

## **The Branding of Indonesian Woman Leader in Instagram: A Case Study of Khofifah Indar Parawansa as a Candidate of East Java Governor**

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### **Abstract**

Instagram is now considered as a good media for politicians to brand themselves attractively with greater impact. Nevertheless, it is still assumed to be not easy for woman leader to compete with man leader at political arena since patriarchal ideology has made women often considered as the second sex in society. Besides, the prevailing religious system has also granted men the sacred duty of being a leader of the people. Thus, this study aimed to reveal how Khofifah Indar Parawansa, a candidate of East Java Governor, is branded in Instagram as a proper woman leader for East Java Province which has the greatest Islamic community organization in Indonesia. Data used were all posts with the top five comments and likes selected from some official Instagram accounts owned by Khofifah and her campaign success team using purposive sampling technique. The data selected then were analyzed by using multimodality theory by Theo Van Leeuwen. The results showed that as a candidate of East Java Governor, Khofifah Indar Parawansa is still branded as a woman leader with ideal female characters and roles for patriarchal society.

**Keywords:** branding; Instagram; political arena, second sex

### **1. Introduction**

Instagram is considered as one of marketing media combining marketing and branding for both organization and individual (Geurin, 2015: 134). Hence, politicians and parties have strategically used the communicative affordances of online media i.e Instagram in interacting with citizens (Kruikemeier, 2014: 132). These online politics culminates particularly during election campaign periods during which high-intensity information flows and communication occur. Although traditional media are still the main distributors of campaign messages, social media i.e Instagram enable political candidates to avoid the filters of journalism and directly release their messages through and collect feedback from networks of citizens at low cost. Consequently, using social media platforms, candidates can directly connect with and mobilize voters, and quickly respond to opponents' claims (Graham et al., 2013: 700).

Barrack Obama, initially as an American Senator, took social media, such as Youtube and Twitter, as his main tool to promote and brand himself before he was elected as the 44th president of United States. These efforts are assumed to gain massive impression of Obama, as what Smith utters "not only your president, but also your cool dad and your friend." Similarly, in Indonesia, Jokowi and Prabowo also actively used new media to gain more mass voters and supporters during their presidential election campaign in 2014. They even formed media campaign team and drew strategies to win that potential number of voters in social media since the number of Indonesian social media users is 8 out of 10 people dominantly aged 15-35 years old, also considered as 44% of potential voters in presidential election in 2014 (Jumlah Pemilu 2014, Pemuda Kuasai 40 Persen Suara).

### **2. Literature review**

In the 2018 East Java governor election, both of candidates, Saifullah Yusuf (Gus Iful) and Khofifah Indar Parawansa, also actively use their Instagram account as political campaign media. Although traditional gender roles, according to Delli Carpini and Keeter (2000: 32), may discourage women from participating in politics, resulting in women's weaker psychological connections to political arena due to "the legacy of de jure gender discrimination and attendant societal views of the 'proper' (i.e., nonpolitical) role of women", the number of followers in the Instagram account of Khofifah Indar Parawansa is 83.5 K, higher than Gus Iful's (only 30.3 K).

It indicates that the popularity of Khofifah is greater than Gus Ipul. Popularity, according to Marwick (2013: 249), is an important element of achieved status in social media. It means that someone's social status is virtually determined by his or his popularity. Hence, it can be said that Khofifah's status as a candidate leader is more significant than Gus Ipul's.

Political arena is always connected with actor, structure, and idea (Celis, K, Johanna Kantola, Georgina Waylen, & S. Laurel Weldon. 2013: vii). No one would deny that actors and certain actors in particular, are hugely important in both the conventional and nonconventional political arenas. But, there has been an "institutional turn" in gender and politics. It means that institutions as gendered structures operate in gendered ways (Krook & Mackay, 2011: 55). Politics is traditionally considered as the machinery of government and electoral politics performing as formal institutions rendering woman participation. John Locke even argued that men should be active in the public sphere, while women subsume into the household or family within the private sphere. (Celis, K., Johanna Kantola., Georgina Waylen, & S. Laurel Weldon, 2013: x), this analytical exclusion of women from the public sphere has created politics as a male sphere from which women has been legitimately excluded as political subjects in the political arena. Hence, it is still assumed to be not easy for woman leader to compete with man leader at the political arena since patriarchal ideology has made women often considered as the second sex in society. Besides, the prevailing religious system has also granted men the sacred duty of being a leader of the people. Thus, this study aimed to reveal how Khofifah Indar Parawansa, a candidate of East Java Governor, is branded in Instagram as a proper woman leader for East Java Province which has the greatest Islamic community organization in Indonesia.

### **3. Methodology**

Population of data in this study was all texts published in the official Instagram account of Khofifah from 13 February to 27 June 2018, about 53 posts. February 13, 2018 was chosen because in that date, Khofifah was officially designated as candidate of the 2018 East Java governor election by East Java Regional Election Commission. Therefore, it can be assumed that the date is considered as an official milestone of the early branding process undertaken by Khofifah. Meanwhile, June 27, 2018 was chosen as the end of collecting data since on that date the 2018 East Java governor election will be held. Next, purposive sampling was performed in selecting samples of data. Purposive sampling is the process of selecting sample data based on predetermined criteria (Marvasti, 2004: 21). Criteria used in this study were top-three-favorite photos and top three viewed videos. The number of likes and views was assumed to signify significant influence. Thus, the total number of samples was six texts, three photos and three videos.

## **4. Result and discussion**

### **4.1 Women as the Second Sex**

Women, according to Simone de Beauvoir (2011: 20), are the second sex. Men are considered as essentialist subjects with a free will who are themselves independent and capable to do anything. On the other hand, women are considered as a contingent being who are dependent and controlled by the circumstances. Men can act up and do anything freely and give meaning to the world, while women only become meaningful in relation to men. (de Beauvoir, 2011: 100). Thus, women's ideal characters, according to de Beauvoir, are constructed by men. "One is not born, but rather becomes woman" (de Beauvoir, 2011: 330), which means that women are not born feminine, but are rather expected and conditioned by patriarchal culture to be feminine. The "feminine world" is integrated by a group governed by male, which characteristics are actually an occupation to subordination (de Beauvoir, 2011: 724). Women are made to keep, to fix, to arrange things because they have no power to construct or destroy; they are full of shyness, pettiness, laziness, and servility (de Beauvoir, 2011: 729). Since men shapes and rules the world, the world is considered as masculine, while the femininity belongs to women. Women cannot peacefully decide what they want to do. Stereotyping reinforces what

women and men should do, as well as what labels them as feminine and masculine. Gendered traits are applied to keep them compliant and controlled since birth. From birth men are assigned traits that reinforce superiority and domination. Gender stereotypes created by the society's expectation in patriarchal system are that men should be self-confident, aggressive, muscular, tall, and etc, while women should be empathy, care-giving, understanding, thin, graceful, long-haired, dresses, taking care of children, dealing with house-hold activities, and etc. Gender stereotyping is formed by people who live in the patriarchal system itself, leading to male dominance over women. Patriarchy forms the rules and values that women must obey. Women should be what society (men) wants them to become. The second sex is a tool to examine patriarchal structures that use sexual differences to oppress women and deprive them from their own bodies.

#### 4.2 Instagram as a multimodality media

Instagram as an "image machine" allows its users to upload photographs and short videos, follow other users' feeds, , set their account as "private" or not, connect their Instagram account to other social networking sites, as well as post share uploaded photos and videos along with caption, comment, and like. In other words, Instagram can be considered as social media with a personal publishing multimodality. Hence, multimodality theory by Theo Van Leeuwen was used to analyze political campaign texts posted in Khofifah's Instagram account.

Multimodality, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 2), uses both verbal and visual communication related to each other (complete each other). Verbal communication has certain compositions, namely subject, predicate, and object to make a sentence, while visual one does not require those compositions. However, visual communication has different compositions which have similar functions as verbal one, such as angle, actor, participant and etc. to achieve the perspective (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006: 6). There are two processes in analyzing verbal communication, conceptual and narrative processes. Narrative process represents vector connects between participants, reflecting an action (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006: 45). Meanwhile, conceptual process refers to how participants are portrayed in terms of their class, structure, or meaning (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006: 79). On the other hand, visual communication, according to Kress and Leeuwen (2006: 114), involves two kinds of participants, namely represented participants (which refer to the people, the places and things depicted in images) and interactive participants (which refer to real people or participants who have communication). There are also some visual communication elements to be analyzed in multimodality approach, such as act and gaze, frame position and frame size, camera movement, as well as camera angle.

#### 4.3 Khofifah as a Second Sex Leader

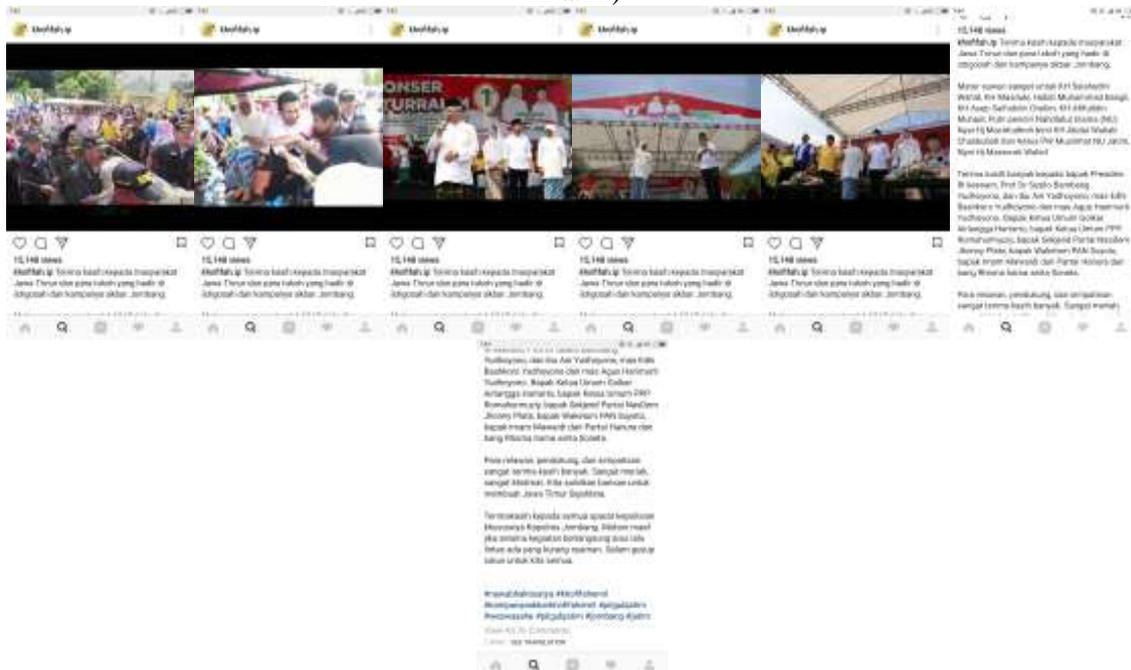
Based on Figure 1-3 below, the mostly viewed Khofifah's branding as a candidate governor of East Java is depicted Khofifah as a second sex leader. From the first scene of the video (Figure 1), Khofifah is portrayed as a leader not leading the movement, but more likely to be supported by men behind her. The position of Emil as her vice governor together with other men walking almost a side Khofifah in the video indicates that Khofifah is supported by men. The number of men bigger than women in the frame also indicates that this political arena is still dominated by men. The second frame of Figure 1 still brands Khofifah not as the main figure. The position of Emil in the left and more forward than Khofifah makes Emil more depicted as the main figure, while Khofifah as the supporting figure. In contrast, the caption verbally constructs Khofifah as the main figure, stating that *I and Emil...will create parsipatory development*. The inconsistency of verbal and visual text seems to legitimate the incapability of Khofifah as de Beauvoir (2011: 729) states that women are made to keep, to fix, to arrange things because they have no power to construct or destroy.

**Figure 1.** Video of Official Candidate Number Announcement for The East Java Governor Election



Similarly, Figure 2 also brands Khofifah as the second sex figure. In the first frame of this second video, Khofifah is depicted as a figure who cannot control and lead men. The position of Khofifah on the passenger side reflects, not on the rider side, according to Goffman (1987: 32), reflects that only men who have executive role in controlling. The second frame also illustrated how woman should be protected. The position of Khofifah next to Emil, but far from the crowd makes her figure depicted as the vulnerable figure. Furthermore, the third and fourth frames demonstrate how woman leader needs a man to introduce, define, and gain voters for her. The domination of man power in the success of Khofifah as woman leader is also depicted in the fifth frame, on which Khofifah is in the middle surrounded by men. The presence of Arum (a young woman with white dress) is because she accompanies her husband, Emil. In line with the visual ones, the caption also verbally reflects how Khofifah is more supported by male figure than female ones since she mentioned more male figures than female ones and put the names of male figures first.

**Figure 2.** Video of Istighosah and Grand Campaign in Jombang (assessed on June 24, 2018 at 11 a.m.)



Like Figure 2, Figure 3 also demonstrates how woman leader needs a man to introduce, define, and gain voters for her. In its caption Khofifah even verbally admitted how she is blessed with Rhoma Irama's support. The depiction of Khofifah as the second sex leader can be seen further on the second frame in which Khofifah only dance without playing a music

instrument like Emil did or used microphone to sing. It seems that Khofifah is not as the main figure though she is in the central position, but more as an attractive supporting figure gaining attention.

**Figure 3.** Video of Official Statement from Rhoma Irama supporting Khofifah



Based on Figures 1-3, we can see how the mostly viewed Khofifah's branding depicts woman leader more as a contingent being, dependent and controlled by the circumstances constructed by men. As a result, Khofifah as a leader only becomes meaningful in relation to men. This unequal position, according to de Beauvoir (2011: 181), occurs due to the fact that the entire history of women is actually written by men. The domination of men leads to the unequal position through the economic, social, and political situations that is overturned women's situation (de Beauvoir, 2011: 133). Consequently, this notion denotes the necessity ties for women to man.

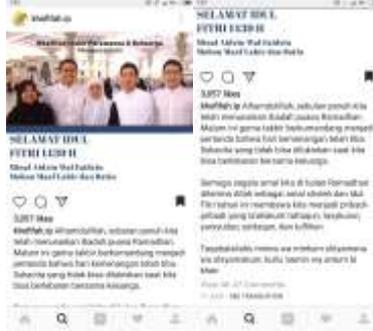
**4.4 Khofifah as a feminine leader**

Women, according to de Beauvoir (2011: 330) are not born feminine, but are rather expected and conditioned by patriarchal culture to be feminine. Figures 4 and 5 below depicted Khofifah as a leader with motherhood traits. The pose of Khofifah in the first photo in Figure 4 branded Khofifah character as a nurturing leader among orphans. Similarly, her pose in the second photo reflects her as an actor with motherhood touch. The baby even looked comfortable in the arms of Khofifah. Like Figure 4, Figure 5 also brands Khofifah as a leader with motherhood traits. Khofifah is depicted as a happy mother surrounded by her children gazing warmly to the camera. Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006: 118) states that when the participants give eye contact and gaze to the viewers, it means the image "demand" something to the viewer. In this case, Khofifah and her children are branded as figures demanding of forgiveness from her viewers since the context is about celebrating Eid Mubarak. Hence, it can be said that Khofifah is branded not only a happy and warm mother, but also a humble leader. Unfortunately, the mostly liked branding of Khofifah in both figures only reflects her ability to control and manage children, not mature men. It legitimates that women character is always subordinated since men shapes and rules the woman world as de Beauvoir (2011: 724) states that the woman world is integrated by a group governed by male, where the feminine characteristics are actually an occupation to subordination.

**Figure 4.** Photo of Khofifah visiting Orphanage in Sidoarjo



**Figure 5.** Photo of Official Statement from Khofifah celebrating Eid Mubarak



In addition, Figure 6 below illustrates the branding of Khofifah as a leader against terrorism. However, the photo narratively does not tell how Khofifah as an actor take an action to pursue the goal (eradicating terrorism effect). Khofifah is only portrayed as a women walking with smiling. In contrast, the caption verbally reflects her action in asking the people of East Java to face terrorism bravely and keep Surabaya safe. Hence, it can be said that Khofifah is still depicted as a feminine figure who never takes an action coercively, but just smile although the situation is not good. The solution offered by Khofifah in the verbal text is also indicated as a woman leader, Khofifah only can keep, fix, and arrange things because she, according to de Beauvoir (2011: 729), has no power to construct. Unfortunately, the low angle shot and the halo effect used more emphasize that Khofifah is branded as a powerful and favorable leader not because of her coercive power, but because of her gentle character.

**Figure 6.** Photo of Official Statement from Khofifah eradicating Terrorism Effects in East Java



**5. Conclusion**

Finally, the number of her posts from 13 February to 27 June 2018 is still considered not as high as her opponent. It indicates that Khofifah as an actor in the political arena did not use social media maximally as her election strategies. In addition, although Khofifah used her official Instagram account as her political campaign media, she still branded herself as a second sex leader with feminine characters. Perceptions of appropriate roles for women and men in politics are actually shaped by broader patterns of societal values and priorities, which in turn rest on economic development and religious traditions. This legitimates that political arena is still considered as male domination.

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