

## Apparatus vs. Neutrality: When the Police are Called the Brown Party in Indonesian Political Narratives

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Keywords:</b> Party Chocolate, Neutrality Apparatus, Framing</p>	<p>The term "Brown Party" emerged as a public criticism of the alleged lack of impartiality of the police in the political contestation leading up to the 2024 regional elections. The color brown refers to police uniforms and is used to criticize officers perceived as biased. This study uses Robert Entman's framing theory to analyze how the "Brown Party" narrative is shaped by the media and political elite, and its impact on public trust and democratic legitimacy. The analysis shows that certain framings reinforce perceptions. public will partisanship apparatus, Which impact on increasing criticism towards state institutions in public spaces.</p>
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### INTRODUCTION

Democracy requires neutral state institutions in carrying out the electoral process. Wrong One actor important in guard democracy is apparatus police. However, in the lead-up to the 2024 regional elections, a new narrative has emerged that refers to the police as the "Brown Party," implying that the police are a separate political party that sides with the ruling class.

Neutrality apparatus enforcer law, specifically police, become element important in ensuring a fair democratic process. However, in recent elections, accusations of police bias have emerged. One symbol that has emerged in public discourse is the term "Brown Party," referring to the color of the uniforms. police And used For make fun of suspicion support apparatus to candidate This term went viral on social media, was discussed in public forums, and was even mentioned in a DPR meeting.

This term circulated widely on social media and was quoted by a number of political figures, reflecting criticism to neutrality apparatus. Criticism This No only target individuals, but also institutions, thus creating tension between public expectations and political reality. Research This make an effort analyze How media And elite political frame issue The "Brown Party" and how it affects public perceptions of the police and democracy.

This phenomenon is very interesting and important to study, as it is not merely a common political event, but also a symptom of a crisis of representation and trust in state institutions. Therefore, this paper aims to analyze how the term "Brown Party" is constructed in the media and public discourse, and how the police respond to this narrative.

Using a qualitative approach and framing theory, this paper not only unravels the issue of Polri neutrality but also examines its impact on the legitimacy of democracy in Indonesia.

### Study Theory

This study uses framing theory. Framing theory explains that media and political communicators can "frame" an issue by selecting certain aspects to highlight and ignoring others (Robert Entman, 1993). There are four main functional elements. framing according to Entman that is *Define Problems* (determine core problem), *Diagnosis Causes* (show actor or reason), *Make Moral Judgments* (give evaluation ethical), *Suggest Remedies* (offer solutions or actions). In the context of the "Brown Party", this theory is useful for understanding how the media and politicians form perception public to neutrality police And How narrative it influences public opinion.

## METHODOLOGY STUDY

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method with a library research approach. Data sources come from online news, opinion articles, statements by political figures, and social media posts related to the "Chocolate Party." The focus of the analysis is how the media and political figures frame the term Brown Party, as well as the response from the police. Theory framing This suitable Because capable explain How media And actor Politics shapes public perception of the term brown party, by providing a description of the problem, causes, moral assessments, and the solutions offered.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The term "Brown Party" was first coined in a meeting of Commission III of the Indonesian House of Representatives by Yoyok Riyo Sudibyo of the NasDem faction. In his statement, he criticized officials who were considered tend take sides to power with mention they as part from "Brown Party" refers to the brown color which is identical to police uniforms.

**Picture 1.** News Which uploaded by Compass PDI-P Pocket it Proof Involvement "Park" in Regional Election 2024, So Capital Sue the Constitutional Court Source : Kompas.com (2024)



In this case, one of the members of the DPP PDI-P chairman revealed evidence of police involvement in the implementation of the 2024 regional elections. This involvement became a public criticism that the police were not neutral towards the election.

This statement was then picked up by various media outlets and widely disseminated on social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram. Memes, satirical videos, and even user analysis emerged. Media social (netizen) make term This as symbol resistance to Allegations of state officials' lack of neutrality. In this context, symbols become a powerful political tool.

Media framing of the Brown Party narrative using Entman's theory, the framing of this issue can be seen as follows:

a. *Define Problems* (Determination Problem)

The problem emphasized in this case is the police's lack of neutrality in the lead-up to the incident. elections. Media like Tirta, Tempo, Compass or Narration highlight indications of abuse of power by the authorities. The media also highlighted the Brown Party as a form of criticism against the allegations involvement police on activity political practical. On use narrative the is method public For define something The problem in democracy is the lack of neutrality of the apparatus in election competitions.

b. *Diagnosis Causes* (Identification Reason)

Media framing and statements by a number of politicians highlight that the main cause from emergence term "Party Chocolate" is suspicion existence "interfering" or direct involvement of police officers in supporting certain candidates in regional elections. However reason main identified as proximity between elite political and apparatus, weak internal supervision, and the continued dominance of a culture of patrimonialism in the bureaucracy.

c. *Make Moral Judgments* (Evaluation Moral)

This narrative has been negatively perceived. Many public figures and political analysts have called the "Brown Party" a threat to electoral democracy and the principle of fairness in political contests.

This stage also refers to how the media and the public judge the actions or individuals involved. In the Brown Party narrative, this is how the police institution is portrayed as a party that deviates from its constitutional mandate.

**Picture 2.** News uploaded by Tempo Source: Tempo.co Allegations Meddling Party chocolate in Regional Election 2024 Reaping Polemics



The news article emphasized that the involvement of officials not only undermines democracy but also violates legal ethics and justice. Moral judgments also appear from institution public civil like Indonesia Police Watch (IPW), that state that the police did not may own interpretation other except neutral in Elections. When law enforcement agencies are no longer trusted because they are biased, then what happens? is degradation ethics institutional And weakening rule of law. In this context, framing his morals is that action non-neutrality apparatus is a form of betrayal of democracy and must be viewed as a serious violation of the integrity of the institution.

d. *Suggest Remedies* (Solutions) or Policy Recipe )

In many media narratives, proposed solutions include increasing transparency in oversight of the National Police institution, strengthening external oversight bodies such as the National Police Commission (Kopolnas), and ongoing internal reform. The solutions frequently mentioned in the media are the need for institutional reform, transparency, and the need for greater transparency. performance apparatus, as well as supervision independent by public civil. In some cases, civil society also demanded that public participation be opened to monitor the neutrality of officials during the election stages.

### Narration Reply And Counter-Framing from the police

Party police in a way firm deny the accusations of not neutral And state that they continue to carry out their duties professionally. The Police's framing emphasizes that accusation is of a nature political And without base law. Media like Compass, Seconds, and Antara tends to quote official police statements to maintain balance in its reporting.

On several occasions, police officials have also expressed their openness to providing open clarification if any party feels they have evidence of the involvement of Polri members in practical politics. This call was a rhetorical strategy to demonstrate transparency and test the validity of the circulating allegations. However, clarification from the authorities often No comparable with many criticism public in media social, Which more spread quickly and were more emotional in their narrative.

### Role Media Social and Activism Digital

Through media social, term Party This chocolate First time spread wide and became a symbol of criticism of the alleged lack of neutrality of the Indonesian National Police. Social media plays a central role in expand impact narrative "Party Chocolate". Criticism Which previously only There is in elite space political now become part from awareness collective netizens. In TikTok, for example, term It is used in satirical videos and political commentary. Twitter is used to archive incidents where the police are suspected of being less than impartial.

In this context, digital political engagement becomes a new form of political participation that influences the narrative of democracy and pressures state institutions to be openly accountable for their actions.

### Impact to Legitimacy and Democracy

Negative framing of state officials directly impacts public trust. If the public perceives officials as being less than neutral, the democratic process becomes delegitimized, and this is dangerous in the long run.

**Picture 3.** News Which uploaded by Kompas Source: Kompas.com (2024) Crowded Question Issue Party Chocolate, IPW Remind Police Must Neutral in Election



This statement shows how allegations of impartiality have the potential to damage credibility. And authority Indonesian National Police in eye people. Police as institutions enforcer The law should maintain a neutral and professional attitude in every political process, especially in the run-up to And during Election General (Election) and Election Head Area (Regional Election). However, accusations have emerged that some police officers are siding with one of the contestants. political, even in a way systematic involved in process winning, become indication of erosion of legitimacy.

Although apparatus country is institution Which own role important in law enforcement and order, when public perception deteriorates, the performance and authority of the institution Also will decrease. This show that communication political And framing has enormous power in shaping the direction of democracy.

## CONCLUSION

Narration "Party Chocolate" is representation from crisis trust public towards neutrality apparatus in political. With use theory framing, can concluded The media and political actors actively shape public perceptions of the police, both positively and negatively. When negative perceptions predominate, this can undermine the legitimacy of state institutions and undermine the democratic process. This battle of discourse not only shows the competition between political actors and institutions country in seize opinion public, but Also reflect vulnerability legitimacy Democracy in Indonesia is under threat when state officials are involved in a contestation of perceptions. When public trust in neutral institutions like the National Police is compromised, one of the foundations of democracy, namely fairness in political contestation, is also threatened. It was emphasized that maintaining the neutrality of the apparatus was not only an internal responsibility. institutions like Police, but Also involving participation public, media Which free, and regulations Which strict. Communication political must directed For build transparency, not just responding to criticism.

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