



Online News Framing of Ansar–Nyanyang during the 2024 Kepulauan Riau Gubernatorial Election

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Abstract

This study examines how online news framed Ansar Ahmad and Nyanyang Haris Pratamura during the official campaign period for the 2024 Kepulauan Riau gubernatorial election (September 25–November 23, 2024). Grounded in Entman’s framing approach, it identifies patterns of selection, emphasis, sourcing, repetition, and narrative organization and interprets how these patterns constructed the pair’s public image. A qualitative descriptive-interpretive design was applied to secondary data from verified national and local online outlets. Google Advanced Search retrieved 102 campaign-related records; 18 records formed nine duplicate pairs, and removing one redundant record from each pair produced 93 unique articles. The corpus was examined through integrated thematic and narrative analysis using a coding matrix covering issue selection, quoted sources, evaluative language, frame indicators, actor positioning, and storyline. Six frames emerged: public support and legitimacy; credibility and competence; welfare and inclusive development; commitment and implementation readiness; identity, culture, and political values; and popularity and public mediation. Local outlets supplied most retrieved records and the most context-specific accounts of endorsements, programs, and regional identity. The study shows that online news constructed a favorable candidate image, but it does not establish audience effects or a causal relationship with the election result.

Keywords: Candidate Image; Digital Political Communication; Electoral Framing; Local Election; Online News Media

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INTRODUCTION

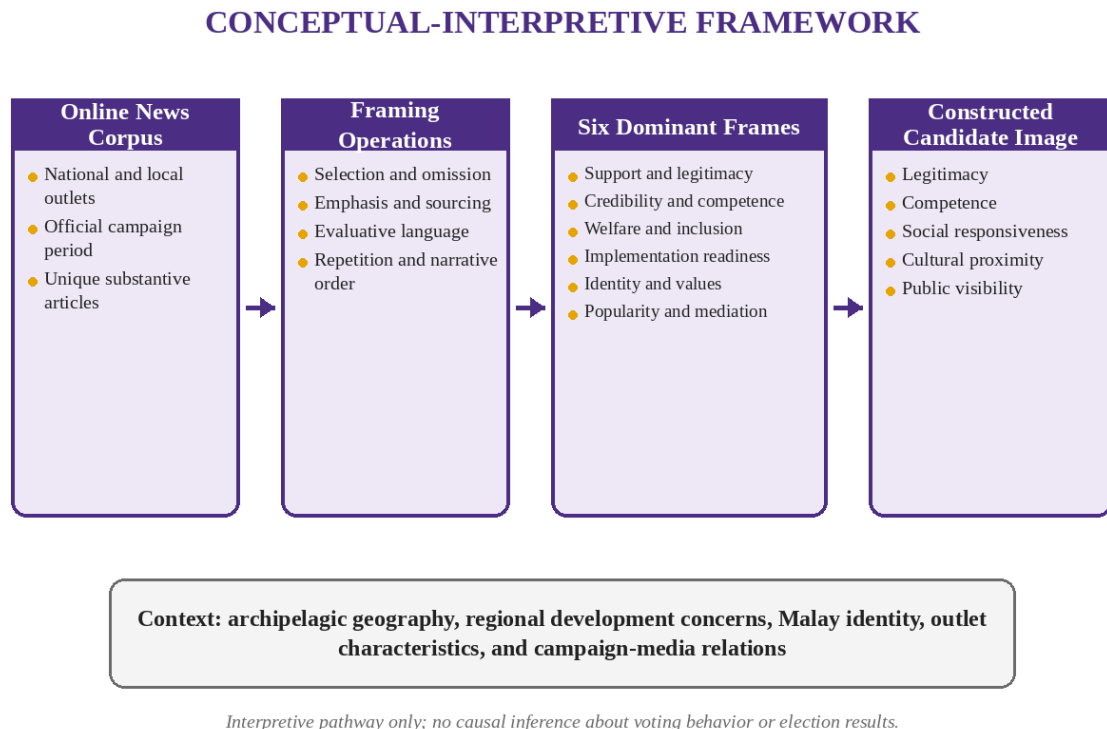
Digital political communication concerns the production and circulation of political meaning through digitally accessible channels. In this article, the concept is operationalized narrowly as online news framing: the selection, omission, emphasis, sourcing, repetition, and narrative organization through which news outlets make particular interpretations of candidates more salient. The unit of evidence is the published online news article, not social media interaction, campaign-team content, platform analytics, or direct voter response. This bounded definition follows framing scholarship that treats news discourse as a structured process of problem definition, evaluation, interpretive emphasis, and patterned presentation (Entman 2007; Pan and Kosicki 1993; de Vreese 2005; Matthes 2009).

Framing is related to, but analytically distinct from, agenda-setting, political branding, and campaign publicity. Agenda-setting concerns which issues receive attention; political branding concerns the strategic management of candidate identity across communication channels; campaign publicity refers to promotional material and source-originated claims designed to secure coverage. Framing analysis instead asks how a news text organizes meaning through headlines, leads, quoted actors, evaluative vocabulary, causal connections, and narrative sequence. A campaign claim repeated by a journalist was therefore not automatically treated as a media frame unless the article's editorial organization made that interpretation prominent (McCombs 2005; Browning and Sweetser 2020; Entman 2007).

The 2024 Kepulauan Riau gubernatorial election offers a relevant local case because political communication had to address an archipelagic electorate, uneven regional development, urban and island constituencies, and a strong Malay cultural context. The contest involved Ansar Ahmad-Nyanyang Haris Pratamura and Muhammad Rudi-Aunur Rafiq. The official provincial recapitulation recorded 450,109 votes for Ansar-Nyanyang and 367,367 votes for Rudi-Rafiq (Komisi Pemilihan Umum Provinsi Kepulauan Riau 2024). These totals establish the electoral setting and the competing pair; they are not used as evidence that media framing caused the result.

Online news is important in regional elections because journalistic texts can repeatedly foreground candidate traits, policy priorities, endorsements, and symbolic claims in the recognizable form of news. At the same time, favorable coverage may reflect campaign publicity, source accessibility, outlet routines, political alignment, or organized media relations rather than spontaneous public opinion. The present study therefore examines textual representation and source patterns without assuming editorial neutrality, audience exposure, voter persuasion, or public endorsement beyond what the articles themselves report (Ninan, Mahalingam, and Clegg 2022; Chong and Druckman 2007).

Figure 1. Conceptual-Interpretive Framework for Online News Framing



Source: Author's synthesis based on Entman (2007), Pan and Kosicki (1993), de Vreese (2005), and Matthes (2009).

Existing research can be organized into four related bodies of literature. Studies of digital campaigning explain regulation, professionalization, personalization, and platformed visibility but generally prioritize national contests or social media activity (Borz and De Francesco 2024; Borchers 2025). Research on candidate image and political branding identifies credibility, authenticity, reputation, and personalization, yet often gives limited attention to the narrative work of local online news outlets (Browning and Sweetser 2020). News-framing research clarifies selection, emphasis, sourcing, and repetition, while local electoral communication highlights regional identity, proximity, and community networks. Few studies integrate these strands in an Indonesian archipelagic gubernatorial campaign using an auditable article corpus and explicit codebook.

The article's novelty is therefore specific rather than universal. It provides a bounded account of an Indonesian local election in an archipelagic province; separates online news framing from platform interaction and campaign-owned communication; documents a 93-article corpus derived from a reproducible search and duplicate-resolution procedure; and develops a six-frame typology from 28 disclosed initial codes. This design makes it possible to assess how local and national outlets organized candidate legitimacy, competence, welfare, readiness, cultural proximity, and visibility without converting textual patterns into claims about voter behavior.

This study examines 93 unique online news articles published during the official campaign period. It integrates thematic analysis, which identifies recurring patterns of meaning, with narrative analysis, which examines plot, actor positioning, problem definition, evaluative language, and anticipated futures. The combined approach shows both which frames recurred and how reports arranged validators, candidate actions, public needs, achievements, and promises into persuasive

accounts. The analytical emphasis remains on what the corpus represented, including the possibility that campaign-originated claims were amplified through news routines (Braun and Clarke 2006; Terry et al. 2017; McAllum et al. 2019).

Table 1. Literature Synthesis and the Specific Research Gap

Area of Study	What the Literature Establishes	Unresolved Issue	Contribution of This Article
Digital political campaigning	Digital channels reshape campaign organization, regulation, and visibility.	Most studies prioritize national elections or platform-based campaigning.	Defines the empirical scope as online news in a local gubernatorial campaign.
Online news framing	Selection, emphasis, sourcing, repetition, and narrative order organize political interpretations.	Limited application to an Indonesian archipelagic election with a documented codebook.	Links textual operations to six inductively developed frames.
Candidate image and political branding	Credibility, authenticity, competence, and personalization shape representation.	Insufficient attention to how local news narratives combine these attributes.	Explains how competence, welfare, identity, and visibility are narratively integrated.
Local electoral communication	Regional identity, proximity, and local media shape campaign meaning.	Few studies connect outlet scope with transparent thematic and narrative analysis.	Shows how Kepulauan Riau-based outlets contextualized endorsements, programs, and identity.

Source: Author's synthesis, 2026.

Accordingly, the article aims to identify the dominant frames in online news coverage of Ansar-Nyanyang, explain how those frames were developed through a transparent codebook, and interpret how the narratives constructed a favorable candidate image during the campaign. Its contribution lies in linking outlet scope, textual framing operations, six empirically developed frames, and local political context. The study does not assess social media interaction, audience reception, changes in voter preference, comparative framing of the opposing pair, or a causal relationship between coverage and the official election result.

METHODS

This study used a qualitative descriptive-interpretive design to examine online news framing of Ansar Ahmad and Nyanyang Haris Pratamura during the official campaign period, September 25-November 23, 2024, as established by the national election schedule (Komisi Pemilihan Umum Republik Indonesia 2024). The unit of analysis was one unique, substantive online news article. Only publicly accessible articles from verified outlets were analyzed; social media posts, campaign-team uploads, comments, audience metrics, interviews, surveys, and experiments were outside the design. Documentary analysis was selected because it enables systematic examination of meaning, context, and representation in public texts (Bowen 2009; Creswell and Poth 2018).

Table 2. Online Media Search Universe and Analytical Corpus

Category	Operational Scope	Number	Analytical Use
National outlets	Editorial scope and routine distribution across multiple Indonesian provinces	49	Broader Indonesian circulation
Local outlets	Primary market in Kepulauan Riau, Batam, Tanjungpinang, or adjacent communities	74	Context-specific local reporting
Total outlet search universe	Verified online outlets screened	123	Full list in Appendix A



Category	Operational Scope	Number	Analytical Use
Article-level records	Records retrieved through the documented searches	102	Eligibility and duplicate screening
Final analytical corpus	Unique substantive articles	93	Thematic and narrative analysis

Source: Author's documentation, 2026.

The search universe comprised 49 national and 74 local online outlets listed in Appendix A. A national outlet was defined as an organization with editorial scope and routine distribution across multiple Indonesian provinces. A local outlet was defined as an organization whose primary editorial market was Kepulauan Riau, Batam, Tanjungpinang, or adjacent regional communities. Inclusion in the search universe did not imply that an outlet produced an eligible article. Because online political coverage can be shaped by partisan orientation, campaign publicity, access to press materials, and source relations, outlet verification was treated as a credibility threshold rather than proof of neutrality.

Figure 2. Systematic Search, Screening, Coding, and Integrated Analysis Process

SYSTEMATIC SEARCH, SCREENING, CODING, AND ANALYSIS



Source: Author's methodological synthesis based on Bowen (2009), Terry et al. (2017), and McAllum et al. (2019).

The retrieval protocol used Google Advanced Search and was documented and rechecked on June 28, 2026. The exact search strings were: "Ansar Ahmad" AND campaign; "Nyanyang Haris Pratamura" AND campaign; "Ansar-Nyanyang"; "Ansar Nyanyang" AND "Kepri gubernatorial election"; and "SAYANG" AND Kepri. Indonesian-language results were retained; English-language results were screened but did not meet the inclusion criteria. Records were included when they fell within the official campaign dates, identified one or both candidates, and contained substantive material on candidate image, campaign strategy, public support, policy commitments, leadership credibility, political identity, or campaign visibility. Purely administrative notices, inaccessible items, and texts without a meaningful framing element were excluded. Duplicate status required the same or near-identical headline, lead, and body; for each duplicate pair, the earliest or most complete version was retained.

Each unique article was entered into a coding form containing outlet, media scope, publication date, title, principal actors and quoted sources, main issue, headline and lead wording, evaluative terms, frame indicators, narrative role, primary frame, secondary frame, and interpretive notes. Open coding generated 28 initial codes, which were consolidated into six frames and checked against the complete corpus. Narrative analysis then examined plot, protagonist construction, supporting actors, problem definition, moral and administrative evaluation, and the anticipated future. A campaign claim was tagged as source-originated when it appeared only in a quotation; it was coded as part of a media frame only when headline placement, lead emphasis, source selection, evaluative wording, repetition, or narrative sequence editorially privileged the interpretation. Coding and peer checking were conducted within the research team, ambiguous cases were resolved by consensus, and decisions were retained in an audit trail. No statistical intercoder coefficient is claimed because validation was consensus-based (Terry et al. 2017; McAllum et al. 2019).

Table 3. Initial Codebook and Frame Development

No.	Initial Code	Dominant Frame	Analytical Role
1	Political-party endorsement	Public support and legitimacy	Institutional validation
2	Community-leader endorsement	Public support and legitimacy	Community validation
3	Organizational support	Public support and legitimacy	Collective validation
4	Religious-group support	Public support and legitimacy	Moral-community validation
5	Volunteer-network mobilization	Public support and legitimacy	Mobilization visibility
6	Cross-group coalition	Public support and legitimacy	Breadth of support
7	Incumbency experience	Credibility and competence	Tested leadership
8	Legislative experience	Credibility and competence	Institutional knowledge
9	Administrative achievement	Credibility and competence	Performance warrant
10	Leadership reliability	Credibility and competence	Trustworthiness
11	Continuity of development	Credibility and competence	Future continuity
12	Pro-people programs	Welfare and inclusive development	Social responsiveness
13	Education support	Welfare and inclusive development	Human-development concern
14	Health access	Welfare and inclusive development	Service inclusion
15	Electricity and connectivity	Welfare and inclusive development	Archipelagic service access
16	Attention to vulnerable groups	Welfare and inclusive development	Inclusive orientation
17	Measurable targets	Commitment and implementation readiness	Program specificity
18	Implementation roadmap	Commitment and implementation readiness	Sequenced action
19	Budget or technical feasibility	Commitment and implementation readiness	Feasibility claim
20	Long-term commitment	Commitment and implementation readiness	Temporal continuity
21	Malay identity	Identity, culture, and political values	Cultural identification
22	Local belonging	Identity, culture, and political values	Regional proximity
23	Religious-moral values	Identity, culture, and political values	Moral evaluation
24	Cultural manners	Identity, culture, and political values	Ethical-symbolic fit
25	Campaign crowd size	Popularity and public mediation	Visible gathering
26	Public enthusiasm	Popularity and public mediation	Affective visibility



No.	Initial Code	Dominant Frame	Analytical Role
27	Public-figure mediation	Popularity and public mediation	Borrowed recognition
28	Media visibility	Popularity and public mediation	Repeated presence

Source: Author analysis, 2026.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Distribution of Retrieved Records and Corpus Screening

The documented search retrieved 102 campaign-related records. The duplicate check showed that 18 of these records formed nine duplicate pairs, meaning that nine records were redundant rather than that 18 records were removed. Retaining one article from each pair therefore produced a final corpus of 93 unique articles for analysis. This calculation resolves the arithmetic inconsistency in the earlier version.

The media-scope figures describe the 102 records before deduplication: 85 records came from local outlets and 17 from national outlets. Local records represented 83.3 percent of retrievals, while national records represented 16.7 percent. Because duplicate status was determined at the record level, these figures should not be interpreted as the national-local composition of the final 93-article corpus. They describe only the source environment from which the analytical corpus was formed.

National coverage placed the candidate pair within wider Indonesian political-news circulation, but it was comparatively limited. Local outlets supplied denser and more context-specific accounts of district-level campaign events, community and organizational endorsements, development programs, and regional identity. The pattern indicates a strong local campaign-news network and substantial regional visibility, while also suggesting limited national salience. It does not demonstrate how many citizens encountered the reports or how the coverage affected them. The local concentration also requires caution. Frequent favorable stories may reflect the news value of proximity, but they may also be facilitated by campaign press releases, organized source access, reciprocal media relations, or outlet partisanship. The analysis therefore treats the corpus as evidence of patterned representation, not as a transparent record of spontaneous public opinion. The coding matrix records who was quoted and how claims were editorially positioned so that campaign publicity can be distinguished from broader framing operations.

Table 4. Verified Distribution and Screening of the Online News Corpus

Category	Verified Finding	Interpretation
Official campaign period	September 25-November 23, 2024	Date boundary for inclusion
Search protocol verified	June 28, 2026	Documented access and recheck date
Retrieved records	102	Initial records located through the five exact searches
Local-outlet records	85 (83.3%)	Pre-deduplication retrievals
National-outlet records	17 (16.7%)	Pre-deduplication retrievals
Duplicate structure	18 records forming nine pairs	One record retained from each pair
Redundant records removed	9	Not 18; explains final arithmetic
Final unique corpus	93 articles	Corpus used for thematic and narrative analysis

Source: Author's documented search and screening log, 2026.

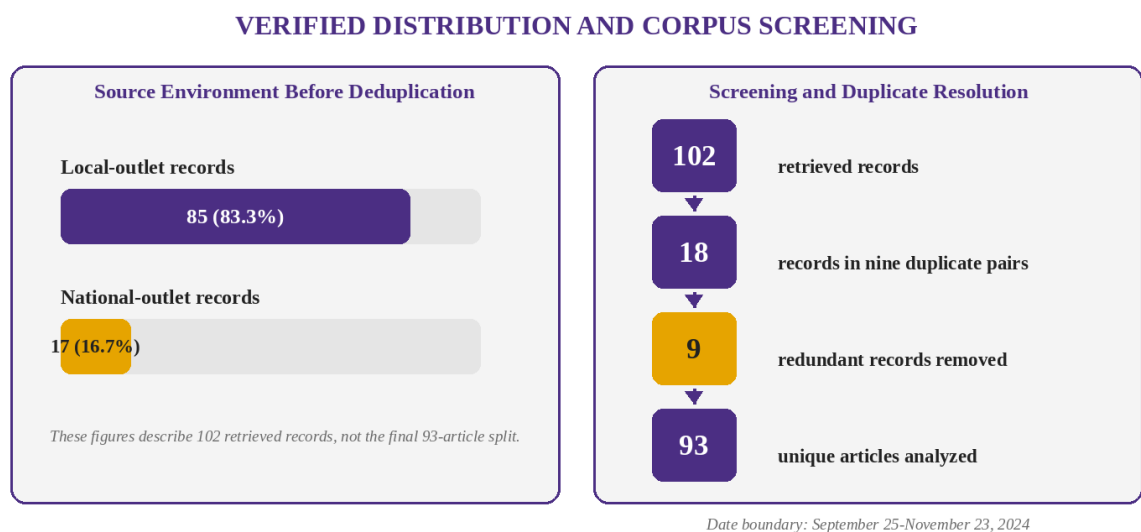


The verified distribution establishes that online news about Ansar-Nyanyang was primarily a regional documentary environment. Local outlets could name specific villages, organizations, cultural associations, and public-service programs that broader outlets generally did not. This contextual density is analytically valuable because it reveals how regional legitimacy was built through concrete actors and places; however, it also means that the findings should not be generalized to national media agendas or to all Kepulauan Riau voters.

The earlier weekly-trend claim was removed because the manuscript did not retain a sufficiently auditable week-by-week calculation rule and complete date table. The revised Figure 3 instead presents only verified information: the exact campaign boundary, raw national and local retrieval counts, percentages before deduplication, duplicate-pair structure, number of redundant records removed, and final corpus size. This change prioritizes reproducibility over an unsupported temporal interpretation.

Taken together, the source distribution and screening flow provide the documentary basis for the thematic and narrative analysis. The key inference is limited: online news coverage of the pair was regionally concentrated and repeatedly favorable in the retrieved corpus. Neither the volume of local coverage nor the final election result establishes persuasion, public acceptance, or causal electoral influence.

Figure 3. Verified Distribution and Screening of Online News Records



Source: Author analysis, 2026.

Dominant Thematic Frames in Online News Coverage

Thematic analysis generated 28 initial codes and consolidated them into six dominant frames: public support and legitimacy; credibility and competence; welfare and inclusive development; commitment and implementation readiness; identity, culture, and political values; and popularity and public mediation. These categories are media frames only when an article's editorial structure selected, emphasized, sourced, evaluated, repeated, or sequenced material in a way that privileged the interpretation. Candidate or endorser statements reproduced without such editorial organization were recorded as campaign claims rather than treated automatically as journalistic frames.

The public-support frame was built through headlines, leads, and source selection that foregrounded endorsements from political parties, community leaders, organizations, religious groups, volunteer networks, and residents. Batam Pos, for example, titled a November 15, 2024 article “Merakyat, Duet Ansar-Nyanyang Terus Didukung Warga Batam Pimpin Kepri.” The framing operation was not merely the presence of supportive quotations; the headline itself selected popular closeness and repeated support as the primary interpretive lens. Such reports positioned supportive actors as validators of social and political acceptance rather than as a representative sample of public opinion.

The credibility-and-competence frame transformed prior office and achievement claims into warrants for future governing capacity. JPNN’s October 17, 2024 article “Pasangan Unggulan, Ansar-Nyanyang Mampu Membawa Kepri Lebih Berprestasi” foregrounded the pair as an “unggulan” combination and connected experience with anticipated regional performance. Ansar Ahmad’s incumbency and Nyanyang Haris Pratamura’s legislative background were therefore narratively organized as evidence of preparedness and continuity. The analysis records this as a textual construction, not an independent verification of performance.

Welfare and implementation-readiness frames frequently operated together. JPNN’s October 9, 2024 report on the Kepri Terang electricity program linked a concrete public-service claim to resident support, thereby moving from need, to program, to validation. Harian Kepri’s October 6, 2024 article emphasizing that many programs had already been realized used retrospective achievement as a warrant for the implementability of future commitments. These stories combined emotional concern with technical or administrative readiness while leaving program impact and attribution outside the study’s evidentiary scope.

Identity and popularity added symbolic and visual dimensions to the representation. JPNN’s October 13, 2024 report on support from Lembaga Laskar Melayu Bersatu positioned a Malay cultural organization as a custodian that authenticated regional belonging and political values. Harian Kepri’s November 23, 2024 final-campaign report highlighted a public gathering and the call to select ballot number one, producing mediated visibility and mobilization. Crowd scenes, enthusiasm, cultural endorsement, and repeated event coverage were coded as news representations of momentum, not direct measures of electorate-wide acceptance.

Table 5. Six Dominant Frames in the Online News Corpus

No.	Dominant Frame	Principal Indicators	Interpretive Function
1	Public support and legitimacy	Party, community, organizational, religious, volunteer, and cross-group endorsements	Positions supportive actors as validators of social and political acceptance
2	Credibility and competence	Incumbency, legislative experience, achievements, reliability, and continuity	Authorizes expectations of governing capacity through prior roles and performance claims
3	Welfare and inclusive development	Public services, electricity, education, health, vulnerable groups, and pro-people programs	Represents the pair as socially responsive and development-oriented
4	Commitment and implementation readiness	Targets, roadmaps, technical feasibility, realized programs, and long-term commitment	Presents commitments as prepared rather than purely rhetorical
5	Identity, culture, and political values	Malay identity, local belonging, moral language, religion, and manners	Creates symbolic and cultural proximity with regional audiences
6	Popularity and public mediation	Crowds, enthusiasm, public figures, event visibility, and repeated coverage	Constructs mediated visibility and apparent momentum without measuring voter response

Source: Author analysis, 2026.

The six frames formed a layered representation rather than six isolated topics. Endorsements supplied visible legitimacy; experience and achievements supplied competence; service programs supplied social responsiveness; implementation language supplied preparedness; cultural references supplied symbolic proximity; and campaign events supplied public visibility. Their combination created a coherent candidate image in the news corpus while preserving an analytical distinction between textual representation, campaign-originated claims, and unmeasured audience effects.

Table 6. Illustrative Evidence from the Online News Corpus

Frame	Illustrative Article (Outlet and Date)	Paraphrased Textual Evidence	Editorial Framing Operation
Public support and legitimacy	“Merakyat, Duet Ansar-Nyanyang Terus Didukung Warga Batam Pimpin Kepri” - Batam Pos, November 15, 2024	Closeness to ordinary people and continuing citizen support were foregrounded as validation.	Headline emphasis and supportive-source selection
Credibility and competence	“Pasangan Unggulan, Ansar-Nyanyang Mampu Membawa Kepri Lebih Berprestasi” - JPNN, October 17, 2024	Experience and expected regional achievement were used to authorize competence.	Evaluative headline and future-oriented narrative
Welfare and inclusive development	“Desa-desa Kini Ada Listrik Berkat Program Kepri Terang...” - JPNN, October 9, 2024	Electricity access was connected to welfare improvement and resident support.	Problem-program-validation sequence
Commitment and implementation readiness	“Ansar ke Warga Batam: 3 Tahun Menjabat, Alhamdulillah Banyak yang Terealisasi” - Harian Kepri, October 6, 2024	Previously realized programs were presented as evidence that future commitments were implementable.	Retrospective achievement used as a future warrant
Identity, culture, and political values	“Lembaga Laskar Melayu Bersatu Solid Memenangkan Ansar-Nyanyang...” - JPNN, October 13, 2024	A Malay cultural organization positioned the pair within regional identity and values.	Cultural validator and symbolic proximity
Popularity and public mediation	“Hari Akhir Kampanye, Ansar-Nyanyang Ajak Pendukung di Batam Pilih Nomor 1” - Harian Kepri, November 23, 2024	The final campaign gathering and ballot-number call displayed visibility and mobilization.	Event selection and mediated momentum

Source: Author analysis of the cited online news articles.

Narrative Construction of Candidate Image and Electoral Legitimacy

Narrative analysis revealed a recurring campaign storyline that was more structured than a summary of themes. Many reports opened with a public need, campaign event, achievement claim, or endorsement; introduced an authoritative validator such as a community leader, organization, resident, or public figure; connected that validation to a candidate quality, program, or prior office; and closed with an anticipated future of continuity, improved welfare, or electoral support. This plot converted discrete campaign occurrences into stories about why the pair appeared suitable to govern.

Actor positioning was central to the plot. Ansar Ahmad and Nyanyang Haris Pratamura were generally constructed as protagonists who possessed experience, delivered programs, listened to communities, or represented regional values. Endorsers functioned as supporting actors and validators, while citizens were positioned as beneficiaries, witnesses, or supporters. The opposing pair was often absent from favorable reports, so legitimacy was accumulated through supportive voices rather than developed through direct policy comparison. This absence is analytically important because it narrowed the conflict structure of the stories.

Problem definition followed several recurrent forms. Welfare stories identified electricity access, service inequality, education, health, or the needs of vulnerable groups as conditions requiring response. The candidate pair or a named program then occupied the solution position, and continuity became the anticipated resolution. Credibility stories defined uncertainty about leadership capacity as the implicit problem, answered it with incumbency, legislative experience,

or achievement claims, and projected competence into the next governing period. The plot therefore linked present needs and past performance to a promised future.

Moral and administrative evaluation supplied direction to these plots. Terms translated in the coding matrix as “tested,” “leading,” “pro-people,” “close to the community,” “realized,” and “committed” did more than describe events; they assigned reliability, empathy, and worthiness. In the JPNN electricity article, a service program and supportive testimony jointly evaluated the candidate as responsive. In the Batam Pos endorsement article, “merakyat” placed moral closeness at the center of the headline. Such vocabulary converted quoted claims into broader narrative judgments when editorial placement made them prominent.

Identity stories used a different configuration. Malay culture, local belonging, religion, manners, and organizational support were linked to the candidates’ symbolic fit with Kepulauan Riau. Cultural organizations and local figures acted as custodians who authenticated belonging, while popularity stories added scenes of crowds, enthusiasm, and visible campaign events. The final-campaign report supplied a closing mobilization scene, but the analysis treats this as mediated visibility rather than proof of electorate-wide momentum or voter intention.

Across the corpus, these narrative devices connected candidate qualities to regional aspirations and produced an image that was experienced, socially supported, welfare-oriented, programmatically prepared, culturally familiar, and publicly visible. The evidence supports a claim about image construction within online news texts. It does not show that every reader encountered, believed, or acted on the narratives, and it does not establish that the stories determined the final vote totals.

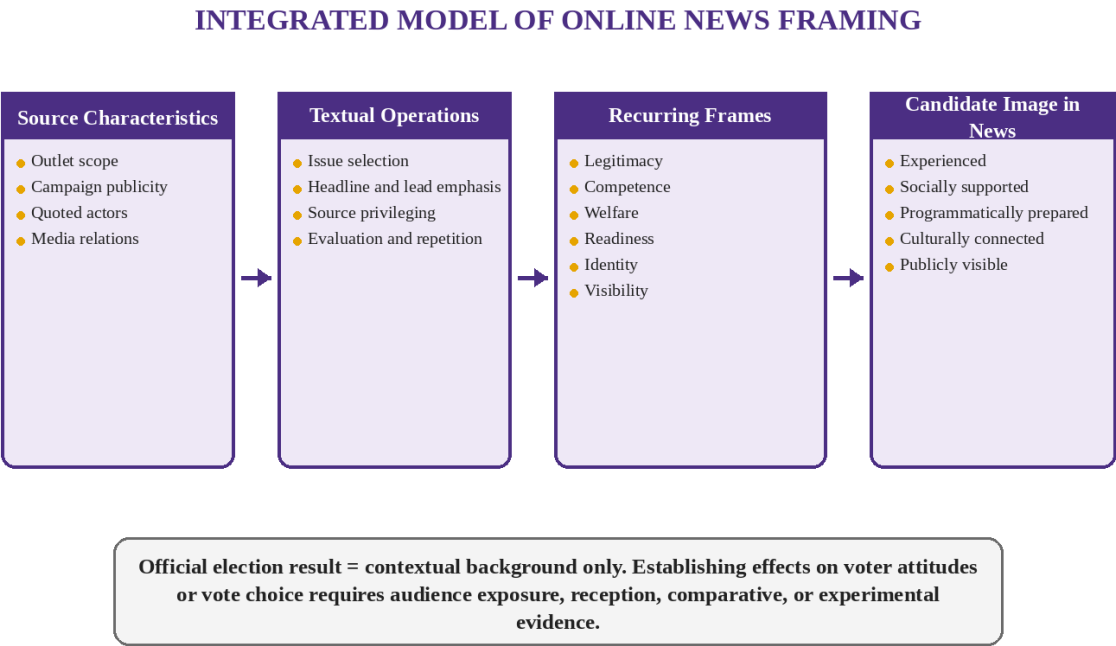
Online News Framing and Candidate Image Construction

The findings demonstrate how online news framing operated within the bounded corpus. Outlets selected particular events, privileged specific speakers, emphasized favorable evaluations, and repeated recognizable associations between the candidates and support, competence, welfare, readiness, identity, or visibility. These operations made certain interpretations more available in the texts, but the study does not infer how frequently citizens encountered the reports or how readers responded (Entman 2007; Druckman 2001).

This distinction also clarifies the meaning of digital political communication in the article. Online news is digitally accessible and circulates through networked environments, yet its textual form is more editorially structured than interactive platform communication. The dataset therefore captures mediated representation produced by journalists, outlets, quoted actors, and campaign-media relations. Some favorable stories may reproduce prepared publicity; framing analysis adds value by showing when source-originated claims were elevated through headline selection, lead placement, validation, evaluative wording, or repetition.

The six frames were mutually reinforcing at the textual level. Support supplied legitimacy, experience supplied competence, programs supplied social responsiveness, implementation language supplied preparedness, identity supplied cultural proximity, and campaign events supplied public visibility. Repetition can stabilize such associations in news discourse, but effects remain conditional on exposure, trust, competing frames, and audience interpretation (Lecheler et al. 2015; Amsalem and Zoizner 2022; Walter and Ophir 2021). Figure 4 therefore ends with candidate image in news rather than an electoral outcome.

Figure 4. Integrated Interpretive Model of Online News Framing and Candidate Image Construction



The model explains patterned representation in texts, not measured persuasion or electoral causation.

Source: Author’s synthesis, 2026. Note: The model explains textual representation, not measured effects on voting behavior.

Kepulauan Riau’s archipelagic context helps explain why local reports repeatedly connected administrative performance with proximity, service access, cultural belonging, and district-level endorsement. Local outlets could name communities, organizations, and programs in ways that broader national coverage generally could not. This contextual detail strengthened the coherence of the candidate image within the corpus, while the small national share indicates that the framing pattern was principally regional rather than a prominent national political narrative.

The findings also raise a democratic concern. Online news can broaden access to campaign events, programs, and endorsements, but a corpus dominated by favorable narratives may narrow comparison when rival perspectives, counter-evidence, or independent program evaluation are scarce. The study does not measure balance at the outlet level or determine whether any outlet was partisan. It instead makes visible which voices, claims, and evaluations were repeatedly privileged, providing a basis for future comparative analysis of supportive, critical, and opponent-focused coverage (Chong and Druckman 2007; Van Aelst et al. 2017).

Overall, source characteristics, issue selection, quoted actors, evaluative language, repetition, and narrative sequencing combined to construct a favorable representation of Ansar-Nyanyang. The official result remains contextual background. Establishing a causal relationship with vote choice would require exposure measures, audience data, a systematic comparison with the opposing pair, counterfactual evidence, or an experimental or longitudinal design beyond this study.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that online news coverage constructed a favorable image of Ansar Ahmad and Nyanyang Haris Pratamura during the official campaign period of the 2024 Kepulauan Riau gubernatorial election. Analysis of 93 unique articles identified six recurring frames: public support and legitimacy; credibility and competence; welfare and inclusive development; commitment and implementation readiness; identity, culture, and political values; and popularity and public mediation. These frames represented the pair as experienced, socially supported, programmatically prepared, culturally connected, and publicly visible.

Local outlets supplied most retrieved records and the most context-specific accounts of community endorsements, development programs, cultural organizations, and campaign events. Through headline and lead emphasis, source selection, evaluative language, and recurring storylines, the reports connected administrative claims with social and cultural proximity. The findings concern mediated representation in online news; they do not show that all voters encountered or accepted the frames, and favorable articles may partly reflect campaign publicity or media relations.

The article contributes a bounded and reproducible account of local online-news framing in an Indonesian archipelagic election. It does not establish that coverage changed voter preferences or caused the official result. Future research should compare supportive and critical coverage of both candidate pairs, distinguish journalist-produced reporting from campaign-supplied material, examine social media and campaign-owned communication separately, and use audience surveys, experiments, interviews, or digital-trace data to test exposure, reception, and electoral effects.

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