Audience Reception and AI in the Political Campaign of the 2024 Bali District Heads Election

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Abstract
Artificial Intelligence (AI), often referred to as artificial intelligence technology, is a new technology used to help solve various human needs in various aspects. One of these aspects is related to politics. With the existence of AI, political contestation is increasingly colourful and provides a new perspective for the community. The purpose of this study is to analyse the audience's reception of the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in political campaigns in the 2024 Bali district heads election using Stuart Hall's theory. The Encoding-Decoding process becomes the reference of this research in understanding how campaign messages poured through AI technology are received, interpreted, and consumed by audiences with diverse social and cultural backgrounds. This research uses a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews, observation, and analysing documentation to explore Balinese audiences' views on the use of AI in political campaigns. The main focus of this research is to understand how Balinese people with strong socio-cultural characteristics can adapt and interpret political messages delivered through various AI-based media tools and whether this understanding is in accordance with the intention of the sender of the message or there are influences from local factors. The results show that there are different ways in which Balinese audiences interpret AI-based campaign messages. There is a positive acceptance due to easy, fast and relevant access to information. However, on the other hand, there is a sense of concern about deprivation of privacy and manipulation of opinions. The findings are expected to provide insights into how AI-based technology can influence the dynamics of political communication through campaigns. In addition, this research also emphasises the need to increase media literacy both conventionally and digitally in order to be more critical in receiving political messages received, one of which is through AI.

Keywords*: Artificial Intelligence; political campaign; reception theory*

INTRODUCTION
Communication is a vital aspect of human life. With communication creating a good message delivery process starting from simple to complex things. The same thing was conveyed in Ariyanto (2020) that communication is important for human survival in presenting themselves to others while improving and perfecting their social relationships. One form of communication carried out is in the world of politics. Political communication is one of the processes of exchanging political messages and moments that are presented when political communicators aspire to

hold positions in governance and politicians. According to Arrianie (2021), political communication is an approach in political development both through the form of symbols and in the form of written or spoken words either through the form of gestures that are able to influence a person's position in a certain power structure.

In the political stage, the messages communicated will emphasise the function of political communication as communication that occurs between the system and its environment. As in a political campaign, it becomes a vehicle that really needs political communication in it. In 2024, the Indonesians celebrated a major democratic party, namely simultaneous regional elections. In the election process, candidates will conduct political campaigns as a form of communication to the audience. In previous research by Triartanto et al. (2024), it was stated that political campaigns become communication activities - the delivery of a number of ideas that are systematic and designed in such a way as to influence the target audience. Of course, the communication process through political campaigns is closely related to message designers who have the sensitivity to identify the characteristics of the target audience.

Nowadays, the rapid development of information and communication technology has changed the paradigm of political communication in the modern era. This also affects how political communication is carried out in the political campaign process. According to Blumler and Kavanagh (1999) in Heryanto (2018), the conditions of electoral democracy have created a realm of open, competitive, hard, and multi-issue battles. This has led to diverse and increasingly intensive variants of political communication channels. Among them are the emergence of the third age of political communication or three generations of political communication, including:

1. First Generation, political rhetoric. In this generation, political communication messages are entirely directed by the art of speech of political actors.
2. The second generation is characterised by the development of the role of mass media, often referred to as mainstream media.
3. The third generation, at this stage, is increasingly widespread due to the development of information and communication technology. The result is the development of new media that strengthens the political communication process by involving social media such as social networking sites to interactive weblogs.

According to Damayanti (2023) which stated that the presence of technological advancements making more political life-changing into developed and dynamic. This phenomenon is an interesting thing for political campaigns in Indonesia that are increasingly adaptive by utilising the internet and new media that are packaged

both statically and dynamically. Political campaigns are not only a phenomenon of political marketing in elections and local elections that only rely on above line media such as newspapers, television, magazines, radio, etc., but also utilise the internet to further enhance information, socialise ideas, and introduce themselves. However, it also makes use of the internet to further enhance information, socialisation of ideas, self-introduction that can increase enthusiastic public support.

This is also supported in previous research by Majid (2023) that the discovery of internet-based multimedia devices can facilitate political candidates in carrying out winning strategies with various innovations and creativity that are able to attract, relevant, and trigger positive interactions with audiences. In addition, the significant use of social media has also become a new space in creating political engagement and social interaction. The results of previous research by Farid (2023) say that the use of social media is able to influence the pattern of delivering political messages to influence behaviour, participation, and public opinion and attitudes towards political issues.

At the political campaign stage, the use of visual media is able to convey messages quickly and effectively. Such as the use of visual media such as posters, billboards, and banners which are often used as a step by candidates in attracting the attention of voters. Supported in a previous research journal that in Indonesia visual media has proven effective in building an image and introducing themselves to the public Muhaemin (2024).

With technological advancements, political campaigns using visual media have also evolved. The use of physical prints such as banners and billboards displayed in public spaces has expanded into the digital realm, including the dissemination of billboard images through social media platforms. This transformation is supported by Triartanto et al. (2024), who found that the use of social media for political campaigns—with broader visual delivery capabilities delivered in a massive and intense manner—can effectively and efficiently influence audiences in terms of cognition, affection, and conation.

The emergence of political campaigns through visual media is growing due to the innovation of artificial intelligence (AI) technology. This makes the visual media production process faster and easier. According to Mahendra et al. (2024) AI is a term that is familiar in the era of increasingly sophisticated technology. It is a paradigm of artificial intelligence integrated in a man-made system that is able to mimic human activity through a series of algorithmic processes and highly sophisticated data systematics and data analysis of behavioural patterns, trends from its objects.

AI, which is often referred to as artificial intelligence technology, is a new technology used to help solve various human needs in various aspects. One of these aspects is related to politics. In the current era, the use of AI has integrated itself in various aspects of political campaign life. The use of AI technology in political campaigns is becoming a dominant trend that further strengthens the new impact in the modern political process. In the journal by Budi et al. (2024), the use of AI in political campaigns is used to personalise campaign messages to suit the preferences and needs of individual voters. This aims to increase interaction and involvement in winning the political process.

As is the case, the use of AI in the context of political campaigns, one of which is the packaging of posters of candidates assembled in such illustrations as a form of visual campaign media. The results of the use of AI have provided a new colour in how to create visual media through the world of graphic design and political visualisation. AI can create a design that is able to trigger human imagination even though its creation is not fully supported by the creativity of humans themselves. In the world of Indonesian politics, in the 2024 elections, the use of AI in supporting image visualisation as a form of political campaign is starting to emerge. Images produced by AI are considered capable of increasing visual recognition in political campaigns with visuals that are more attractive, unique, and time and cost efficient.

This statement is supported by research in the journal from Muhaemin (2024) related to the use of AI has a stage in the 2024 elections in Indonesia. In the presidential election, the trend of using AI in presidential and vice-presidential election campaign posters. This phenomenon shows that the development of visualisation is truly influenced by the needs of the times and technology. So that overall the use of AI in supporting political campaigns in the form of visualisation is able to provide a change in the perspective of the graphic design landscape and visualisation of political trends. As stated from a book by Irmayani & Broven (2024) AI is the newest tool for digital political campaigns. It can make candidates reaching out the audience widely with a lower cost. With using AI in the rapid advancement of technology, it becomes easier for understanding voter preference through well-structured messaging.

The use of visual rhetoric in electronic media provides space to personalise campaign messages as a way of candidate interaction with voters. In this case, political campaigns with visual images of AI faces are considered more trustworthy than real faces. Political campaigns with the use of AI are considered to be able to improve self-image in building a positive impact on voter engagement. In addition by Gibson (2023), the presence of AI is able to create visual content that is increasingly attractive and arouses voter involvement and interest in voicing their

voting. In addition to the presidential and vice-presidential elections, 2024 is also a political year for regions in Indonesia because in November 2024 simultaneous district heads elections will be held.

Therefore, the trend of visual political campaigns utilising AI will not only occur in the 2024 elections but will also be widely adopted in political campaign events in the 2024 District Heads Election. Bali is one of the regions conducting the 2024 District Heads Election democratic party with two pairs of candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor. For instance, in Bali using AI based on political campaigns is expected to provide platform for voters to enhance their participation.

Balinese political culture, which is often characterized by soft culture, gives rise to cultural values such as *tatas, drops* (prudence in acting), *tat twam asi* (tolerance by not emphasizing differences), *paras-paros* (openness to giving and receiving others' opinions), *salunglung sabyantaka* (the principle of uniting through constructive criticism), and *merakpak danyuh* (maintaining friendship despite differences of opinion) based on article from Suacana (2024). In this cultural context, Bali has begun implementing artificial intelligence (AI) in political campaigns, notably through billboards featuring animated representations of candidates. This development introduces a new dimension to Bali's political landscape while adding an element of entertainment for the public. Additionally, Nuraida & Simanungkali (2023) emphasized that the functions of AI have had a significant impact on society.

Based on the description above, this article aims to explore the use of AI-generated images in the governor's political campaign in Bali. The significance of this research lies in examining how Balinese audiences, whose worldview is deeply rooted in philosophical cultural values, receive and interpret the modernisation of political campaigns through technological advancements. Employing Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding Theory, this study seeks to identify audience receptions across three positions: dominant-hegemonic, negotiated, and oppositional. The analysis focuses on visual campaign materials such as posters, billboards, and other AI-enhanced media. The current study aims to support the evaluation of AI usage in political campaigns, with the goal of enhancing self-image construction and optimising engagement with voters.

METHODOLOGY
This research aims to explore the audience's reception of the utilisation of AI in political campaigns in the 2024 District Heads Election in Bali through a constructivist paradigm. Using a qualitative methodological approach and based on case study, this research aims to collect in-depth information and data related to the values of Balinese political culture in responding to the political campaign process in an increasingly digitally connected era. Using Stuart Hall's theory of

Encoding-Decoding Process, this article will focus on the audience's reception of political campaigns through visual media. In other words, that audiences can form a meaning when consuming information with the aim of providing an understanding of the process built in the content as the journal from Haris & Azwar (2024). The research data collection uses a variety of methods, including observation, in-depth interviews directly with informants, documentation and supported by literature studies that have relevance to the research of this article.

The selection of informants at the in-depth interview stage to support this research uses purposive sampling, which is a technique of determining informants based on certain considerations. The determination is based on characteristics that are adjusted to the research objectives by Wekke (2019). Some of the characteristics of the informants include: 1) Individuals who are aware of political campaign posters utilising AI on the candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor of Bali. 2) An individual who represents a cross-generation (Gen Baby Boomer, X, Y, and Z) and has been registered as a Final Voter List (DPT). Additionally, based on the author's identification and observation the informarmants are represent different generations. Those are with a unique perspective on receiving messages conveyed through AI-powered. The following four people were selected as informants in this research:

Table 1. List of Research Informants

Name	Age	Generation	Description
EAB	61	Baby Boomer Generation– Born in 1963	Informant 1
LS	59	Generation X – Born in 1965	Informant 2
RY	32	Generation Y – Born in 1992	Informant 3
JN	20	Generation Z – Born in 2004	Informant 4

Source: Author's Processed Data, 2025

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before describing the results of the reception of cross-generational meanings of AI in political campaign posters for the 2024 Bali District Heads Election, the author first observed the informants' knowledge, understanding, and experience of political communication. For the most part, the four informants viewed political communication quite well. However, the utilisation of AI as visual media in political campaigns has largely decreased the quality of political communication.

In a paradoxical sense, ironically the development of information technology that gave birth to artificial intelligence (AI) does not actually provide something new for people's understanding of the political messages conveyed. In line with the results of research by Triartanto et al. (2024) that technological developments gave birth to the principle of conventional media simply migrating to a digital format or system so as not to find differences in it. However, it has been in line with the understanding of political communication with various innovations and creativity in influencing the public, trust, and political action towards the relationship of objects targeted in political campaigns.

According to the informants, political actors in the 2024 Bali regional head election have felt targeted or targeted in the implementation of political communication. Some of the experiences that informants have had related to political communication practices are very diverse and interesting. The experience experienced by one informant representing generation Z felt that entering the 2024 Bali District Heads Election, he felt that he was intensely targeted by political communicators. Plus, at the campaign stage, starting from candidates to sympathisers, they began to be active and massive in campaigning and socialising themselves through social media with the concept of the content approach delivered towards young voters.

Meanwhile, informants who represent the baby boomer's generation feel that the political campaigns that are felt to be carried out by candidates in the 2024 Bali District Heads Election, only focus on the younger generation while the older generation has very little information about the candidates for Bali's leaders. Similarly, another informant who represents generation X complained that the involvement of young people and the targets given to young people, especially first-time voters, fostered social jealousy that led to feelings of indifference towards the political frenzy at the 2024 Bali District Heads Election. While the highest support and appreciation was recognised by the next informant from the millennial generation for the adaptation and enthusiasm of the candidates in adjusting to the current conditions of technological development. So that massive political campaigns are packaged so differently and colourfully from previous campaigns.

The informant's statement from the description above seems to confirm the assumption that not only in the 2024 elections but also in the 2024 regional elections, young voters will become a special group for candidates. It is undeniable, considering that this happens in reference to the massive number of young voters in the 2024 edition of the democratic party. Supported by General Elections Commission data, it is known that young voters aged 17-40 years dominate with a percentage figure showing 51.93 per cent of the total voters in Indonesia. This indicates that more than half of the voters in Indonesia in the 2024 election are

young voters. In line with final presented research from journal by Suprayitno (2023) showing that millennial generation is the group of people closely associated using information techonology. Also in the political sphere this generation is highly mature considering their frequent participation in democratic events. Another research shown with the emergence of new media, society has found the easily way to access and giving them oppotrtunity to distribute their own mind about democratic perspectives and process of political communication, according to Adiputra et al. (2023).

Meanwhile, the Bali General Elections Commission noted that 51 per cent of the largest vote contributor in the Governor election at the 2024 Bali District Heads Election came from generation Z and Millennial young people. This is based on the total number of Bali's final voter list of 3,283,893. With details of the Millennial generation in the range of 29 per cent and generation Z reaching 22 per cent. The following data that researchers managed to collect from the Bali Provincial General Elections Commission document.
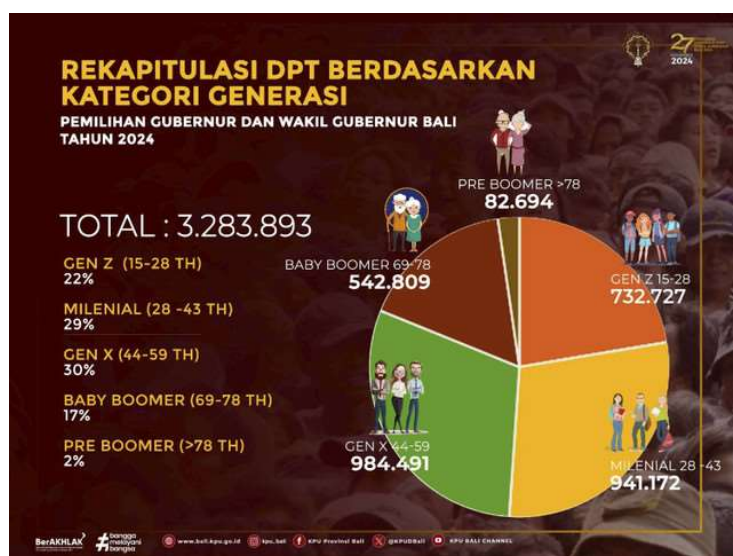

Figure 1. Final Voter Data of General Elections Commission Bali
Source: Photo Doc. General Elections Commission Bali

However, the high number of final voters will not have a significant meaning for the 2024 Bali District Heads Election if there is no innovation or creativity that can be created by candidates in introducing themselves to voters. The balance of political socialisation as a form of providing political understanding to young voters who occupy the largest position at this election stage must be considered in such a way. In principle, candidates who will conduct socialisation in the form of political

campaigns must be able to sort and choose the right type of content and media as a channel for delivering messages.

However, the uneven provision of political understanding to young people was found in the results of a research journal by Nurfebriansyah & Erviantono (2025) that the concept of providing understanding still occurs in a top-down manner which likens young people to empty containers. This model is felt to be able to trigger the growth of apathy for young people. In addition, some people feel that they do not understand the benefits and impacts generated in the election process from the content and political campaign process provided, only limited to understanding that certain ages are obliged to vote as a form of responsibility as a good citizen.

In addition, all informants shared their point of view in the lead-up to the Bali District Heads Election, which was largely only getting political messages from political candidates in the form of pictures containing their faces, serial numbers, and short slogans mentioning the names of the two pairs of candidates. Physically, the billboards and banners of the 2024 Bali District Heads Election are still an old story that is only printed very large but with minimal information. While through social media, a lot of content appeared but not much was found directly from the candidates' social media accounts.

However, many are through social media accounts that are not well known but provide complete information related to political candidates. This is enough to shake the informants' confidence to accept the information or, on the contrary, to be suspicious of the content, which could be a hoax as a form of political combat in cyberspace. This description is also in line with research by Haris & Azwar (2024) that political messages through various contents presented by political contestants do not necessarily influence the community considering that based on the experience and political views of the people who see the majority of political practices are not in accordance with what is displayed or promised at the political campaign stage.

This political communication that is not fully received by the informant indicates that some informants are quite critical of the information they receive. However, on the other hand, the informants' mindset towards politics, which is thick with chaos and promises that are limited to promises without proof, is still a big reason for their apathy towards politics.

However, it does not rule out the ease of accessibility that informants are starting to feel related to current technological developments. So that there are new colours

felt at the political campaign stage of the candidates, ranging from the design of diverse visual content to the expansion of platforms that allow voters to exchange opinions and interact with similar political interests. Positively, social media has become a forum for the rapid dissemination of information, the formation of public opinion, and the contributions that arise related to political dynamics in society as the result research by Farid (2023).

Next, this research talks about the results of the reception or meaning of informants in the visual media of political campaigns in the 2024 Bali District Heads Election with the use of AI. The meanings obtained were successfully collected and described through an in-depth interview process with the informants. There are two main points generated. First, this political campaign is considered very unique, creative, and literate in technological developments. Second, political campaigns that only become entertainment with minimal ideas.

1. Political campaigning as unique, creative and tech-savvy

In accordance with the opinions given by informants in in-depth interviews, most informants said that this political campaign was able to provide a new colour in the hustle and bustle of politics, especially in Bali. The uniqueness born from this visual design is also considered to be a unique form of campaign and very adaptive in the technological developments that occur. The informants stated that the uniqueness that became the turning point in this political campaign was in the design that depicted the visuals of the candidates into animated forms with proportional faces and bodies that gave an entertaining impression to those who saw it.

Furthermore, the majority of informants also acknowledged that the visualisation of political campaigns using AI through the creation of posters or digital designs can create and show futuristic visuals. Therefore, looking at this content, the author describes a common type of political campaigns, namely candidate-oriented campaigns. With the aims and objectives of political campaigns, the orientation lies on the candidates to grab political power. Aiming to gain public support for the candidates, one of which is the candidate for Governor and Deputy Governor.

According to the results of research in the journal 'Simulacrum of the use of artificial intelligence in the 2024 presidential and vice presidential election political campaign through tiktok videos' by Triartanto et al. (2024) that the content in this type of political campaign contains persuasive messages by referring to four persuasive campaign actions, among others: 1) the campaign systematically realises efforts to create a certain 'place' in the minds of the audience towards candidates to the products and ideas conveyed. 2) the campaign is carried out through various

stages, starting from the content of the message that is able to attract the attention of the audience, providing an opportunity for the audience to show interest in making changes in action on the information obtained, until finally succeeding in inviting the audience to take real action. 3) The campaign also dramatises some of the ideas conveyed to the audience so as to arouse the audience to be actively involved both symbolically and practically so as to successfully achieve the campaign objectives. 4) The campaign clearly makes use of mass media in building awareness to change the behaviour of the audience.

From the description above, the author can assess that the campaign of the two pairs of candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor at the 2024 Bali District Heads Election carries the 2024 campaign. Proven through the political jargon included in the posters that are disseminated to the public. For example, candidate number 1 MULIA-PAS with its political jargon "Satu Jalur-Satu Komando" which means "One Line-One Command" with the intention that it will lead the regional government in accordance with the central government considering that the Central Government is led by President Prabowo Subianto who comes from the Gerindra political party that supports Candidate 1.

So that this jargon is felt to be able to provide an understanding to the audience that when the region is led by a leader who is one party and in line with the central government, it will facilitate communication and implementation of national and regional development much easier. Meanwhile, the political jargon echoed by Candidate 2 is "Bangkit, Jaya, Menang – Menyala Wi" which means "Rise, Triumph, Win – Awesome bro" with the intention of reviving and awakening Balinese cultural values which are the foundation of governance in Bali which is full of cultural wealth. Menyala wi, in the author's opinion, is because Candidate 2 wants to show its openness to current trends that are happening in society as a sign of self-confidence or self-existence.

In addition, the visual content delivered also leads the audience to pay attention, mobilise, and take concrete actions in addition to political jargon through visual design that indirectly introduces the figures of the candidates. As is the case, the pair of candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor of Bali number 1 presents a visual design dominated by blue with the political gimmick 'Gundul-Gembul' and carries the power of elephants and lions as representatives of the nicknames of the daily life of Muliawan Arya as a candidate for Governor as De-Gadjah and Agus Suradnyana as a candidate for Deputy Governor of Bali is a figure from the birthplace of SINGA-raja.

Figure 2. AI Visual Political Campaign of Candidates for Governo and Deputy Governor Number 1
Source: Documentation of Sumitha Ghanjali, 2025

While the candidate pair for Governor and Deputy Governor of Bali number 2 did not show visual design by using Balinese traditional clothes with a natural background showing his introduction in the vision and mission echoed in reviving Balinese culture.

Figure 3. AI Visual Political Campaign of Candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor Number 2
Source: Documentation of Sumitha Ghanjali, 2025

The presence of this political campaign is considered unique and provides a new colour, considered by informant RY as one of the ways for candidates to approach the audience. Given that the use of AI has been widely used in the 2024 elections, this shows that candidates are adaptive and open to technological developments,

one of which is the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) technology. Likewise, according to JN, the adaptiveness of these candidates shows a shift in understanding of the political world that is not always rigidly packaged.

The informants' statements are supported in research by Majid (2023) that technological developments, targets and selection of political campaign content presented in this digital era have been able to lead to significant changes in the political communication landscape. Another interesting thing is that this political campaign offers novelty in visual design that indirectly provides entertainment for the audience. This statement was confirmed in the statement conveyed by informant EAB, that he never thought that the faces of political candidates could be packaged in such a way with animated nuances that tickled his humorous side as a society in his generation who had never seen a poster with the results of using AI like this.

EAB's opinion seems to have confirmed that when he enjoyed the visualisation of this political campaign, it gave him a new understanding that politics is not always serious and rigid, but can be packaged in this style. He also considers that the political world, especially candidates, is very open to seeing and adapting to a change in trends that must occur in society. Whereas before, informants thought that politics would always be hard, rigid, and serious.

2. Political campaigns are limited to entertainment and lack of ideas

Other receptions and meanings were also conveyed by informants who considered that the visualisation packaging of this political campaign was considered a form of political campaign that lacked ideas. Even informant LS considered that the assertiveness and authority of a leader was not reflected in the visualisation. According to Budi et al. (2024), political campaigns are a vehicle that plays a very crucial role in the democratic process for candidates in conveying messages to the public. With art and design that upholds innovation and creativity, political campaigns are expected to strengthen identity, create differences with political opponents, and create a strong emotional connection with voters.

This stage of political campaigning is also an important tool in shaping opinions and illustrates clearly how a work of art can be empowered to become an effective weapon in achieving the goals of candidates in politics. However, in this case, informant JN considered that there was no significant change in him to make a choice if he only saw the visualisation of political campaigns through posters using AI. He only felt entertained but did not renew his understanding or insight into the candidates.

This is further clarified by informant RY's understanding that we only know the names, serial numbers and faces, while we cannot get the vision, mission and work programmes of the candidates from the content. This expression further reinforces that the visual media campaigned by these candidates is only limited to entertainment and political games. Given that the content of ideas is not displayed on the posters, the public must look for other content to recognise the candidates. Informant EAB said that it is true that this has succeeded in changing the paradigm landscape of politics, especially in Bali, to become more fluid. However, giving a significant influence in the understanding of the candidates and mobilising the choice to directly choose between these pairs of candidates is not yet optimal.

Informant LS added that AI should not be used at all on political campaign posters of candidates. This is because, according to him, the political campaign event with a certain time should be well maximised by the candidates to produce content that is rich in ideas and education rather than mere gimmicks. In addition, JN as a young voter feels that poster content with AI visualisation should be developed so that a lot of varied content can be enjoyed. Given that as a young voter with the presence of social media so close, he feels quite aware in this political world. So, when this poster was launched, he felt quite entertained, but also looked forward to other innovations that were more in-depth to get to know the candidates better. But in reality, there is a lot of content circulating that is only limited to the design of futuristic animated candidates with political jargon.

In line with informants RY and LS, JN views that this political campaign does not provide a significant picture of the candidates in navigating the democratic process of the 2024 regional elections. Informant JN feels that this political advertisement with AI visualisation has succeeded in attracting the attention of new views and angles on the assessment of political campaign forms that are starting to vary. However, it is unfortunate that when this form of campaign has attracted enough attention from the public, there is no further innovation that can deepen the knowledge of these potential voters about these candidates.

This description reinforces the meaning that this political campaign only focuses on being a gimmick designed in such a way as to build an image and gain audience virality. This reinforces the view Tinarbuko in Haris & Azwar (2024) that this political campaign is considered anti-depth. This means that it emphasises style over substance, image over reality, emotion over reason, charm over morals.

Therefore, based on the majority view expressed by informants that this political campaign lacked ideas, informants also expressed their expectations for the selection of content for the next political campaign. Most informants hope that

political campaigns as a forum for the community to find out about their leaders should be more educative. Not only limited to distributing posters containing party colour identity with serial numbers and names or political jargon, but also able to simultaneously provide an understanding of the candidates' vision and mission.

The use of AI by targeting animated and futuristic designs can actually create content that raises problems in Bali and these political actors are able to offer real solutions. In addition, political campaigns also utilising increasingly sophisticated technology are also expected to be more sophisticated in educating the political understanding of the community, especially novice voters. So, political campaigns that only sell promises with odd gymnastics and hyperbolic narratives can slowly be diluted in the minds of the public. So that people's apathy towards politics can be eliminated and political life, especially in Bali, will gradually improve and become stronger in upholding democratic values.

3. The Position of Audience Reception and AI in Political Campaigns in the 2024 Bali District Heads Election

Understanding the messages conveyed through visual political campaigns requires the ability to interpret the images displayed. So, in the study of reception analysis, audiences are not placed and assessed as passive recipients of media messages. However, audiences have a role as individuals who have the ability to create meaning from a variety of content presented by message makers or media.

Not surprisingly, audiences are also considered cultural agents who have the power to create a variety of interpretations of media messages. In this research, to find out the position of audience reception using the encoding-decoding concept of Stuart Hall's reception theory. Three patterns of thought called 'the three hypothetical positions' from Morrisan in Utami & Herdiana (2021), namely:

1. Dominant-Hegemony Position
In this context, the audience gives meaning to the message content as expected by the message maker or the media.
2. Negotiated Position
The audience actually understands the intent defined in the message but in some instances, there is a misalignment of intent.
3. Oppositional Position
Basically, in this context, the audience understands the meaning conveyed but on the other hand has a different understanding. That is, audiences create their own alternative views in the meaning of the message.

In addition, audiences have diverse tendencies in interpreting the messages received influenced by individual cultural backgrounds. In this study, informants who have status as people who represent cross-generations and have the right to vote in the 2024 Bali regional election.

These informants perform the decoding process or convey various interpretations related to the messages received in the visual political campaign in the form of posters with the use of AI of the candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor of Bali adjusted to the subjective background. Therefore, the reception position produced in this decoding process depends on the informant's background such as education, knowledge, and life experience. The diversity of the informants' reception positions in this study is described as follows:

Table. 2 Informant's Reception Position

Num	Informant	Dominant-Hegemony Position	Negotiated Position	Oppositional Position
1.	EAB	√		
2.	LS			√
3.	RY		√	
4.	JN		√	

Source: Author's Processed Data, 2025

4. Dominant-Hegemony Position

In the context of this research, audiences fully agree with every meaning in the utilisation of AI in the visual posters offered by the candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor in the political campaign of the 2024 Bali District Heads Election. Therefore, informants who fall into this position are identified as audiences who understand that the visual display of AI posters is a unique form of political campaigning and provides a new colour in the world of politics that has been rigid.

As for the results of the data that has been collected and analysed by researchers, there is one informant out of four informants who fall into the position of dominant hegemony, namely the informant with the initials EAB. Informant EAB is classified as an informant who represents the Baby Boomers generation in the dominant hegemony position.

He admitted that political campaigns with visuals like this were new to him during the political campaign events he had been through. With a design that he thinks resembles a cartoon, this is something unique and able to attract his attention.

Furthermore, he also said that this indicates that the current political world has opened up space and freedom to existing developments, as the following interview results indicate:

"*Yes, I was very amused by the way the poster was designed. I never thought that someone's face could be like that. And, this uniquely makes me think that politics today has changed, is not rigid, and adapts to the development of technology.*" *(*EAB, 2025).

The results of this reception are presumably motivated by the background factor of the informant's life experience of political campaign visuals that are formal and rigid. So, it is not surprising that informants fully agree with the intent of the message in the visual political campaign poster and AI in presenting a new form of political campaign.

5. Position

The negotiation position in this study shows that the audience does not fully accept the meaning conveyed by the media but there are other different alternative views. Through in-depth interviews with four informants, there were two informants who entered the negotiation position, namely informants with the initials RY and JN. These two informants were able to form alternative meanings from the meanings produced by the candidates in the political campaign at the 2024 Bali District Heads Election.

Based on the background they believe in, RY and JN consider that the visualisation of this political campaign and AI is a very unique and creative form of campaign. In addition, the design is considered very entertaining and makes the political world, especially at the campaign stage in the democratic process, less rigid. However, on the other hand, despite the uniqueness and creativity of the design, they formed other opinions in the interpretation of the message.

As informant RY stated, he admitted that he was quite amazed by the adaptive spirit carried out by the candidates in following existing technological developments, but according to him, this form of campaign should not stop at designs that only show the futuristic candidates. In addition, he also feels that today the public also really needs a design that introduces the vision and mission or abilities of the candidates with a more unique, creative, and innovative packaging. The following are the results of the interview with informant RY:

"I was quite impressed with the adaptiveness of these candidates. It's just a shame that at the beginning we have been entertained and amazed by the self-introduction through this AI poster but afterwards there is no other content that deepens the figure of this candidate. Either the vision and mission or the work programme designed through the poster and AI. So as well as being entertained by the unique design, we can also be educated by directly knowing the vision and mission or work programme."

Furthermore, informant JN also thinks that the visualisation in this political campaign, which is one of the novelties carried out, is not necessarily able to inspire informants to immediately vote for these candidates. As the results of the following interview:

"Yes, for me, the first time in voicing my right to vote in this democratic party, especially the Bali 2024 District Heads Election, I regret that the supply of information I get from posters / poster content and AI is only limited to the candidate's face, serial number, jargon or party colour characteristics. So for me, this political campaign innovation is still far from being able to make me immediately be able to make a choice if I only see that visual design."

So, the results of this reception are interpreted as a novelty of political campaigns with all their uniqueness, but on the other hand consider that it does not provide maximum education for voters.

6. Oppositional Position

In this context, it refers to the interpretation of informants who reject the intended meaning of the message, in this case there is one informant who is in the opposition position, namely LS. Informant LS rejects and does not fully agree with the meaning conveyed through the visual design of political campaign posters and AI in the 2024 Bali regional election. Based on this, the informant creates a different interpretation of the message from the meaning offered in accordance with his perspective that is not in line with the intended meaning.

Informant LS formed another meaning that was at odds with the message producers, vocally criticising this political campaign. The informant said:

*"I don't think it is appropriate for a political campaign for a leader to be made or depicted with a cartoon design like this. In my opinion, this removes the authority of the candidates and does not have any impact." (*LS, 2025).

In relation to the meaning of the message conveyed by the candidates, namely the novelty of a more flexible political world with the use of technology, this was rejected by informant LS. He interpreted it critically with the assumption that the message only dropped the image of the leaders who gave room to be made fun of. The following is an interview with informant LS:

*"Yes, that's why the Gundul-Gembul jargon describes the number one leader in the region. It's like giving space to mock the leader who should be respected by the people. The design also does not provide any form of education, only entertainment content." (*LS, 2025).

The results of differences in meaning between informants and message producers are due to the background factors underlying informants such as knowledge, education and experience. The assumption that politics must be serious is based on his knowledge that managing an area, creating policies, and the authority of the leader must be supported by a serious campaign process. Political campaigns and AI should be placed in the right position, not in visual design but can be placed in the context of work programmes that are not serious in nature.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data collection and analysis of the discussion, it is known that the actual reception of audiences and AI in the political campaign at the Bali 2024 District Heads Election is conceptualised so uniquely and creatively. Creating such a design to be able to create a novelty in the process of delivering messages in political campaigns and showing the capabilities of candidates as adaptive figures does not always produce interpretations and meanings that are in line with the audience.

This is reflected in the results of the study which show a variety of audience reception positions of cross-generational representatives who have the right to vote in the 2024 Bali District Heads Election. Based on Stuart Hall's encoding-decoding process, the four informants studied gave birth to the reception of informant categories, namely one informant in the dominant hegemony position, two informants in the negotiation position, and one other informant in the opposition position. The factors that influence the informants' interpretations are through a negotiated process.

In other words, they don't fully agree how political campaigns in the 2024 Bali District Heads Election has a significant impact for determining their choice directly. Some of these factors become the basis for the informants' position in accepting, understanding, and responding to the phenomenon of poster visualisation and AI

just giving them know how AI works with animated version without any information of candidates.

In accordance with the findings of this research, it can be concluded that these political campaigns in Bali is still not optimal. Looking from cross-generational voters have an equal portion in this democratic party event. They are not only passive consumers of political campaign content but can also be said to be active as creators of meaning and how they interpret the messages conveyed depending on their respective backgrounds.

So that this will affect how the attitude they will show towards politics in the environment and how to determine and use their voting rights. Suggestions that can be given from the results of this study are that posters are not only a vehicle to highlight the faces of candidates but can be used as a place to show in-depth introductions such as vision and mission and work programmes that are relevant to answering regional challenges. The utilisation of AI is expected to be wiser in its use and a regulatory policy governing the pattern of its use will soon be born.

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