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The Techno-Oligarchic Communication Paradox: Corporate Media Effects and Democratic Deficit in Indonesian Political Parties

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Abstract: Indonesian political parties exhibit a persistent democratic contradiction: electoral turnout above 79% coexists with party trust at only 35%, while algorithmic media ecology has simultaneously enabled civic mobilization and reinforced oligarchic entrenchment. Drawing on a qualitative constructivist design integrating PRISMA-guided systematic literature review (N = 44 studies, 2019–2025), single-case study of the Perindo Party, and systematic social media content analysis (N = 400 posts, $\kappa = 0.81$), this study extends Aeron Davis's (2019) four-phase media effects model through the proposed Techno-Oligarchic Communication Paradox (TOCP) framework. TOCP formalizes three structural mechanisms—Funding Corporatocracy, Digital Personalization Without Participation, and Algorithmic Legitimation Substitution—that explain how Phase 4 digital communication technologies paradoxically deepen democratic deficits within oligarchic institutional logics. Perindo's deployment of MNC Group infrastructure (68% corporate content), figure-centric microtargeting (79% HT-branded), and high algorithmic reach (34% youth) produced comprehension failure (72% unable to identify party platform) and legitimacy decline (–21 points in trust; electability at 4.1%). TOCP advances Davis's framework by centering corporate media ownership as an organizing structural variable applicable to emerging democracies in which media–party fusion is constitutive of the political communication landscape.

Keywords: techno-oligarchic communication paradox, media effects, digital democracy, political participation, algorithmic politics, Perindo Party, Indonesia, Global South.

INTRODUCTION

The Participation–Trust Paradox

Indonesian democracy presents a compelling contradiction. Over three consecutive electoral cycles (2014, 2019, 2024), national voter turnout remained above 79% (KPU, 2024), positioning Indonesia among the most participatory electoral democracies in Asia-Pacific. Yet a national survey (R&D, 2023) recorded party trust at 35%—the lowest of any major state institution (Tables 1 and 2). The 14-percentage-point decline in party trust between 2019 and 2023 coincides precisely with the period of most intensive digital political communication. A 2023 LSI survey found 68% of young voters characterized parties as 'elite clubs' disconnected from public concerns (Mietzner, 2020).

Table 1. Voter Participation Rate in Indonesia (2014–2024)

Year	DPR Turnout (%)	Presidential Turnout (%)	Δ vs Previous (%)
2014	75.11	70.99	—
2019	81.97	81.97	+6.86
2024	79.89*	79.89*	-2.08

Note: *2024 = provisional KPU results as of June 2024. Source: (KPU, 2024)

Table 2. Public Trust in State Institutions, Indonesia (2023)

Institution	Trust (%)	Trend 2019–2023
Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI)	85	Stable (+1%)
President of Indonesia	77	Declined (-8%)
Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK)	72	Declined (-11%)
DPR/DPRD (Parliament)	51	Declined (-7%)
Political Parties	35	Declined (-14%)

Note: Trust = proportion expressing 'trust' or 'high trust.' Source: (R&D, 2023)

The digital environment has simultaneously mobilized and polarized. The #SaveKPK campaign (2019) generated 1 million petitions within 72 hours; #ReformasiDikorupsi mobilized students across 53 cities (Wijayanto & Mubah, 2022). Yet (Kominfo, 2024) recorded 1,507 verified political hoax cases in the 2024 election—277% more than in 2014—including AI-generated deepfake campaign content (Table 3).

Table 3. Political Disinformation Cases During Election Campaigns, Indonesia (2014–2024)

Year	Hoax Cases	Key Characteristics	Source
2014	400	Nascent era; mostly text-based	Kominfo
2019	1,221	Sharp escalation; SARA and viral defamation	MAFINDO
2024	1,507	Record high; deepfakes, AI-generated disinformation	Kominfo

Note: Verified reports by respective monitoring bodies. Sources: (Kominfo, 2024; MAFINDO, 2024).

Research Gap and Literature Review

(Davis, 2019)four-phase media effects model traces political communication from Strong Effects (pre-1960s) through Limited Effects, Interactive Effects, and Phase 4 Algorithmic Effects—characterized by big data analytics, AI, and personalized microtargeting. However, this framework was developed from Western democratic contexts assuming institutional separation of corporate media ownership and party leadership. This assumption fails in Indonesia, where Surya Paloh (MetroTV/NasDem), Hary Tanoesoedibjo (MNC Group/Perindo), and Aburizal Bakrie (TVOne/Golkar) represent a structurally novel media–

party fusion (Tapsell, 2022) Existing Indonesian scholarship has documented oligarchic ownership patterns (Lim, 2021; Tapsell, 2017) without integrating them into communication effects frameworks. The specific paradox—sophisticated digital technologies deployed to simulate participation while structurally foreclosing it—has not been formalized as a comparative theoretical construct. This study addresses that gap.

Drawing on (Isin & Nielsen, 2008) 'acts of citizenship,' (Castells, 2013) 'communication power,' and (Zuboff, 2019) behavioral modification critique, alongside (Tapsell, 2022) and (Mietzner, 2020) documentation of democratic backsliding, the study situates Indonesia's digital communication paradox within a broader framework applicable to the Global South (Guerrero & Márquez-Ramírez, 2014; Norris & Inglehart, 2019).

Research Questions

This study pursues three objectives: (1) document structural transformation of political participation in Indonesia across 2019–2024, mapping displacement of formal by alternative digital channels; (2) examine Phase 4 algorithmic media effects with attention to oligarchic ownership interaction; and (3) develop the Techno-Oligarchic Communication Paradox (TOCP) as a theoretical extension of (Davis, 2019) for Global South democratic contexts. Corresponding research questions are: How has political participation shifted between formal and alternative digital channels (2019–2024)? In what ways do Phase 4 effects operate differently under oligarchic media ownership? What framework accounts for the paradox in which advanced digital communication deepens rather than resolves democratic deficits?

METHOD

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative constructivist design (Creswell & Poth, 2018), integrating three complementary strands: PRISMA-guided systematic literature review (SLR), single-case study, and systematic content analysis. An abductive analytical logic (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014) iteratively systematizes empirical observations against (Davis, 2019) framework, generating theoretical extensions where observations exceed its explanatory scope.

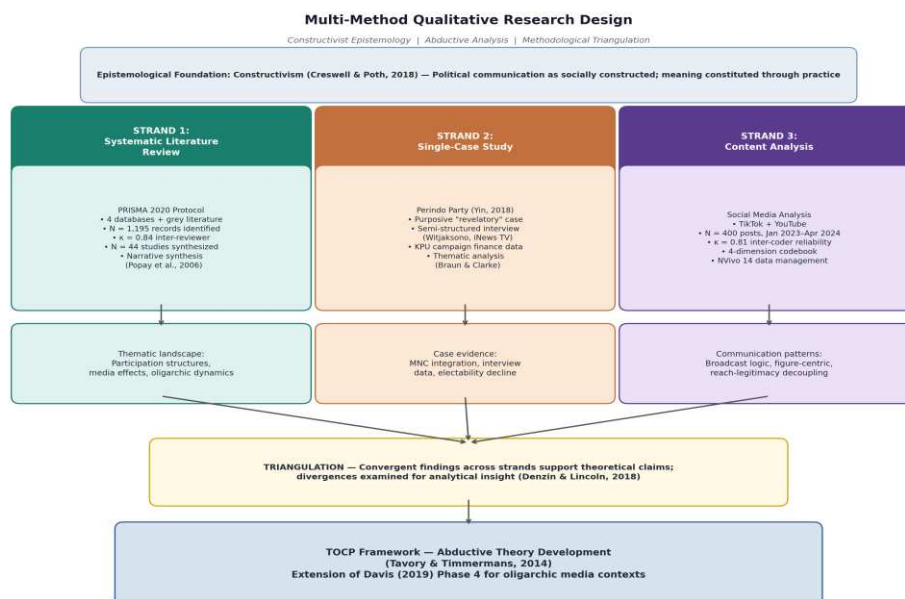


Figure 1. Multi-Method Qualitative Research Design: Three-Strand Structure and Abductive Integration

Strand 1: PRISMA-Guided Systematic Literature Review

A SLR was conducted per PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021) searching four databases (Table 4) with additional grey literature retrieval. Two-stage screening applied inclusion/exclusion criteria (Table 5) with inter-reviewer agreement $\kappa = 0.84$. Of 1,195 total records, 237 were excluded at full-text stage (Table 6), yielding 44 studies for narrative synthesis (Table 7) organized around three themes: participation structures, media effects evolution, and oligarchic communication dynamics.

Table 4. PRISMA 2020 Search Protocol: Databases, Search Strings, and Records Retrieved

Database	Search String	Date	Records
Scopus	"political communication" AND "Indonesia" AND "digital" OR "media effects"	Mar 2024	342
Web of Science	"party trust" OR "electoral participation" AND "Indonesia"	Mar 2024	198
Google Scholar	"Indonesian democracy" AND "social media" OR "oligarchy"	Mar 2024	520
SINTA (Indonesia)	"komunikasi politik" AND "media digital" OR "partai politik"	Mar 2024	87
Additional sources	Grey literature, policy documents, institutional reports	Mar–Apr 2024	24
Total			1,171

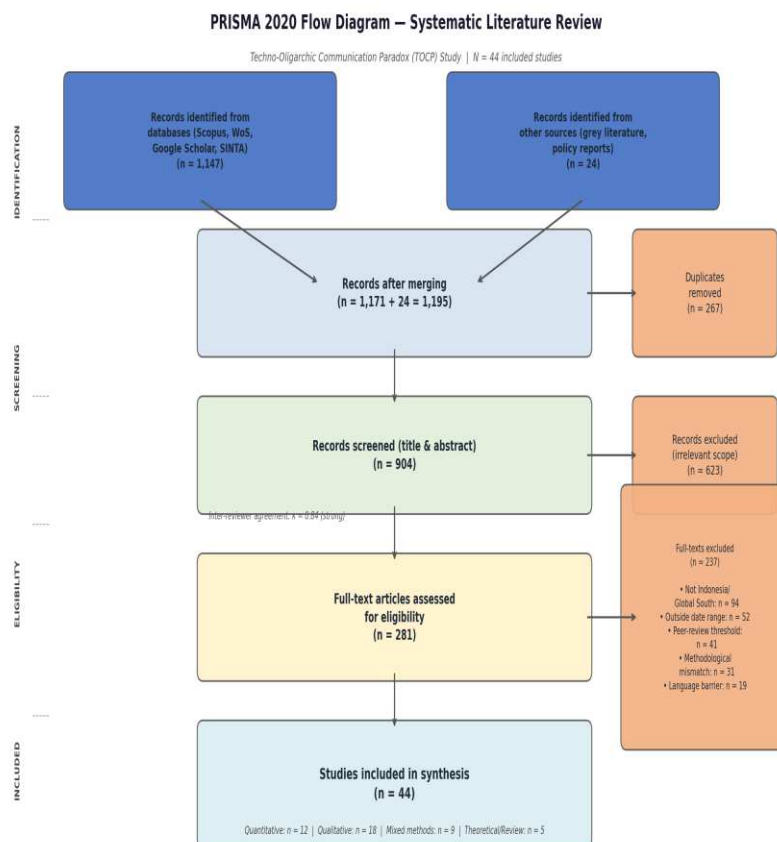


Figure 2. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram: Systematic Literature Review Process (N = 44 studies)

Table 5. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication type	Peer-reviewed, reports, grey literature	Non-academic without peer review
Date range	2019–2024 (seminal works: 2005+)	Pre-2019 unless seminal
Geographic focus	Indonesia or comparable Global South	High-income democracies without comparative relevance
Language	English and Bahasa Indonesia	Other languages
Thematic relevance	Political communication, digital media effects, party trust, oligarchic media	Health/entertainment media without political dimension

Table 6. Full-Text Exclusion Reasons (PRISMA 2020)

Exclusion Reason	n	% of Full-Text Pool
Not focused on Indonesia or comparable Global South context	94	33.5%
Outside specified date range (pre-2019, unless seminal)	52	18.5%
Did not meet peer-review quality threshold	41	14.6%
Language barrier (non-English, non-Indonesian)	19	6.8%
Methodological mismatch	31	11.0%
Total excluded	237	84.3%
Total included	44	15.7%

Table 7. Included Studies by Research Design (N = 44)

Study Design	n	Dominant Methods	Representative Focus
Quantitative	12	Survey, content analysis, experiments	Voting behavior, trust, filter bubble effects
Qualitative	18	Case study, interview, ethnography	Party communication strategy, civil society activism
Mixed methods	9	Social media analysis + survey	Digital political campaigns, algorithmic effects
Theoretical/review	5	Systematic review, conceptual analysis	Media effects theory, democratic theory
Total	44		

Strand 2: Single-Case Study of Perindo Party

Perindo was selected as a theoretically 'revelatory' case (Patton, 2015; Yin, 2018): it represents the most advanced articulation of corporate media–party fusion in Indonesian politics, making TOCP mechanisms maximally observable. Hary Tanoesoedibjo simultaneously chairs Perindo and leads MNC Group—Indonesia's largest private media conglomerate (RCTI, iNews TV, MNC TV, Okezone.com; ~40 million daily viewers). Primary data: in-depth semi-structured interview with Aiman Witjaksono, former Perindo cadre and Editor-in-Chief of iNews TV (October 2023), covering communication strategy, MNC Group's role, citizen participation structure, and digital reach vs. democratic engagement. Secondary data: (KPU, 2024) campaign finance disclosures, (Politika, 2023) electability data, LSI (2023) trust surveys, and content analysis (Section 2.4). Analysis used thematic coding (Braun & Clarke, 2021) Ethical approval: Universitas Sahid IRB (USH/IRB/2023/047).

Strand 3: Social Media Content Analysis

400 posts from Perindo's TikTok and YouTube accounts (89% of identified digital spend) were sampled at four-week intervals across three temporal periods: non-campaign (Jan–Sep 2023, n = 200), pre-campaign (Oct 2023–Jan 2024, n = 120), and campaign (Feb–Apr 2024, n = 80). A codebook deductively derived from the research framework and inductively from a 40-post pilot identified four coding dimensions: (1) content focus; (2) communication directionality; (3) participatory design; and (4) production attribution. Inter-coder reliability on a 60-post subsample (15%): $\kappa = 0.81$ (Landis & Koch, 1977). Data integration followed triangulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) an audit trail documented all interpretive decisions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Systematic Literature Review Findings

Of 44 included studies, 31 addressed participation structures: nine quantitative studies documented statistical dissociation between voting behavior and party identification, political efficacy, and institutional trust; eleven qualitative studies documented alternative digital participation as a structural response, finding higher political efficacy and policy impact per citizen engagement unit than formal party activities. Across 27 studies addressing media effects evolution, eight specifically analyzed Phase 4 dynamics—algorithmic personalization, filter bubbles, microtargeting—with consistently intensifying effects (Kominfo, 2024; Sanjaya et al., 2022). Critically, 12 studies on Indonesian media ownership found algorithmic amplification is structurally biased toward actors with production infrastructure (Lim, 2021; Tapsell, 2022), a gap in (Davis, 2019) politically neutral account. Sixteen studies addressed the media oligarchy–political communication nexus, consistently finding negative audience responses to perceived media–party collusion (LSI, 2023; Politika, 2023). Quality appraisal indicated moderate-to-high rigor overall (9 of 12 quantitative studies: adequate sampling; 14 of 18 qualitative studies: met COREQ criteria).

The Formal–Alternative Participation Divide

Electoral data (Table 1) confirm robust aggregate turnout, but (SMRC, 2023) survey analysis reveals 41% of 2024 voters attended polls due to social pressure or material incentives rather than ideological preference—up from 27% in 2014. This shift signals qualitative deterioration behind stable quantitative participation. Crucially, this pattern is most pronounced among youth (17–35): 58% social-obligation motivated, the very demographic targeted by Phase 4 campaigns including Perindo's #EkonomiRakyat. Alternative digital movements demonstrate remarkable mobilizational vitality (Table 8), yet their episodic, issue-specific character distinguishes them from sustained democratic institutionalization. Six months after each peak mobilization event, reported political efficacy among participants had returned to baseline (LSI, 2023), indicating that Indonesia's democratic deficit cannot be resolved through alternative channels alone.

Table 8. Alternative Digital Participation Movements in Indonesia (2019–2024)

Year	Movement	Platform	Democratic Impact
2019	#SaveKPK	Change.org, Twitter	1M+ signatures; forced legislative reconsideration
2019	#ReformasiDikorupsi	Instagram, YouTube	Multi-city student mobilization; partial policy concessions
2020–24	Kitabisa.com advocacy crowdfunding	Kitabisa.com, WhatsApp	Legal aid, environmental advocacy; 3.2M donors by 2023

2021–24	Digital environmental communities (#BijakPlastik)	Instagram, TikTok	12M TikTok views; collaboration with 47 NGOs
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Note: Sources: Change.org Indonesia (2019); Kitabisa.com (2023); MAFINDO (2024); Wijayanto & Mubah (2022).

Phase 4 Media Effects in the Indonesian Context

The trajectory of media effects follows (Davis, 2019) four-phase model with notable fidelity. Phase 4 became dominant from 2014, with the 2024 election representing maturity: AI-generated synthetic media, programmatic advertising, and real-time sentiment analytics were deployed at scale. (Kominfo, 2024) recorded 1,507 political hoax cases—34% AI-enhanced, versus 6% in 2019 (MAFINDO, 2024). Three structural asymmetries characterize Phase 4 in Indonesia beyond Davis's framework: (1) production volume asymmetry—Perindo's MNC Group access enabled broadcast-quality posting at an estimated IDR 4–6 billion below market cost; (2) distribution network asymmetry—MNC Group's ~40 million daily viewers provided cross-platform amplification unavailable to competitors, with iNews TV content systematically recycled to social media mimicking organic demand; and (3) temporal asymmetry—continuous non-campaign communication (200 posts analyzed) achieved algorithmic conditioning unachievable by parties relying solely on formal campaign-window spending. Indonesia's compressed Phase 3-to-4 transition (~2014–2019) also left regulatory frameworks structurally unprepared, an independent vulnerability that TOCP must account for.

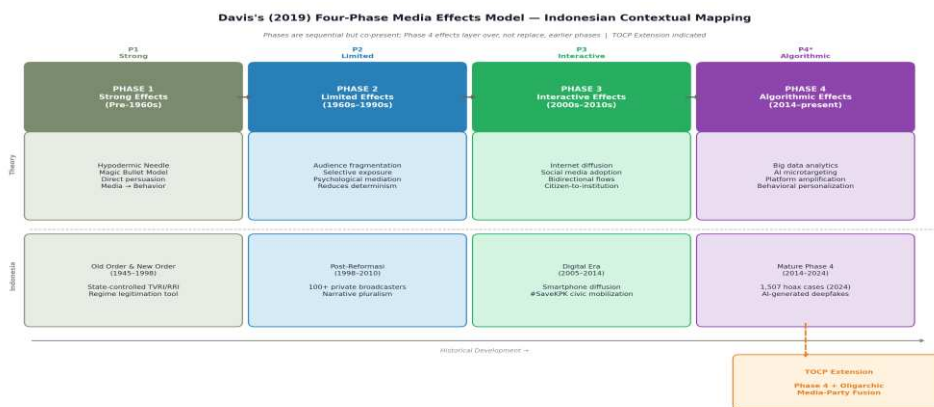


Figure 3. Davis's (2019) Four-Phase Media Effects Model: Indonesian Contextual Mapping and TOCP Extension

Perindo Case Study: Empirical Foundations of TOCP

Content analysis of 400 posts (TikTok/YouTube, January 2023–April 2024) reveals a communication architecture with three empirically robust patterns (Table 9). The dominant pattern is figure-centric content (79%, n = 316)—HT-branded narratives of personal trajectory and philanthropy at broadcast quality. Policy communication constituted only 12% (n = 48), overwhelmingly economic nationalism without specific programmatic commitments. Communication directionality was systematically broadcast-oriented: 88% of posts (n = 352) contained no responsive engagement. The 12% classified as dialogic was limited to complaint management—event logistics and merchandise, not political content. MNC Group production markers appeared in 68% of posts (n = 271), escalating from 61% (non-campaign) to 78% (campaign), operationalizing Mechanism 1. Temporal analysis reveals figure-centrism rose from 74% (non-campaign) to 86% (campaign), with simulated interactivity peaking at 13% in the campaign period—precisely when genuine participation demands were highest.

Table 9. Perindo Party Social Media Content Analysis: Dimensional Coding Results (N = 400)

Dimension	Category	N (%)	Interpretation
Content focus	Figure-centric (HT-branded)	316 (79%)	Leader personality dominates over party platform
	Policy/platform communication	48 (12%)	Minimal programmatic content
	Citizen engagement content	36 (9%)	Tokenistic — no follow-through
Communication direction	Broadcast (no responsive engagement)	352 (88%)	Systematic failure of dialogic communication
	Dialogic/responsive	48 (12%)	Limited to complaint management
Participatory design	One-way broadcast	352 (88%)	Reproduces mass media broadcast logic
	Interactive (polls/questions)	36 (9%)	Simulated interactivity without genuine dialogue
	Co-creation	12 (3%)	Absent as meaningful participation
Funding attribution	MNC Group production visible	271 (68%)	Corporate media infrastructure as campaign resource
	Independent party content	129 (32%)	Minority independently produced

Note: $\kappa = 0.81$ for inter-coder reliability. MNC Group attribution based on visual production markers and metadata. Source: Authors' content analysis, January 2023–April 2024.

Comment analysis across the 48 dialogic posts found 91% of 3,847 comments received no response; of 9% receiving responses, 78% were logistical; only 22 comments (0.6% of total) received substantive political engagement—all identity-affirming, none addressing critical questions. This 'silent accountability demand' is the micro-level manifestation of Mechanism 2 (Digital Personalization Without Participation).

The #EkonomiRakyat campaign achieved 34% reach among voters aged 17–25 via 120 influencers, yet post-campaign surveys found 72% of reached young voters could not correctly identify Perindo's economic platform (LSI, 2023; Charta Politika, 2023). Campaign finance data (KPU, 2024) indicate IDR 1.2 trillion in combined direct spending and MNC Group in-kind contributions. Despite this, electability remained at 4.1%—below the 4% parliamentary threshold—and trust declined 21 percentage points since 2019. Between Q2 2023 and Q1 2024, favorable ratings among 17–35 year olds fell from 22% to 14% ($p < .01$) during maximum campaign reach. LSI (2023) qualitative follow-up ($n = 48$ respondents) found 67% spontaneously described content as inauthentic using terms like 'seperti iklan' (like an advertisement) or 'promosi diri' (self-promotion)—without even being aware of MNC Group ownership (only 31% could identify HT as a media owner). Internal interview data echoes this: 'We were everywhere—on TikTok, on TV, on billboards—and yet when we went to the grassroots, people didn't feel like the party was theirs. They felt like they were watching a show.' (Witjaksono, n.d.)

Discussion

Formalizing the Techno-Oligarchic Communication Paradox (TOCP)

Findings across all three methodological strands converge on a single theoretical conclusion. The TOCP designates a structural condition in which Phase 4 algorithmic communication technologies are deployed within oligarchic institutional structures, producing

a systematic paradox: the more technologically sophisticated the communication apparatus, the less substantively participatory the political process it mediates. Three diagnostic criteria are necessary: (1) media-party ownership convergence (>5% national market share); (2) structural communication asymmetry (>30% in-kind media infrastructure contributions); and (3) legitimacy-reach decoupling (null or inverse relationship between communication scale and trust/electability). Perindo satisfies all three: RCTI reaches ~17% national audience share; 68% of content is MNC Group-produced; and trust declined 21 points during maximum digital reach.

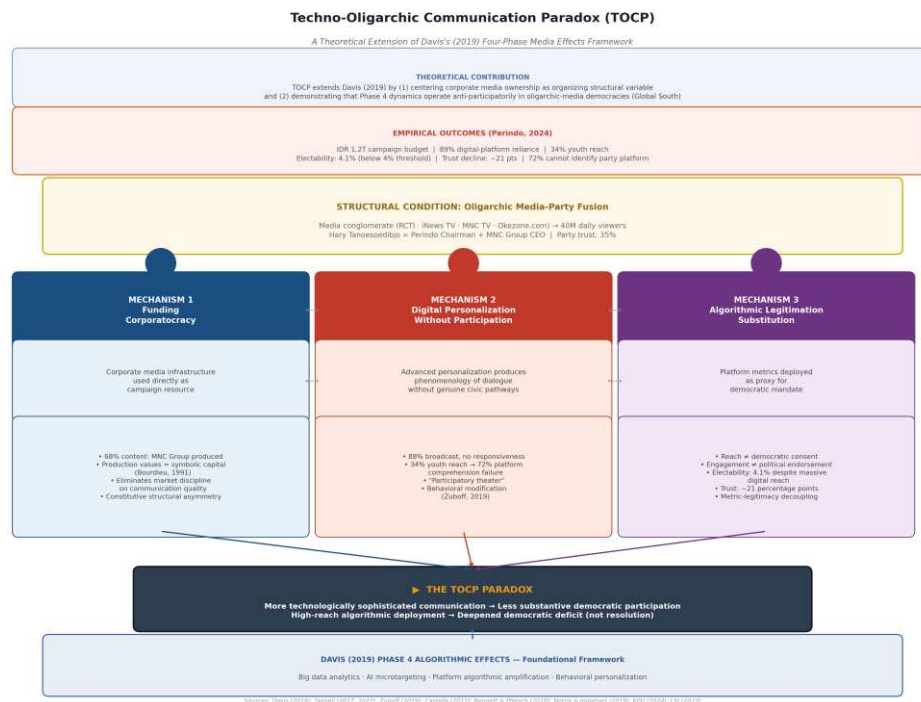


Figure 4. The Techno-Oligarchic Communication Paradox (TOCP): Theoretical Framework Diagram

Table 10. The Techno-Oligarchic Communication Paradox (TOCP): Mechanisms, Evidence, and Theoretical Anchors

TOCP Mechanism	Empirical Indicator	Perindo Data Point	Theoretical Anchor
Funding Corporatocracy	Corporate media infrastructure as campaign resource	68% MNC Group-produced; IDR 1.2T budget	(Tapsell, 2017, 2022; Zuboff, 2019)
Digital Personalization Without Participation	High reach, low platform comprehension	34% youth reach; 72% cannot identify party platform	(Castells, 2013; Davis, 2019)
Algorithmic Legitimation Substitution	Metric performance decoupled from legitimacy	Electability 4.1% despite large digital budget; trust -21pts	(Bennett & Pfetsch, 2018; Norris & Inglehart, 2019)

The three mechanisms are non-additive and structurally co-constituted. Funding Corporatocracy eliminates two market mechanisms—competitive pricing and editorial independence—that normally constrain campaign communication. Its 68% production share provides symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1991) that inflates the epistemic authority of political messages beyond their substantive democratic content. Digital Personalization Without Participation deploys microtargeting and behavioral analytics to create the phenomenology of relational communication—'participatory theater'—without genuine accountability pathways.

The 90% non-response rate to citizen aspirations submitted via Perindo's digital portal reflects not organizational incapacity but strategic choice: genuine participation creates accountability demands that oligarchic structures are not designed to meet. Algorithmic Legitimation Substitution deploys platform metrics (views, likes, trending positions) as proxy indicators of democratic mandate, exploiting the ambiguity between exposure and consent, reach and endorsement. Interventions targeting only one mechanism while leaving others intact are unlikely to resolve the paradox.

TOCP as Extension of Davis's Framework

Table 11. Theoretical Comparison: Davis's Phase 4 Media Effects vs. TOCP Extension

Dimension	Davis (2019) Phase 4	TOCP Extension
Media ownership assumption	Competitive market; arm's-length separation	Oligarchic fusion; media owner = party leader
Algorithm function	Amplification of any actor's messages by engagement signals	Structurally biased toward actors with production infrastructure
Participatory potential	Theoretically dialogic; enables citizen-to-institution communication	Paradoxically anti-participatory; technology deployed against deliberation
Legitimacy source	Ambiguous; platform metrics as proxy for public attention	Metric decoupling; algorithmic reach ≠ democratic mandate
Applicable context	Established democracies with moderate institutional trust	Low-trust, weakly institutionalized, oligarchic-media democracies (Global South)

TOCP and Davis's framework are complementary: Davis's Phase 4 account provides the necessary baseline for understanding algorithmic political communication; TOCP provides the structural modifications required for oligarchic media contexts. TOCP advances Davis in two dimensions. Structurally: Davis's implicit competitive-market assumption treats media production as a market service actors purchase, rendering it incapable of modeling the feedback loop in which oligarchic ownership simultaneously enables Phase 4 sophistication and forecloses competitive conditions that would make Phase 4 democratically productive. TOCP makes media ownership architecture an explicit analytical variable. Contextually: Davis's framework was developed from established democracies with moderate-to-high institutional trust, competitive party systems, and mature regulation. TOCP theorizes what happens when these conditions are absent—when Phase 4 technologies become structurally implicated in democratic deficit reproduction rather than mere powerful communication tools. The metric-legitimacy dimension offers TOCP's strongest predictive claim: IDR 1.2 trillion invested, 34% youth reach achieved, 21-point trust decline recorded simultaneously—a systematic inverse relationship directly predicted by TOCP but inexplicable within Davis's framework.

Democratic Reform Pathways

The TOCP framework implies a tri-level reform architecture. At the regulatory level, media ownership incompatibility provisions should prevent individuals holding board-level positions in broadcast media conglomerates from simultaneously leading political parties—modeled on post-Berlusconi Italian media law reforms, with enforcement through KPI and KPU supplemented by civil society monitoring. At the institutional level, parties developing genuine policy co-creation mechanisms—transparent feedback loops, documented citizen input in platform development, measurable accountability—should receive preferential access to public party funding and broadcast airtime. At the communicative level, media literacy

initiatives should extend beyond disinformation detection to structural literacy: equipping citizens to identify media ownership and party affiliation, drawing on Finland's extensively evaluated media literacy curriculum. TOCP's urgency is amplified by the 2024 election's AI deployment: 34% of political disinformation involved AI-enhanced content (MAFINDO, 2024). AI intensifies all three mechanisms simultaneously—most severely when deployed within existing oligarchic infrastructure, because the data assets and distribution networks that maximize AI's communicative impact are precisely those concentrated in media conglomerates. Regulatory approaches addressing only AI content without the structural conditions of its deployment will reproduce the same limitation as existing campaign finance regulation: technically accurate but structurally inadequate.

TOCP's comparative applicability extends to analogous contexts: the Philippines (elite-aligned broadcasting conglomerates; (Coronel, 2019), Thailand (military-affiliated business conglomerates; (McCargo, 2020), and Latin America (Venezuela: state-controlled media simulating participatory communication; (Guerrero & Márquez-Ramírez, 2014). The common structural feature is not private oligarchic versus state-controlled ownership but the structural absence of competitive media conditions creating accountability pressures. This positions TOCP as a comparative contribution applicable across diverse Global South democratic configurations.

CONCLUSION

This study documents Indonesia's structural bifurcation of political participation (79% turnout alongside 35% party trust), develops the TOCP framework as a theoretical extension of (Davis, 2019) model, and grounds both in a multi-method empirical analysis. At the empirical level, the study confirms money politics, elite recruitment patterns, and hollow party organization as structural drivers of qualitative participation decline, while alternative digital channels exhibit mobilizational vitality insufficient to substitute for reformed formal institutions. Phase 4 media effects reached mature expression in the 2024 election: 1,507 political hoax cases (+277% from 2014) and documented AI-generated synthetic media. At the theoretical level, TOCP advances Davis's framework structurally—identifying corporate media ownership as an organizing variable conditioning Phase 4 effects—and contextually—demonstrating how Phase 4 dynamics operate differently in low-trust, weakly institutionalized contexts. The three mechanisms jointly explain how IDR 1.2 trillion in campaign resources, 89% digital-platform reliance, and 34% youth reach produced 4.1% electability and a 21-point trust decline. At the practical level, a three-level reform agenda is required: regulatory conflict-of-interest provisions (media oligarchs cannot simultaneously lead parties and control broadcast infrastructure), institutional development of genuine deliberative party structures, and structural media literacy extending beyond disinformation detection.

Methodological limitations inform future directions. The single-case design appropriate for TOCP theory development limits generalizability across the Indonesian party system. Future research should apply TOCP operationalization comparatively to Golkar/TVOne, NasDem/MetroTV, and parties without media holdings to test discriminant validity. Computational content analysis across larger corpora and longer periods would enable more systematic mechanism testing. International comparative application to the Philippines, Thailand, Brazil, and Mexico—where media-oligarchy-political party configurations are documented—represents the logical next step toward a comparative theory of oligarchic political communication adequate to Global South democratic diversity.

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