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PUBLIC PERSPECTIVES ON THE "*LAPOR MAS WAPRES*" PROGRAM ON THE INDONESIAN LAWYERS CLUB YOUTUBE CHANNEL

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Abstract
The transformation of information technology has created a new public space in digital media, which also serves as a political discourse arena. The "Lapor Mas Wapres" program, launched by Vice President Gibran Rakabuming Raka, is an interesting phenomenon that has received diverse responses from the public. This study aims to analyze the public's perspective on the program as presented through the Indonesia Lawyers Club (ILC) YouTube channel, specifically regarding the issue of political imagery. Using a qualitative descriptive method, this research explores the perceptions and interpretations of active ILC viewers who commented on the show "Lapor Mas Wapres // Between Appreciation and Imaging" in April-May 2025. Data was collected through observation of audience engagement on the platform and in-depth online interviews with purposefully selected active users. The analysis utilizes Stuart Hall's reception theory to identify dominant, negotiated, and oppositional readings. The results reveal a complex spectrum of public reactions, with the majority of informants in a negotiated position. They acknowledge the program's positive aspects but are skeptical about its consistency and real-world follow-up, often viewing it as a political gimmick rather than substantive public service.

Kata Kunci:
Perspektif Masyarakat; Lapor Mas Wapres; Indonesia Lawyers Club; Pencitraan Politik; Teori Resepsi.

Abstrak
Transformasi teknologi informasi telah menciptakan ruang publik baru dalam media digital, yang berperan sebagai arena diskursus politik. Program "Lapor Mas Wapres" yang diluncurkan oleh Wakil Presiden Gibran Rakabuming Raka menjadi fenomena menarik yang menimbulkan respons beragam dari publik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perspektif masyarakat terhadap isu pencitraan politik yang diangkat dalam program tersebut, yang disajikan melalui kanal YouTube Indonesia Lawyers Club (ILC). Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif, penelitian ini menggali secara mendalam persepsi dan interpretasi penonton aktif tayangan ILC yang memberikan respons dalam bentuk komentar pada program "Lapor Mas Wapres // Antara Apresiasi dan Pencitraan" pada bulan April-Mei 2025. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi terhadap interaksi penonton dan wawancara mendalam daring dengan pengguna aktif yang dipilih secara purposif. Analisis data berlandaskan pada teori resepsi Stuart Hall untuk mengidentifikasi posisi dominan, negosiasi, dan oposisi dalam interpretasi khalayak. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan spektrum

reaksi masyarakat yang kompleks, dengan mayoritas informan berada pada posisi negosiasi. Mereka mengakui potensi positif program tetapi bersikap skeptis terhadap konsistensi dan tindak lanjut di lapangan, serta menilai program tersebut sebagai "gimik politik".

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INTRODUCTION

The transformation of information technology has created a new public space in digital media, which serves not only as a means of entertainment but also as an arena for political discourse. Platforms such as YouTube play a crucial role in the dissemination and framing of political discourse more openly to the public (Livingstone & Lunt, 2002). In this context, the launch of the Lapor Mas Wapres program by Vice President Gibran Rakabuming Raka is an interesting phenomenon that warrants study due to the diverse responses it has generated from the public. This program is claimed to be an innovative digital-based public aspiration service, but many also consider it a political image strategy inherent in Gibran's figure (Sidik, 2025).

This image issue is inseparable from Gibran's political background as the son of President Joko Widodo, who is often associated with the practice of political dynasties in Indonesia (Firdaus, 2020). His presence at the national level was preceded by controversy regarding the Constitutional Court's decision that allowed him to run as a vice presidential candidate (Argawati, 2023). When the Lapor Mas Wapres program was introduced, various interpretations emerged from the public, captured in the Indonesia Lawyers Club (ILC) broadcast entitled "Lapor Mas Wapres // Between Appreciation and Image." The broadcast not only contained narratives from elites but also displayed public responses through digital commentary that demonstrated various audience reception positions.

Previous research has shown that audiences do not always passively accept media messages. Message reception is influenced by social, economic, cultural, and individual backgrounds and experiences. Saputra & Claretta (2023) found a tendency for people to take an oppositional stance against the narratives of power in ILC political broadcasts. Meanwhile, Widiastuti et al. (2025) and Afandi & Rozi (2024) revealed that young audiences are increasingly critical in deconstructing political symbols and messages conveyed through digital media.

Based on the background outlined above, this study aims to analyze public

perspectives on the Lapor Mas Wapres program presented through the Indonesia Lawyers Club (ILC) YouTube channel, specifically regarding the political image issues raised in the program. The analysis will be conducted using Stuart Hall's reception theory to identify dominant, negotiating, and oppositional positions in audience interpretation of the political messages conveyed. The results of this study are expected to make a significant contribution to the study of political communication, particularly in understanding the interaction between digital media content, political image formation, and critical public responses in the digital era.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods to analyze public perspectives on the Lapor Mas Wapres program presented on the Indonesia Lawyers Club (ILC) YouTube channel. The primary focus of the study is to explore in-depth audience perceptions and interpretations regarding the political image issues raised in the program. To achieve this goal, the research targets specifically include active viewers of the ILC channel who respond to the form of comments, likes, and shares on the platform. Furthermore, data were also collected through in-depth interviews with several informants who were purposively selected based on their activity and involvement in digital discussions about the program. The qualitative approach was chosen to explore audience meanings, experiences, and interpretations within the natural context of their interactions on digital media (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Meanwhile, descriptive methods were applied to provide a systematic and detailed overview of the various audience perceptions and assessments within their socio-cultural context regarding the controversial image issues (Sugiyono, 2017).

This research took place in April-May 2025. Primary data were collected from the comments section and interactions on the Indonesia Lawyers Club YouTube channel (@IndonesiaLawyersClubReborn), specifically on the show "Lapor Mas Wapres // Antara Apresiasi dan Pencitraan." Data collection techniques included observation (participatory and non-participatory) of audience engagement on the platform, as well as in-depth online interviews via direct message with active users. All viewers who interacted with the show became research subjects, while key informants were purposively selected based on their activity and the relevance of their arguments regarding the image issue. This selection aimed to obtain rich and diverse perspectives. Data analysis was based on a constructivist paradigm (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, in Romdani (2021) to understand how audiences shape the social reality of Gibran's image. Furthermore, Stuart Hall's encoding-decoding approach (Hall, 1973, in Dixon, 2025) was applied to analyze various interpretations of the show's messages,

revealing the possibility of preferred, negotiated, or oppositional readings of the image issue.

Table 1. List Research Informants

Initials	Gender	Age	Background	Domicile	Information
MO	P	36	Legal Consultant	Attack	Informant 1
ML	L	34	Village Apparatus	Mojokerto	Informant 2
GD	L	27	Private employees	Surabaya	Informant 3
ON	P	26	Teacher	Tegal	Informant 4
FD	L	25	Bachelor of Political Science & Teacher	Sidoarjo	Informant 5
DU	L	22	Communication Science Student	Surabaya	Informant 6
GA	P	21	Law Student	Poor	Informant 7

Sources: Research (2024)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Public reaction to the Lapor Mas Wapres program on the Indonesia Lawyers Club YouTube channel reflects a complex spectrum of assessments regarding Vice President Gibran Rakabuming Raka's political image. One key dimension in audience interpretation is the uncertainty between appreciative attitudes toward the innovative public complaints channel and skepticism about the political motives behind it. This multi-layered perception is heavily influenced by each individual's social background, experience interacting with the bureaucracy, and level of political literacy. This phenomenon underscores the existence of an active decoding process, in which audiences not only receive messages literally but also adjust their meaning and critique the image-building messages conveyed.

Public Perception of Gibran as a Responsive Leader

In political communication literature, a responsive image refers to the public's perception of a leader who demonstrates openness, a willingness to listen, and the ability to respond quickly and appropriately to community needs (Lubis & Rabbani, 2023; Maolani et al., 2021). This image is built not only through symbolic messages but also through direct interactions and concrete policies that provide benefits. The presence of public aspiration channels such as the Vice President's Lapor Mas program can be a means of building this image, particularly in the digital era that demands two-way communication between the government and the public.

In this study, the findings indicate a spectrum of audience reception consistent with Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding framework. Some informants occupied a dominant-hegemonic position, fully accepting the message that the 'Lapor Mas Wapres' program was evidence of Gibran's concern for the people. They viewed easy access via WhatsApp, the e-Lapor website, and face-to-face posts as concrete steps to cut through bureaucracy. One informant succinctly described this:

"This program is a good step to bring the government closer to the people." (Informant 2)

However, the majority of informants held a negotiated position. They acknowledged positive efforts but assessed inconsistent implementation on the ground and slow bureaucratic response. This attitude reflects a process of reinterpreting messages based on social context and personal experiences (Hall, 1973, in Dixon, 2025). In their view, a responsive image must be demonstrated through tangible and sustainable results, not simply media posts or press coverage. Some even linked this initiative to a long-term political image strategy.

An oppositional stance emerged within a small group that firmly rejected the program's narrative as a form of public service. They viewed it as a political communication effort that was more cosmetic than substantive. One informant stated:

"This is more about political image building; there is no real impact that can be felt." (Informant 1)

This reception pattern confirms that public acceptance of a responsive image is heavily influenced by direct experience interacting with the bureaucratic system and the figure's political track record. Previous literature (Hasan, 2009; Jefkins, 1994) suggests that without performance-based legitimacy, that is, tangible, verifiable evidence, a responsive image tends to be fragile and vulnerable to rejection.

Gibran's credibility as a responsive leader through the Vice President's Lapor Mas program depends on his ability to maintain consistent follow-up, ensure transparency in the process, and deliver tangible impact directly felt by the public. In a digital ecosystem that rapidly and massively shapes public opinion, the success of building a responsive image is measured not only by how effectively the message is delivered, but also by the alignment between the political narrative and policy implementation on the ground. Without sustained, concrete results, the image created risks losing legitimacy in the public eye.

Public View of Gibran as a High-Performing Leader

Performance image in the context of public leadership is generally measured by the extent to which implemented programs produce tangible and measurable changes for the public. Commonly used indicators include policy effectiveness, speed of response, transparency of processes, and sustainability of results. Within this framework, public perception of the Vice President's Lapor Mas program provides a diverse picture of how Gibran is positioned as a performing leader.

In terms of portraying themselves as performing leaders, the research results show a clear polarization. In the dominant-hegemonic position, some informants believe the Vice

President's Lapor Mas program is beginning to produce real solutions and is an initial step toward improving public services. One informant stated:

> *"This program has already begun to produce real solutions and concrete changes, and I am very optimistic about future developments." (Informant 2)*

For this group, the program's presence is seen as a sign of the government's commitment to listening to public concerns and seeking solutions. This finding aligns with the concept of performance image in political communication, where performance is assessed based on effective policy implementation and its direct impact on the public (Kondolele et al., 2025).

However, the majority of respondents were in a negotiated position, acknowledging the program's positive potential but doubting its actual success and sustainability. For example, one informant said:

> *"There is potential to be effective, but the reality on the ground and the lack of follow-up make me skeptical; it is more about gimmick politics." (Informant 6)*

These doubts arise from unclear follow-up actions, minimal transparency regarding case progress, and the absence of public performance indicators such as the number of reports resolved or the level of reporter satisfaction. This perspective is consistent with public accountability theory, which emphasizes the importance of transparency, accountability, and performance data for building legitimacy (Bovens, 2007).

Furthermore, a small number of informants held an oppositional stance, viewing the program as merely a symbolic tool for building a political image without clear policy substance. This view is supported by literature (Hasan, 2009; Malonda, 2019), which states that political image building without measurable achievements will foster public cynicism and erode trust.

Therefore, despite efforts to build a high-performance image, its success in the public eye is primarily determined by concrete evidence, clear achievement indicators, and policy sustainability. In an era of open information, performance claims unsupported by verified data tend to be quickly questioned, especially by critical citizens active in digital media.

Public Perception of Gibran's Future Leadership Potential

A prospective image in political communication is a picture constructed by political actors to instill public perception regarding their potential for future leadership (Azhar, 2017). This image is aspirational and future-oriented, with its success dependent on the continuity between actual performance and the political narrative conveyed (Putra, 2019). For Gibran,

the Vice President's Lapor Mas program is seen not only as a means of public service but also as a strategy for shaping a prospective image ahead of political contests, including the 2029 Presidential Election.

Some informants held a dominant-hegemonic position, accepting the view that this move was a reasonable political strategy as long as it had a positive impact on society. They saw a continuity between Gibran's public communication and efforts to build political legitimacy in the future. One informant stated:

> *"This could be part of a strategy for the 2029 presidential election, but with positive goals, as long as the program can demonstrate tangible results." (Informant 2)*

This view aligns with the concept of political image, which emphasizes that the formation of public perception is not an instantaneous process, but rather the accumulation of consistent interactions, policies, and political symbols (Nimmo & Savage, 1976). The existence of the Vice President's Lapor Mas program is seen as both social capital and a means of demonstrating performance that can strengthen a prospective image.

However, the majority of informants displayed a negotiated position, acknowledging the program's benefits but remaining critical of its motives. They viewed the initiative as a form of soft campaigning disguised as a public service narrative. One informant stated:

> *"This program is more of a long-term political strategy, a soft campaign wrapped in a narrative of public service. Political observers call it 'early campaigning' and 'a gamble on credibility.'" (Informant 3)*

This attitude reflects Stuart Hall's reception framework, where the audience interprets the message by modifying its meaning according to their respective social backgrounds and political experiences (Hall, 1973 in Ulumuddin, 2024). Informants with this position assess that the political image built for the future will be effective if supported by measurable performance legitimacy, process transparency, and program sustainability.

Furthermore, some informants took an oppositional stance, rejecting the positive narrative being constructed and viewing the program purely as a political branding tool that masks limited experience and achievements. This view aligns with Azhar's (2017) warning that an imbalance between aspirational and actual imagery can undermine the success of political strategies and even potentially backfire on an increasingly critical public.

The role of the Indonesia Lawyers Club YouTube channel also plays a crucial role as a medium shaping Gibran's political image. As McNair (2014) in Simarmata (2014) explains, mass and digital media not only convey information but also produce and modify political meaning, which is then interpreted differently by audiences. The visual content and narratives

created through this platform can either strengthen or weaken the prospective image, depending on how the public perceives it. Construct it.

This perception mapping demonstrates that Gibran's future leadership potential is determined not only by his current communication strategy but also by the alignment between the political symbols he constructs and concrete evidence on the ground. In the digital age, the public has the capacity to access, compare, and evaluate political performance directly. Any discrepancy between narrative and reality will be quickly detected and could impact the figure's future political legitimacy.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of public perspectives on the "Lapor Mas Wapres" program broadcast on the Indonesia Lawyers Club (ILC) YouTube channel, it was found that public acceptance of this program is not singular, but instead consists of three reception positions according to Stuart Hall's theory: dominant-hegemonic, negotiating, and oppositional. The majority of the public occupies a negotiating position that acknowledges the efforts to open access to public aspirations and the image of Gibran as a responsive leader, but remains critical and demands transparency, consistency, and concrete evidence regarding the program's effectiveness. Perceptions of Gibran's performance vary; some view it as evidence of real work, while others doubt its sustainability and follow-up. A crucial aspect in shaping Gibran's future leadership potential is the alignment between the image narrative and the realization on the ground, which is the primary key to political legitimacy in the digital era. The public's critical attitude as active evaluative agents shows that digital political communication must be able to provide transparent and accountable dialogue in order to build trust and strengthen the credibility of political imagery sustainably.

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