

Public Response to the 2024 Presidential Election Results in Purba Sinomba Village, Padang Bolak District

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the response of the Purba Sinomba Village community to the results of the 2024 Presidential Election, with a focus on the socio-political dynamics that occur in rural areas. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews and observations of community political participation. The results of the study indicate that despite political polarization and dissatisfaction with the election results, the community tends to prioritize social harmony by respecting each other's choices, with the role of local figures such as village officials, religious leaders and youth leaders as important mediators in easing tensions. In addition, disinformation circulating through social media worsens the situation, especially due to the low political and digital literacy among rural communities. This study suggests the need to improve political and digital literacy to reduce the negative impact of invalid information, as well as strengthen the role of local figures in maintaining social stability post-election.

Keywords: 2024 Presidential Election; Public response; Purba Sinomba Village

1. Introduction

General Elections (Pemilu) are political events that always attract public attention, especially when it comes to presidential elections that will determine the direction of national leadership. As a democratic mechanism, elections provide space for the public to actively participate in determining their leaders. However, election results often give rise to mixed reactions in society. This response not only reflects political choices, but also reflects the social, economic, and cultural conditions of the community. In Purba Sinomba Village, Padang Bolak District, this phenomenon is very interesting to study. The characteristics of heterogeneous villages with distinctive social dynamics make the community's response to the results of the 2024 Presidential Election worthy of in-depth study.

Public response to election results is not a sudden phenomenon, but rather the result of the interaction of various factors that have been studied in previous studies. (Citra Widayanti & Yulita Nilam Fridiyanti, 2024) in his study showed that social media has a major influence in shaping public opinion on election results. Social media is not only a means of disseminating information, but also a space for people to express their emotions and political opinions. This phenomenon is getting stronger in the digital era, where news can spread quickly, including news that is not necessarily true.

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(Setiawati, 2025) revealed that the political involvement of rural communities is still heavily influenced by traditional social relations. In many villages, political decisions are often based on loyalty to certain figures or existing social networks, rather than solely on rational political preferences. This causes the community's response to the election results to be very emotional, especially when the results do not match their group's expectations. Meanwhile, (Rahawarin, 2017) in his research on post-election social conflict found that dissatisfaction with the election results can trigger social tension. People who feel disadvantaged by the election results often express their dissatisfaction through protests or other actions that show rejection. However, on the other hand, there are also groups of people who try to respond to the situation in a more constructive way, such as holding political dialogues or joint discussion activities.

(Isyanawulan et al., 2023) highlighted the role of political education in shaping the post-election public response. They found that people with good political understanding tend to be wiser in accepting the election results, even though the results do not match their political preferences. Conversely, people with low levels of political literacy tend to be more easily influenced by negative narratives circulating, especially through social media. In the context of North Sumatra, (Wulolo & Renmaur, 2020) emphasized that local culture still has an important role in reducing post-election social tensions. They found that the tradition of deliberation and mutual cooperation in rural communities can be an effective means of resolving differences of opinion regarding election results. These local wisdom values act as a counterweight that can prevent open conflict in society.

(Akhyar Anshori et al., 2023) through his research that people with less stable economic conditions tend to show dissatisfaction with the election results. This is due to high expectations for economic changes after the election that are not met, resulting in a negative perception of the democratic process. (Ilham, 2025) in his study highlighted the phenomenon of disinformation which also exacerbated the post-election situation. He found that in rural areas, disinformation often triggers social conflict. People who have difficulty accessing valid information are easily influenced by fake news circulating, which then triggers an overreaction. This situation is even more complex when the disinformation involves sensitive issues that touch on the social and political identities of the community. On the other hand, (Halawa, 2019) shows that economic factors also play an important role in shaping the community's response. Dissatisfaction with the election results is often influenced by worsening economic conditions. People who feel that the government is unable to improve their welfare tend to associate the election results with the failure of government policies, so that their response to the election results becomes more emotional and full of disappointment.

This phenomenon is certainly inseparable from various problems that arise in society. One of the main problems in Purba Sinomba Village is the increasingly strong political

polarization. This polarization causes society to split into several opposing groups, especially when the election results are considered detrimental to one party. This polarization not only has an impact on social relations, but also has the potential to trigger open conflict if not managed properly. In addition, the emergence of disinformation is a serious challenge that must be faced. Invalid and provocative information often ignites people's emotions. They have difficulty distinguishing between true information and fake news, so that the opinions formed are often based on false assumptions. This situation further complicates the situation and increases the potential for conflict.

Several factors contributed to the diverse public responses to the results of the 2024 Presidential Election in Purba Sinomba Village. Low political literacy is one of the main factors influencing public perception. Lack of understanding of the election process makes them easily influenced by negative narratives circulating. The influence of social media also cannot be ignored, because social media is a very effective space for spreading opinions, both positive and negative. Economic factors also play a big role, where people who face economic difficulties tend to respond to the election results with a more critical attitude and full of disappointment.

In this context, this study makes a new contribution by focusing on the response of rural communities to the election results in a complex socio-political situation. Different from previous studies that have mostly discussed the responses of communities in urban areas, this study examines the unique socio-political dynamics in Purba Sinomba Village. The approach used in this study is also more comprehensive, by integrating political literacy, the influence of social media, and socio-economic conditions as the main variables. This study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of how rural communities respond to election results, as well as provide recommendations for better managing post-election socio-political dynamics.

2. Proposed Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to understand and analyze public responses to the results of the 2024 Presidential Election in Purba Sinomba Village, Padang Bolak District. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore in depth the perceptions, views, and experiences of the community in a complex social context. Qualitative research provides flexibility in understanding social phenomena holistically, according to the social, cultural, and economic background of the local community.

According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is an investigative process that aims to understand the meaning constructed by individuals or groups related to a social phenomenon. This process is natural, where researchers become the main instrument in collecting and analyzing data. Creswell also emphasized that qualitative research focuses on in-depth descriptions and interpretations of data obtained directly from the field. Thus, this

research not only seeks to describe the community's response, but also to understand the meaning behind the response.

3. Results and Discussion

Padang Lawas Regency, located in the province of North Sumatra, consists of 12 sub-districts, each with unique social, cultural, and economic characteristics. Each sub-district in this area plays an important role in the structure of government and regional development, with a predominantly agrarian lifestyle and heavily influenced by rich local cultures. These sub-districts cover a hilly area with stunning natural scenery, as well as significant natural resource potential, such as agriculture, plantations, and livestock. However, each sub-district faces different challenges, ranging from limited infrastructure, education, to economic inequality. Academic studies on Padang Lawas must consider the geographic and demographic differences between sub-districts, and how these factors influence the socio-political dynamics and development of the region as a whole. This diversity makes Padang Lawas an interesting object of study in understanding the interaction between rural communities and the growing urbanization in the area.

Purba Sinomba Village, located in Padang Bolak District, Padang Lawas Regency, has a community whose livelihood is mostly as farmers. Social life in this village is heavily influenced by an agrarian lifestyle, with most of its residents relying on agricultural products to meet their daily needs. However, politically, the people of Purba Sinomba Village still adhere to old traditions, where social and political interactions are more based on personal relationships and local figures, which influence the way they respond to various political events, including the results of the 2024 Presidential Election. The existence of local figures who are respected and relied on as determinants in many things makes politics in this village tend to be more conservative and protected from sharp political polarization, although there are still dynamics that need to be understood.

The results of the 2024 Presidential Election in Purba Sinomba Village have generated mixed responses among the community. This shows the socio-political complexity that occurs in rural areas. Differences of opinion and political choices do not always result in open conflict, but are more often reflected in dissatisfaction or suspicion of the election process. Torkis Halomoan, Head of Purba Sinomba Village, emphasized that the role of local figures in maintaining harmony is very important. According to Halomoan, "In our village, people trust information from local figures more than information from outside which often triggers division." This is in line with the findings of (Khadavi, 2024) in his research entitled "The Role of Religious Figures in Maintaining Community Harmony After the 2024 General Election" which found that religious figures act as effective mediators in easing tensions due to differences in political choices. They continuously socialize the values of harmony, working together with community leaders and village officials to prevent polarization in society.

However, the big challenge faced is the very high flow of information, especially through social media. Along with technological advances and increasingly widespread internet access, village communities now find it easier to access various information, both valid and unverified. Salman Alfarisi, a member of the Purba Sinomba Village KPPS, explained that information spread on social media often adds to confusion among the community. "We must continue to provide clarification so that the public does not get caught up in a false narrative that could worsen the situation," he said. This phenomenon indicates that even though the election is over, the public is still haunted by information that is not clear about its truth. This is also supported by the findings of Harahap (2024), which shows that social media is the main means for spreading political polarization narratives, especially in rural areas, where digital literacy is still very limited. Village communities, with low levels of digital literacy, often find it difficult to distinguish between factual and provocative information, which in turn influences their views on election results.

Political participation in Purba Sinomba Village was recorded as quite high, with voter turnout reaching 85%. This high level of participation indicates a strong political awareness of the community, especially because of their involvement in the social and political processes taking place at the village level. Communities tend to have higher levels of political participation compared to urban communities. This is due to the more traditional social life in rural areas, allowing for more intensive interaction between individuals, thus encouraging more active political participation.

The phenomenon of political polarization triggered by information circulating on social media is a very important issue to be responded to wisely. Inability of most people in rural areas to evaluate the truth of the information they receive exacerbates political polarization. This is clearly seen in Purba Sinomba Village, where several residents who were dissatisfied with the election results spread unverified information, thereby increasing tensions among the community. This uncertainty creates unrest that can escalate into open conflict if not immediately addressed wisely. Fake news circulating via WhatsApp and Facebook is one of the main triggers of tension among residents.

Nevertheless, the social life of the Purba Sinomba Village community generally continues to run normally. Firman, a villager, said that after the post-election tension subsided, social life returned to normal. "After the election, activities returned to normal. What is important is that we maintain good relations," he said. This shows that despite differences in political choices, the village community prefers to focus on deeper social aspects rather than getting caught up in political conflict. Maintaining good relations and mutual respect between residents is a priority, because they are aware that social harmony is more important than momentary political differences. Routine dialogue efforts facilitated by village officials and local figures have proven effective in reducing political tensions and restoring a peaceful atmosphere in the community.

To prevent a recurrence of the phenomenon of dissatisfaction with election results in the future, increasing political and digital literacy among rural communities is crucial. (Darajat, n.d.) emphasized that the lack of political education and literacy causes the practice of money politics to flourish during elections. By increasing political literacy, rural communities can better understand the importance of integrity in the democratic process and become more critical of offers that are detrimental to democratic values. In addition, political literacy campaigns in villages are important to ensure that welfare programs are communicated effectively, so that communities can actively participate in the development of their villages.

On the other hand, digital literacy also plays an important role in equipping rural communities to be more critical of the information they receive. Data from the Ministry of Communication and Information (2022) shows that the digital literacy index in the western part of Indonesia is at a score of 3.54 for digital skills and 3.70 for digital ethics, on a scale of 1 to 5. Although this figure shows progress, efforts are still needed to improve, especially in the aspect of digital security which has a lower score. With better digital literacy, rural communities will be able to recognize and avoid disinformation, and participate more actively and wisely in the democratic process.

4. Conclusions

The community response to the results of the 2024 Presidential Election in Purba Sinomba Village reflects the complex socio-political dynamics in rural areas. The community, which mostly relies on traditional social relations and local figures, shows that elections are not just political events, but are also closely related to the existing social and economic context. Political polarity, often fueled by disinformation, exacerbates existing social tensions. However, local figures and the tradition of deliberation are still able to ease these tensions. Increasing political and digital literacy and better information management are key to managing post-election socio-political dynamics, especially in rural areas.

In addition, although the people of Purba Sinomba Village tend to value social harmony and personal relationships, they also show dissatisfaction with the election results that can lead to tension. People who are influenced by unverified information or disinformation often feel anxious or provoked, even though there is no real evidence to support their claims. This shows that more effective information management and education about media literacy are essential to maintaining social stability. Local figures who act as unifiers still play an important role in directing the community to be wiser in responding to political issues, avoiding potential conflicts that could threaten the social integrity of the village.

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