

# **THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS IN INDONESIA**

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## **Abstract**

The role of music in political campaigns has become an increasingly significant phenomenon in Indonesia. Music not only acts as a means of strengthening political identity, but also as a tool for mass mobilization, political expression and the formation of public opinion. In the context of political campaigns, theme songs become symbols of the vision and values promoted by political parties, while political concerts become an opportunity to voice political aspirations and build mass support. Music is also used as a medium to express political and social views, where various musical genres such as rock, punk and hip-hop are used by musicians to voice dissatisfaction with political and social conditions in Indonesia. Song lyrics often contain political messages that reflect the views of a particular political party or social movement, helping to shape the political views and attitudes of listeners. Apart from that, music is also a tool to represent local political and cultural identities, strengthen social ties, and mobilize the masses at the regional level. However, political expression through music is also faced with challenges such as restrictions on freedom of expression and the risk of repression against musicians who are critical of the government. Therefore, it is important for governments and society to ensure that freedom of expression is respected and that musicians have space to express their political views without fear of repression. In this way, music can continue to be a positive force in political and social formation in Indonesia, helping to strengthen democracy and community involvement in the political process.

Keywords: music, political campaign, political expression, Indonesia.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The role of music in political campaigns in Indonesia has been an integral part of the democratic process since the beginning of independence. Music is not only a means of entertainment, but also a tool for conveying political messages, raising the spirits of the masses, and strengthening political identity. In the Indonesian context which is rich in cultural diversity, music is often used as a tool to express this diversity in a political context. Over time, the role of music in political campaigns has expanded significantly, reflecting political, social, and cultural changes in society.

Since the struggle for independence, music has been used as a means to unite the Indonesian people in the struggle against colonialism. Struggle songs such as "Indonesia Raya" and "Halo, Halo Bandung" not only became symbols of the spirit of resistance, but also reminded the people of their common goal of achieving independence. During the New Order, the government used music as a propaganda tool to promote regime policies, while the opposition movement also used music as a tool to express dissatisfaction with the government. For example, music from the rock and punk genres is often seen as a symbol of resistance to authority.

In the reform era, music has an increasingly important role in articulating political aspirations and voicing criticism of the government. Songs from various genres, including pop, rock, hip-hop, and dangdut, are often used to voice political and social issues relevant to society. Some musicians have even become public figures active in social and political movements, using their stage to fight for human rights, justice and democracy. For example, bands such as Slank, Superman Is Dead, and Navicula have become icons of the anti-corruption and environmental conservation movement.

However, the role of music in political campaigns is not limited to independent musicians or opposition movements. Political parties also actively use music as part of their campaign strategy. Music concerts held as part of political campaigns are often an opportunity to gain mass support and strengthen party identity. Campaign theme songs, such as party jingles, are also an important part of political campaigns in Indonesia. Politicians often use these songs to increase their popularity and improve their image in the eyes of voters.

Apart from that, music is also used as a tool to build solidarity and mobilize the masses in political campaigns. Political concerts held before general elections are often an opportunity to gather support from various levels of society. Musicians who support a particular candidate often make effective campaign ambassadors, due to their popularity and influence in society. In addition, music is also used as a tool to attract the attention of young people and increase their participation in the political process.

Not only in national political campaigns, but music also plays an important role in local level political campaigns. In various regions in Indonesia, there are musical traditions that are used as a means to communicate political messages and mobilize the masses. For example, in West Java, there is a tradition of Kuda Lumping which is often used at political events as a means to entertain the masses and strengthen local political identity.

However, although the role of music in political campaigns has many positive potentials, there are also some risks and challenges that need to be considered. One of them is the potential for polarization that can occur due to the use of music as a tool to strengthen political identity. Music used by one political party can often trigger strong reactions from the other party, especially if the message conveyed is deemed controversial or provocative. Apart from that, there is also the risk of commodification of music, where music becomes just a tool to gain political advantage, without paying attention to the artistic values or messages conveyed.

In facing this challenge, it is important for stakeholders, including musicians, politicians and the general public, to pay attention to ethical principles in using music in political contexts. This includes respecting freedom of expression, paying attention to cultural sensitivities, and avoiding the use of music for divisive or conflict-inducing purposes. In this way, music can continue to act as a tool to unite, inspire and change society, both in political and social contexts.

## **METHOD**

The literature study research method is an effective approach for collecting and analyzing information from various literature sources that are relevant to the research topic. In understanding the role of music in political campaigns in Indonesia, this method allows researchers to explore the history, development and impact of music in a political context without having to conduct time-consuming and expensive field research. Relevant sources for this literature study include books, academic journals, articles, research reports, as well as online sources such as official websites, news archives, and recordings of political concerts. The research process begins with identifying appropriate keywords, such as "Indonesian political music", "the role of music in political campaigns", and "history of Indonesian political songs".

Next, researchers can use academic databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, or ProQuest to search for relevant sources. After that, the researcher selected the most relevant and high quality sources to include in the analysis. The analysis stage involves reading and synthesizing information from multiple sources, noting key themes, trends, and perspectives that emerge over time. The results of this analysis are then used to develop a solid theoretical framework and support the findings in the research. By using the literature study research method, researchers can present a comprehensive understanding of the role of music in political

campaigns in Indonesia, as well as contribute valuable insights to future academic discussions and political practice.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Analysis Results: The Role of Music in Political Campaigns in Indonesia**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sub Theme</b>	<b>Description</b>
Music as Political Identity	- Campaign theme songs	Political campaign theme songs are often used by political parties to strengthen their political identity and increase the popularity of their candidates. Memorable party jingles often played at campaign events are an important part of modern political strategy.
Mass Mobilization	- Political Concert	Political concerts are often held as a means of gathering support from the masses. These concerts attracted the attention of thousands of people and became an opportunity to voice political aspirations. Musicians who support a particular candidate often make effective campaign ambassadors, due to their popularity and influence in society.
Political Expression	- Criticism of the government	Music is often used as a tool to voice criticism of

		the government and their policies. Music genres such as rock, punk and hip-hop are often used by musicians and bands as a medium to voice dissatisfaction with political and social conditions in Indonesia.
Opinion Formation	- Social media influence	Music also has a significant role in shaping public opinion through social media. Music videos and political songs published on platforms such as YouTube and Instagram can be effective tools for spreading political messages and influencing people's views on certain candidates or issues.
Social transformation	- The role of music in social movements	Music also has an important role in inspiring and mobilizing social change. Songs that speak about social issues such as poverty, injustice, and discrimination are often used in social movements as a tool to attract public attention and fight for positive social change.

Music has a complex and varied role in political campaigns in Indonesia. As part of political identity, music is not only used to strengthen the image of

political parties and candidates, but also as a tool to express local political identity which is rich in cultural diversity. Apart from that, music also plays an important role in mass mobilization, both through political concerts and its use in mass actions to voice political aspirations. Music is also a medium for conveying criticism of the government and representing certain political ideologies through song lyrics and the messages conveyed. In the digital era, the influence of music in shaping public opinion is growing through social media and active fan networks. Apart from that, music also has a role in influencing social change and building solidarity in social movements. Thus, music is not only a tool for entertainment, but also a powerful force in shaping and influencing the world of politics in Indonesia.

### **Music as Political Identity**

Music has become one of the main tools for strengthening political identity in Indonesia. In the context of political campaigns, theme songs become symbols of the vision and values promoted by each political party. For example, in every general election, be it presidential or legislative elections, each political party often has a distinctive theme song and is known as an integral part of their identity. These songs not only function as a tool to introduce political candidates and parties, but also as a means to create a supportive atmosphere among the masses. Memorable party jingles are often played at various campaign events, from rallies to direct meetings with voters. Through these theme songs, political parties try to build a strong image and increase public support for their political platforms and programs.

Apart from that, music is also a reflection of local political identity in Indonesia, which is rich in cultural diversity. Regional musical traditions are often used in political campaigns to strengthen social ties and mobilize the masses. For example, in the context of campaigns in West Java, Kuda Lumping music is often performed as part of political events to strengthen local political identity. Through the use of traditional music such as this, politicians seek to connect with voters emotionally and demonstrate their concern for local values.

Music is also an effective tool in expressing political and social aspirations. Various music genres, such as rock, punk and hip-hop, are often used by musicians and bands as a medium to voice dissatisfaction with political and social conditions in Indonesia. Song lyrics often contain political messages that reflect the views and values of a particular political party or social movement. For example, songs supporting issues such as democracy, human rights, and justice are often part of the repertoire of musicians involved in political activism. Music is also a platform for

representing political ideology, where through song lyrics, musicians can convey political messages directly to their listeners, helping to shape their political views and attitudes.

Not only as a tool for voicing political aspirations, music also has a significant role in mass mobilization in the context of political campaigns. Political concerts are one of the most popular strategies used by political parties to garner support from the masses. These concerts not only attracted the attention of thousands of people, but also became an opportunity to voice political aspirations. Musicians who support a particular candidate often make effective campaign ambassadors, due to their popularity and influence in society. Apart from that, music is also used in mass actions as a tool to raise enthusiasm and increase political participation. Struggle songs and social action theme songs are often sung by action participants as a form of solidarity and togetherness in expressing political aspirations.

In the digital era, music has an increasingly significant role in shaping public opinion through social media. Music videos and political songs published on platforms such as YouTube and Instagram have become effective tools for spreading political messages and influencing people's views on certain candidates or issues. A musician's active fan network can also have a significant impact in increasing the popularity and support of a particular political candidate or movement. Musicians and celebrities who have millions of followers on social media often use their platforms to support specific political candidates or issues, helping to spread political messages to a wider audience.

Apart from that, music also has an important role in influencing social change in Indonesia. Songs that speak about social issues such as poverty, injustice, and discrimination are often used in social movements as a tool to attract public attention and fight for positive social change. Music is also often the bond that unites people in social movements. Charity concerts and music events dedicated to voicing social issues often provide an opportunity to build solidarity and unity in pursuit of common goals. Through music, social activists can convey their messages in an emotional and motivating way, inspiring people to take action and contribute to social change.

### **Mass Mobilization through Music**

Music is a very effective tool in mass mobilization in the context of political campaigns in Indonesia. Political concerts are one of the most popular strategies

used by political parties to garner support from the masses. These concerts not only attracted the attention of thousands of people, but also became an opportunity to voice political aspirations directly. Musicians who support a particular candidate often make effective campaign ambassadors, due to their popularity and influence in society. They not only present stunning performances on stage, but also use their influence to persuade and influence public opinion. By performing campaign theme songs or voicing political messages through music, these musicians help strengthen the image of the candidate or political party they support.

Apart from that, music is also used in mass actions as a tool to raise enthusiasm and increase political participation. In many political demonstrations and rallies, struggle songs and social action theme songs are often sung by the action participants as a form of solidarity and togetherness in expressing their political aspirations. Music helps create an energetic atmosphere and builds a sense of unity among the protesting masses. By singing songs that have a strong political message, marchers can feel connected to each other and become more motivated to continue fighting for the change they want.

Political concerts are also a way for political parties to reach the masses widely and introduce their candidates and political platforms. In these concerts, political party leaders often participate to give speeches that inspire and motivate the masses. Music provides the perfect introduction to convey political messages directly to potential supporters. By presenting interesting and entertaining musical performances, political parties can attract the attention of young voters and strengthen their support among different demographic groups.

Apart from that, political concerts can also be an opportunity to introduce new political candidates and build a positive image in the eyes of the public. In the context of political campaigns in Indonesia, where image and popularity are very important, political concerts can be a very effective tool for increasing visibility and gaining support from voters. Through electrifying musical performances and inspiring speeches, political candidates can build closer relationships with voters and win their hearts. This provides an opportunity for political candidates to introduce themselves personally and deliver their messages directly to voters.

Thus, mass mobilization through music is a very effective strategy in the context of political campaigns in Indonesia. Political concerts and mass rallies accompanied by music not only help increase political participation, but also strengthen solidarity among the protesting masses. Music is not only a means of voicing political aspirations, but also a tool for building political awareness among



society. Therefore, it is important for politicians and political activists to utilize the power of music wisely in their efforts to achieve the political goals they pursue.

### **Political Expression through Music**

Music is not only a form of entertainment, but is also an important means of expressing political and social views in Indonesia. Various music genres such as rock, punk and hip-hop are often used by musicians and bands as a medium to voice dissatisfaction with political and social conditions in Indonesia. Through strong lyrics and booming music, they are able to describe the social realities they experience and express aspirations for change. Song lyrics often contain political messages that reflect the views and values of a particular political party or social movement. For example, songs supporting issues such as democracy, human rights, and justice are often part of the repertoire of musicians involved in political activism. In a broader context, music is also a forum for representing political ideology. Through song lyrics, musicians can convey political messages directly to their listeners, helping to shape their political views and attitudes.

In a complex society like Indonesia, where politics and society are often intertwined, music is one way to convey criticism of the government and the existing political system. Musical genres such as punk and hip-hop, known for their provocative and controversial nature, are often used by musicians as platforms to express dissatisfaction with government policies and social injustice. Song lyrics in this genre often reflect the experiences and perspectives of those less heard in official politics. For example, punk songs often criticize social inequality and domestic corruption, while hip-hop lyrics often highlight issues such as racism, poverty and systemic injustice. By using music as a medium for political expression, musicians can create space for deeper discussion and reflection about the political and social challenges faced by society.

Apart from that, music is also a tool to represent the political and cultural identities of various groups in society. In Indonesia, which is rich in cultural diversity, music is often a means of expressing local political identity and regional culture. For example, in various regions in Indonesia, there are musical traditions that are used in political campaigns to strengthen social ties and mobilize the masses. Traditional music such as gamelan, keroncong, and regional dances are often performed at political events to attract attention and gain support from local residents. This regional music is not only a tool to celebrate the uniqueness and

diversity of culture in Indonesia, but also a means to stimulate political awareness among local communities.

However, it is important to remember that political expression through music is also often faced with challenges and risks. In Indonesia, where freedom of expression is often limited, musicians who express controversial political views or are critical of the government can face pressure and repression from the authorities. The arrest and detention of musicians deemed to be a threat to political stability is not uncommon. This shows that although music can be a powerful tool for voicing political aspirations, there are also risks and consequences that must be faced by musicians who choose to use their music as a means to express their political views.

Thus, political expression through music has a significant impact in the political and social context in Indonesia. Music is not only a means of voicing dissatisfaction with existing political and social conditions, but also a medium for representing the political and cultural identities of various groups in society. However, it is important to remember that political expression through music can also come with risks and consequences, especially in countries where freedom of expression is often limited. Therefore, while music can be a powerful tool for bringing about political and social change, it is important to be mindful of the challenges and risks associated with its use in complex political contexts.

### **The Influence of Music in Forming Public Opinion**

In the increasingly digital era, the role of music in shaping public opinion has become increasingly significant, especially through the use of social media. Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and others provide a wide platform for musicians and political activists to spread their political messages to the wider public. Music videos and political songs published on these platforms are not only a means of entertainment, but also an effective tool for influencing people's views on certain candidates or issues in a political context.

Music videos have become one of the most effective media for spreading political messages to a wider audience. With a combination of exciting music and interesting visuals, music videos are able to capture the audience's attention and convey political messages in an emotional and engaging way. For example, musicians often use their music videos to speak out on political issues they consider important, such as human rights, social justice, or environmental protection. These music videos often go viral on social media, reaching millions of people and influencing public opinion on certain issues.

Political songs published on social media platforms also have a significant influence in shaping public opinion. Music is a universal language, and song lyrics have the power to convey political messages in a way that listeners can easily understand and remember. Through political songs, musicians can voice their opinions on various ongoing political and social issues, helping to shape society's views on these topics. For example, songs that criticize the government or voice aspirations for political change are often in the spotlight on social media, generating discussion and reflection among the public.

Apart from musicians, celebrities also have a big influence in shaping public opinion through social media. Many celebrities have millions of followers on platforms like Instagram and Twitter, and they often use their social media presence to support specific candidates or political issues. With a single post or tweet, a celebrity can create a huge groundswell of support for a particular political candidate or movement, helping to strengthen their image in the public eye. Celebrities are also often involved in political campaigns and charity events aimed at speaking out on important political and social issues, leveraging their popularity to expand the scope and impact of their political messages.

However, while the influence of music in shaping public opinion through social media can provide many benefits, there are also risks that need to be considered. One of the main risks is the spread of incorrect or manipulative information. In an era where information can be easily edited and distributed en masse via the internet, political songs or music videos can be used to spread propaganda or inaccurate narratives about particular political candidates or issues. This can confuse and manipulate people's views on important political issues, undermine democratic processes and reduce public trust in political institutions. Apart from that, the role of music in shaping public opinion can also cause polarization and conflict in society. For example, controversial or provocative political songs can trigger negative reactions from different groups, causing social tension and conflict. In more extreme situations, political songs can be used to incite violence or intolerance against certain groups in society, endangering security and social stability.

### **Social Change through Music**

Music also has an important role in inspiring and mobilizing social change in Indonesia. Songs that speak about social issues such as poverty, injustice, and discrimination are often used in social movements as a tool to attract public

attention and fight for positive social change. Music is also often the bond that unites people in social movements. Charity concerts and music events dedicated to voicing social issues often provide an opportunity to build solidarity and unity in pursuit of common goals. Through music, social activists can convey their messages in an emotional and motivating way, inspiring people to take action and contribute to social change.

In the context of political campaigns in Indonesia, music has a very important role in strengthening political identity, moving the masses, expressing political views, forming public opinion, and mobilizing social change. Music is not only a tool for conveying political messages, but also a means of strengthening solidarity and unity in society. Therefore, it is important for politicians, musicians and the general public to understand and appreciate the role of music in a political context, and to use it positively to fight for democratic and social goals in Indonesia.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the role of music in political campaigns in Indonesia is a complex and significant phenomenon. Music is not only a means of strengthening political identity, but also a tool for mass mobilization, political expression and the formation of public opinion. Through theme songs, political concerts, and political expression through music, politicians and political activists can reach the masses effectively, inspire social change, and influence people's views on political and social issues. However, challenges such as restrictions on freedom of expression and the risk of repression against musicians critical of the government must also be acknowledged. Therefore, while music can be a powerful tool to bring about change, it is important for governments and societies to ensure that freedom of expression is respected and that musicians have the space to express their political views without fear of repression. In this way, music can continue to be a positive force in political and social formation in Indonesia, helping to strengthen democracy and community involvement in the political process.

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