadership.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the research focuses on the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election, meaning that its findings are situated within a particular regional, political, and sociocultural context and cannot automatically represent electoral communication practices in other regions. Second, the analysis relies primarily on publicly accessible social media content and digital documentation, which may not fully capture private campaign strategies, internal political decision-making, or voters' perceptions and experiences. Third, the study examines political communication through the normative framework of *siyasah syar'iyyah* without conducting an extensive quantitative assessment of audience engagement or the actual influence of digital messages on voting behavior. Future research could address these limitations through comparative studies across provinces, interviews with candidates, campaign teams, and voters, as well as mixed-methods approaches combining qualitative content analysis with quantitative measurements of digital engagement. Such investigations would provide a broader

understanding of how Islamic political ethics, digital communication strategies, and voter participation interact in contemporary regional elections.

Declarations

Author Contribution Statement

Sucirahmadani: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft. Saiful Amin: Methodology, Writing – Review & Editing, Supervision. Both authors contributed equally to this work and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Funding Statement

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. No publicly archived datasets were used or generated during the current research.

Declaration of Interests Statement

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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