

The Use of Verbal Violence Metaphors Toward Indonesian Female Politicians on X Social Media

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the use of verbal violence metaphors on X social media (formerly Twitter) toward three Indonesian female politicians. As a social media that provides an accessible medium of expression, X is often used to perpetrate verbal violence using metaphorical devices. The data were collected from online comments on the X accounts @detikcom, @kompascom, and @KompasTV. The results showed that the verbal violence metaphor was used to insult or demean female politicians. The verbal violence metaphor toward female politicians consisted of metaphors for the domains of animals, metaphysical creatures, and physical objects. These metaphors were intended to deny human uniqueness and human nature as a form of X users' anger and disgust toward female politicians. The metaphor of verbal violence against female politicians was intentional because female politicians are considered to be violating existing cultural boundaries or norms, as Indonesian culture is still steeped in patriarchal ideas.

Keywords: Metaphor, verbal violence, female politicians, political discourse, X.

1. Introduction

Indonesia's political landscape is still generally dominated by men. In fact, since the era of Soeharto, the Indonesian President who led the longest in the New Order era, the involvement and role of women in politics have been relatively low. Women's involvement rates increased from 8.8% in 1999 to 11.8% in 2004, further rising to 17.9% in 2009. However, in 2014, the rate slightly decreased to 17.3%. By 2019, the participation rate reached 20.9% (Aspinall and Berenschot 2019). The increase in women's participation in politics in Indonesia cannot be separated from Law No. 12 of 2003 on the General Election of Members of the People's Representative Council, Regional Representative Council and Regional People's Representative Council, Article 65 paragraph 1, which states that the minimum requirement for women's participation is 30 percent. This law is a new impetus for women's participation in legislative elections because this law requires political parties to provide a 30 percent quota for women as legislative candidates (Siregar 2005). Since then, women's participation in Indonesian politics has increased.

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While the level of women's involvement in politics is on the rise, it is important to acknowledge that they still face significant challenges. Female politicians experience various kinds of violence when they enter the political world, ranging from physical violence to psychological violence. Recent studies reveal that female politicians in countries such as the United States (Hunt, Evershed, and Liu 2016), Japan (Fuchs and Schäfer 2021), India (Vincent and Kumari 2023), Sri Lanka (Bjarnegård, Håkansson, and Zetterberg 2022), and Chile (Silva-Paredes and Ibarra Herrera 2022) are often targets of violence and verbal harassment. Violence toward female politicians also occurs in Indonesia (Aspinall et al. 2021). The violence is manifested through degrading images and sexist language that includes strategies such as sexual objectification, symbolic destruction, and the use of extremely negative gendered language (Krook and Restrepo-Sanín 2020). This violence is perpetrated to delegitimize women for their continued participation in electoral politics.

Conversely, social media is increasingly being used for the exchange of political discourse. It is customary for politicians to utilize social media platforms as a means of engaging with the public and endorsing political social movements (Kuperberg 2021). The results of Al-Momani's research (2016) show that there has been a change in media discourse in Jordanian political advertising since 2011. This change is in the form of more popular use of social media which is used to criticize the Jordanian government, especially after the Arab Spring. Among the social media that are often used to spread political discourse is X (formerly Twitter). Politicians often use X to share their personal lives, emotions, as well as their competencies, programs, activities, and political thoughts (Kruikemeier 2014). Moreover, these politicians are also often discussed on X. In fact, apart from sharing news via websites, mass media also share news via their X accounts. Sharing news on X is a favorable option due to the expedited accessibility and reader engagement with the disseminated information.

Currently, X has become a prevalent popular social media platform in Indonesia. Based on the Statista report, Indonesia is ranked as the fifth country with the highest number of X users with 18.45 million users (Statista 2022). This large number of X users indicates that X is beneficial for better understanding the opinions, feelings, and emotions of other people (Melendres and Barea 2019), including understanding the verbal expressions used on X. Unlike other social networking sites, the reach of posts on X does not have to be limited to certain groups, for example having to be friends or follow an account; in contrast, messages posted on X are public so they can be found by visitors tracking posts on X. Thus, any user can create public posts to start discussions, participate in debates, and follow other people's communications (Bruns and Stieglitz 2012).

The high percentage of X users leads to a high possibility of verbal violence on the platform, as it is used as a medium to release all forms of emotional outbursts and express anger in the form of sarcasm and insults toward other people. Moreover, X users feel free to express any opinion, even extreme ones, under the protection of anonymity, without fear of criticism or even exclusion from the online community (Fuchs and Schäfer 2021). In the case of news shared by mass media on their Twitter accounts, X users are free to post comments on the content of the news, including providing comments on political news even giving hate speech against the politicians in the news.

Because news about politicians is shared on X, comments about them are also not free from verbal violence. Apart from the fact that X is an accessible channel to use for verbal violence, verbal violence against politicians is also suspected to occur because politicians are unable to present good political figures to citizens/netizens. As representatives of the people, politicians are expected to have good competence, integrity, personality, attitude, and leadership (Aichholzer and Willmann, 2020; Valgarðsson et al., 2021). The absence of these qualities will cause people to feel disappointed and may even lead to public anger against politics and politicians (Stapleton and Dawkins 2022). This anger manifests itself in verbal behavior, including verbal violence. Verbal violence against politicians is aimed at beating or even massively overthrowing political opponents (Agustina et al. 2020). Verbal violence, particularly when it comes to female politicians, is linked not only to their political role but also to their gender. Consequently, female politicians face criticism not only for their political abilities but also for their gender.

Verbal violence can take various forms, one of which is using metaphors. As stated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphor is a linguistic expression used to express something abstract with something concrete. Because of that, metaphors are often used in everyday life and have become part of the human thinking system. For example, we often use the expressions *the idea didn't come out* or *getting the idea* to describe an abstract idea with a concrete physical object. Thus, it can be said that our understanding of the concept of IDEAS is based on PHYSICAL OBJECTS.

Metaphors have the ability to mold one's understanding of the world and might potentially impact one's behavior. For this reason, metaphors are sometimes used to deny someone's human qualities and are deliberately used as an expression of hatred toward someone (Pražmo 2020). Such metaphors are often realized by using the concepts of animals, inanimate objects and plants to deny a person's human qualities. This type of metaphor is called a dehumanizing metaphor (Musolff 2017; Usman and Yusuf 2020).

A study examining the use of verbal violence metaphors against politicians was conducted by Cassese (2018), which showed that netizens use the monster metaphor or monstrosity as a metaphor against two United States politicians, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. Donald Trump is metaphorized as a dangerous and unpredictable monster. Moreover, Trump is also metaphorized as a dangerous and uncontrollable genie. Meanwhile, Clinton is metaphorized as a witch. The use of the word "witch" as a metaphor against Clinton implies that Clinton is a woman who deviates from the social norms of what it means to be a "good woman". Witches are also considered unorthodox, subversive, and potentially threatening to society. Thus, the use of the monster metaphor against Clinton cannot be separated from the gender narrative that views women as hideous and condemns women who do not conform to gender norms. The use of the monster narrative associated with gender against Clinton is not surprising, considering that Clinton was the first female candidate to run in the U.S. presidential election, so Clinton was considered to violate existing norms and customs.

The production of metaphors of verbal violence against politicians cannot be separated from the open nature of social media, which means that anyone can say anything. Furthermore, the availability of anonymous features or pseudonyms on social media and the absence of face-to-face interaction fosters a

more uninhibited form of communication. As a result, the norms of etiquette in communication become indistinct or even nonexistent (Abdel-Raheem 2022). This is one of the causes of the use of verbal violence metaphors on social media.

Megarry (2014) explains that women are more likely to be targets of verbal violence and gender-biased harassment (as opposed to gender-neutral slurs). Megarry also found that harassment directed at women on social media is often related to their physical appearance rather than their capabilities. Therefore, verbal violence directed at women, whether using metaphors or not, should be considered online harassment because its main goal is to silence women in patriarchal-dominated online communities (Megarry 2014).

Given the lack of studies on verbal violence metaphors, especially verbal violence metaphors against female politicians, this study seeks to reveal the use of verbal violence metaphors as a form of misogyny against Indonesian female politicians. To achieve this goal, we used data obtained from X because X is a semi-private and semi-public space, which makes it possible for politicians to be attacked using metaphors as a form of verbal violence. In addition, the freedom to express opinions on X allows for the collection of rich data. The open nature of X for data collection was also a consideration when choosing it as the site for this research. Thus, the research question of this research is how verbal violence metaphor against female politicians in X is conceptualized?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition of Verbal Violence Metaphors

Verbal violence comes in many forms. Verbal violence can be defined as the use of language and other forms of verbal communication that cause mental stress (Neuhart and Carney 2020:1). It can include the use of profanity and vulgarity or other emotionally charged communication directed at another person. Verbal violence can also take the form of shouting, screaming, and cursing, which can cause harm because it is done to embarrass, humiliate, and intimidate the person speaking (Lee and Lincoln 2017). In addition, verbal violence can take the form of bullying, which is emotional intimidation perpetrated by someone who is stronger or in a position of authority over the victim.

Verbal violence is all forms of speech (words, sentences, metaphors, turns of speech, etc.) that represent the meaning of neglect, rejection, belittlement, judgment, threats, and outbursts of anger toward the speaker, so that causes a state of dislike (psychological disturbance to the speaker) (Eriyanti 2011). This is because verbal violence can cause psychological wounds and mental anguish. Verbal violence is one of the most common forms of emotional abuse (Jeong et al. 2015).

Based on the explanation given by Eriyanti (2011) above, it can be seen that one of the tools of verbal violence is metaphor. In simple terms, this metaphor can be called a metaphor of verbal violence. Metaphors of verbal violence are all forms of language used to indirectly deny human characteristics, ridicule, reject, threaten, scold, doubt, or judge by using metaphors of other entities. In other words, the metaphor of verbal violence is a metaphor used to undermine human dignity. In this instance, the

metaphor is employed more extensively, encompassing not just the negation of someone's human attributes but also the act of ridiculing, reprimanding, or passing judgment on them.

The metaphor of verbal violence is different from the dehumanizing metaphor. The dehumanizing metaphor is narrower because it focuses only on metaphors aimed at denying human nature. Verbal violence metaphors are metaphors used to ignore, reject, belittle, degrade, insult, threaten, or scold. Thus, they are more general, but also include the dehumanizing metaphor.

Verbal violence metaphors are one of the most common manipulation techniques used to negatively influence readers' perceptions of a specific group of people. This includes the use of dehumanizing metaphors. Ironically, metaphors of verbal violence that use linguistic representations to degrade a person or group of people are ubiquitous in society in general. They use various kinds of metaphors, both those that do not aim to offend anyone directly, and those that use aggressive and deliberately offensive metaphors, which are then called hate speech (Bastian and Haslam 2011; Townsend 2014). Therefore, the metaphor of verbal violence becomes hate speech to some extent.

A study by Usman and Yusuf (2020) showed that the dehumanizing metaphor describes a person's behavior, which is generally related to someone's corrupt behavior. The results of the study by Usman and Yusuf showed that dehumanizing metaphors are used without reference to a specific gender and only a few are gender-based. This means that the dehumanizing metaphor can be directed at people of any gender. The dehumanizing metaphor is often used with animals, inanimate objects, and plants as the source domain.

Metaphors with animal sources were also used in debates about immigrants in England. The findings of Mussolf showed that the animal metaphor used to dehumanize immigrants is the PARASITE metaphor and metaphors that have the same domain of meaning, such as exploiters and leech (Musolff 2017). These metaphors are deliberately used along with the terminology of "disgusting and dangerous organisms" to denigrate immigrants and denounce them (Mussolf 2017, 50) as part of the national society "worthy" of censure and humiliation. In other words, these metaphors are used indirectly to commit xenophobia against immigrant groups in England.

2.2 *Metaphors in Political Discourse*

The use of metaphor in political discourse has a long history. However, it was not until the 1980s that the use of metaphor in political discourse came into the spotlight (Imani 2021). This political discourse uses metaphors to frame socio-political issues. The main goal of political discourse is persuasion, which cannot be achieved unless the audience sees the picture of the world from the perspective determined by politicians. Studies show that exposure to framing metaphors changes the audiences' attitudes toward the target issues and influences their judgments (Thibodeau and Boroditsky 2011). For example, the *Holy War* metaphor in Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1933 inaugural address was considered an effective strategy to "unify the audience" and "rehearse shared values" among the audience (Daughton 1993, 429).

The metaphorical expression *war* is one of the most popular and effective metaphorical domains in political discourse used to promote public cooperation and unity. Charteris-Black (2004) provided a

comprehensive analysis of the *war* metaphor compared to the sports metaphor. The word "war" implies control of territory. Success requires physical and mental strength, which requires extensive training. Moreover, *war* is a struggle for survival. Thus, the main ideological stance behind the war metaphor is the importance of unity and cooperation among group members to achieve success or survival. The *war* metaphor conveys high emotions, especially fear and aggressiveness, which then persuades a high level of audience participation to achieve a goal (Steinert 2003). Furthermore, Steinert (2003, 266) mentions that *war* is "the ultimate populist moment, the perfect situation to gather as many people as possible, preferably the entire nation, to work for a common goal, thereby causing us to forget petty differences and even opposing interests".

Wei (2001) took a strong position on the importance of metaphors used in campaign rhetoric to express thoughts and influence ideas in Taiwan. He obtained data for the study from newspaper coverage and websites of Taiwan's 1997 elections. The researcher used all of these sources to interpret the interactions between voters, readers, and campaigners. Wei (2001) further argued that discussions of Taiwanese politics are inherently and inevitably metaphorical. The use of a series of metaphors, such as *marriage*, *show business*, *war*, *weather*, and *financial transactions* was found in news coverage of Taiwanese political discourse. These metaphors were used to emphasize various aspects of Taiwan's elections. Additionally, the 1996 presidential and vice-presidential candidates used *war*, *revenge*, and *journeys of spiritual awakening* to promote their visibility and spread political ideals and political ideologies.

Taiwo (2010) studied metaphors in Nigerian political discourse. The study combined methods of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with Cognitive Linguistics derived from Lakoff and Johnson (1980) to discuss metaphorical expressions found in the data. Taiwo (2010) focused mainly on metaphor identification and how discourses conceptually map source and target domains in their metaphorical expressions. Guided by the conceptual metaphor theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), he identified three target domains as sources of conceptual metaphors in his data: nation, politician, and politics. In his work, he stated that the NATION was conceptualized as a FAMILY and as a PERSON. He also identified a conceptual mapping of POLITICS AS COMBAT and POLITICS AS JOURNEY. There was also a conceptual mapping of POLITICS AS DEVELOPMENT. Taiwo (2010) further argued that metaphors help to shape the structure of political categorization and argumentation. For example, conceptual metaphors such as "POLITICS IS A GAME" shape our perceptions of politics. He further stated that Nigerian politicians use the principle of target-domain mapping to achieve their persuasive and rhetorical goals in political discourse. The metaphor has been used either negatively or positively. The goal of politicians is not primarily to present facts, but to be persuasive.

Kalmoe (2014) examined the influence of the use of violent metaphors on voter polarization. The results of the study by Kalmoe showed that using violent metaphors increases polarization among aggressive partisans. Aggressive partisans are more likely to take more extreme positions on political issues when they are exposed to violent rhetoric. In contrast, less aggressive partisans tend to compromise their differences and avoid aggressive stances to avoid conflict. People with low aggression often find

violent content unpleasant and anxiety-provoking. These findings provide evidence that violent metaphors differentially affect the conflict perceptions and emotions of individuals with high and low aggression traits.

3. Methods and Procedures

3.1 Approach and Materials

There are two approaches to identifying metaphors in discourse: top-down and bottom-up (Krennmayr 2011). The top-down approach is conducted by starting from the existing conceptual metaphor and then matching the existing conceptual metaphor with the linguistic expressions in the discourse that are identified as conceptual metaphors. The bottom-up approach is conducted by reading the discourse under study, identifying the linguistic expressions identified as metaphors, and then identifying the source domain and target domain for the linguistic expressions identified as metaphors. Based on this explanation, this research was conducted using a bottom-up approach, which involved reading the entire data source and then identifying linguistic expressions identified as metaphors.

The data for this research is in the form of metaphors found in comments on X toward three Indonesian female politicians: Megawati Soekarnoputri, Puan Maharani, and Tri Rismaharini. The three female politicians were selected based on their popularity on social media. At the end of 2021 and 2022, the Indonesia Indicator agency has released their survey result on the most popular politicians on social media in 2021. This popularity indicator is based on the number of reports, mentions, or discussion of the politicians' names on social media. The release presents the names of the most popular figures on social media. The three politicians mentioned above are the most popular female politicians on social media in 2022.

This research data was obtained from the comments regarding three female politicians on the official accounts of prominent Indonesian national mass media, namely @detikcom, @kompas.com, and @KompasTv. The three newspaper accounts are newspapers with quite high followers on X: @detik.com followers are 31.3 million, @kompas.com followers are 8.5 million, @KompasTV followers are 5.2 million. These three newspapers also allow X users to provide comments on their posts so that taking data from the comments columns of these three newspapers will produce abundant data for research. This is in line with Alshakhanbeh and Alghazo's view which states that social media is a rich source of data for research, including linguistic research (Alshakhanbeh and Alghazo 2022).

The data collection period was carried out from October 2022 to July 2023. The decision to gather data for the first time in October 2022 was based on the fact that it coincided with Anies Baswedan's declaration as a presidential contender, which led to a significant increase in the political discourse on X.

The data collection was done through the following steps. The first was to read the articles and comments in the mass media about the three selected politicians. The second was to select the three posts with the most comments for each selected politician. In the third step, comments on selected accounts and uploads were transcribed. After the comments were transcribed, the last step was to clean the transcript from links, images, emoticons, and other nonverbal expressions, since the research data was in the form

of verbal data. The fifth step, after the transcript was “cleaned”, I identified metaphors of verbal violence in the comment transcripts and then analyzed the metaphors found.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

This research was conducted on using verbal violence metaphors against politicians on X. The research data were analyzed by combining the MIP (metaphor identification procedure) technique, as proposed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007), with the critical metaphor analysis (CMA) work steps, as proposed by Charteris-Black (2004). The MIP was used to find metaphorical expressions of verbal violence against politicians on X. The CMA was used to identify the context and factors that cause the use of verbal violence metaphors against female politicians on X.

The critical metaphor analysis (CMA) framework posits that metaphors possess linguistic, pragmatic, and cognitive attributes. Therefore, it is insufficient to solely examine metaphors from their language or cognitive dimensions. The use or production of a metaphor in a given setting is accompanied by a pragmatic feature. This analysis not only reaches the stage of identifying the linguistic form of metaphor, but also analyzes the factors that cause the use of a metaphor in a discourse. Pragmatic aspects are essential to consider in metaphor analysis because recent cognitive metaphor studies often ignore aspects of the context in which a metaphor is created or used (Charteris-Black 2004).

The research procedures and data analysis in this study consisted of three stages: (1) identification; (2) interpretation; and (3) explanation. The identification stage was conducted by carefully reading text samples in the comment section of the selected news X accounts with the aim of identifying "candidate" metaphors from a randomly selected data corpus sample. Linguistic expressions identified as candidate metaphors were tabulated and used as keywords for metaphor analysis in the larger corpus, while linguistic expressions not identified as metaphors were not tabulated.

The metaphor identification procedure (MIP), which consists of four stages, was performed to determine whether a linguistic expression is a metaphor or not. First, the text was read to gain a general understanding of the meaning. Second, the lexical units of candidate metaphors in the text were determined. Third, for each candidate metaphor, the contextual meaning was assigned, recognized, and compared with the more basic contemporary meaning of the unit. Fourth, determining the overall metaphor in the large corpus as a whole.

The interpretation stage involved establishing a relationship between the metaphor and the cognitive and pragmatic factors that determine it. At this stage, the source and target domains for the metaphors found at the identification stage were analyzed. Also, at this stage, the relationship between the target domain and the source domain of a metaphor was examined by involving cognitive and pragmatic aspects. For example, the metaphors RAT and DOG addressed to female politicians are metaphors from the same source domain, namely ANIMALS.

The metaphor explanation stage involved identifying the agents in the production or use of the metaphor, as well as the function of the metaphor in expressing thoughts, the reason specific agents use certain metaphors for certain politicians, and the meaning of using certain metaphors against certain politicians. At this stage, the motivation for using metaphors can be identified, including ideology or

other social factors behind using certain metaphors. The choice of a particular metaphor is built into the reader's cognition, which contributes to the framing of the reader's perception of a particular issue (Yu 2020).

4. Findings and Discussion

Based on data analysis, 122 metaphors of verbal violence against female politicians were found. The number of verbal violence metaphors is described as follows.

Table 1: Metaphors of Verbal Violence against Female Politicians

No	Metaphor Domain	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Animal	61	50
2	Physical object	32	26
3	Metaphysical Creature	15	13
4	Others	14	11
Grand Total		122	100

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the most frequently found metaphors for verbal violence against politicians are metaphors in the animal domain, followed by the physical object domain, the metaphysical creature domain, and other domains. The other domains contain non-representative numbers of other domains. Therefore, in this article, other domains are not discussed further due to insufficient data.

4.1 Verbal Violence Metaphor from the Animal Domain

Animals are a source domain that is often used as material for perpetrating verbal violence. Animals are concrete entities familiar to humans, so animals are a source domain that is very suitable for conceptualizing more abstract ideas. The conceptualization of ideas from the target domain and the animals source domain is determined by the similarities between humans and animals. Politicians are conceptualized with animal based on the similarities in the characteristics or behaviors of politicians with those of animals. The use of metaphors of verbal violence in the animal domain toward female politicians is presented in the following data.

Table 2: The Data of Verbal Violence Metaphor from the Animal Domain

No	Data	Translation
1	@CreativeTmy @puanmaharani_ri mana suara tikus ini??	@CreativeTmy @puanmaharani_ri Any response from this rat ??
2	@Rustiawati12 Msh mending cm tikus aja, knp ga sekalian tikus idung nya ' pig '	@Rustiawati12 It's still a good thing [for her] to just be [compared to] a rat . Why was [she] not [compared to] a rat , but with a ' pig ' snout?
3	@patsamasta Terlalu bagus kl tikus ..harusnya yg lebih hina lg utk org yg kelakuannya menjijikkan	@patsamasta It's too good for [her to be compared to] a rat ... people whose behavior is disgusting should be [equated with something] more despicable [than rats].
4	@SinaSin02980281 Padahal bukan tikus ..tapi bipang	@SinaSin02980281 Actually, she's not a rat , but bipang (roasted pork)
5	@kamurandeng Bagus ada kemajuan dalam kritik, selanjutnya tinggal berbadan babi dan anjing	@kamurandeng It's good that progress has been made in criticizing [her]. Next, [create memes of] a pig and a dog [with her head for a head].
6	@srhgrca Cewe banteng emang	@srhgrca What a bull -like chick she is.

In the data, the metaphor of verbal violence in the animal domain was used against a female politician and chairperson of the Indonesian People's Representative Council, Puan Maharani. In data (1), the word "*rat*" was used as a metaphor, whereas in data (2) the word "*rat*" was used together with the words "pig snout". Based on data (3), X users said that the word "*rat*" was still too good to describe the female politician in question. In fact, she should be metaphorized as something more despicable than rats. In data (4), the female politician should not be metaphorized with a *rat*, but with another animal, which was *bipang* (*babi panggang*) or roasted pork, a typical dish from Kalimantan (Borneo). According to data (5), the female politician should be metaphorized with *pig* and *dog*. According to data (6), the female politician should be metaphorized with *bull*. From these data, the metaphorical conceptualization of verbal violence against female politicians was that FEMALE POLITICIANS ARE ANIMALS.

The conceptual metaphor implies that WOMEN ARE ANIMALS holds a prominent place in the representation of women across languages (Reali 2021). The animal imagery used to frame women is used to convey ideological values about women's behavior and beauty, which are generally negative. In many languages, the metaphor implying that WOMEN ARE ANIMALS has been used to portray women negatively.

The conceptualization of animal metaphors for humans, especially female politicians, is not based on physical similarities, for example, the physical form of monkeys resembling humans. The conceptualization of humans and animals is done by attributing unique human mental capacities, including consciousness, intention, and emotion, to animal entities (Waytz, Epley, and Cacioppo 2010). In other words, the metaphorical conceptualization of humans and animals is based on the similar characteristics between humans and animals.

The metaphor of *rat*, for instance, was employed to allude to female politicians not due to any physical connection between the female politician and the rat, but rather because of the shared characteristic attributed to both rats and politicians. When politicians are described as rats, the rats in question are sewer rats, not moles or white rats (Waśniewska 2019). Rats, especially gutter rats, are known as greedy, dangerous, and destructive pets. Their greedy, dangerous, and destructive nature is not overt, so the process of destruction is often unknown, but only the consequences of the damage is known later. Apart from this, rats are synonymous with animals that live in herds, leading to group exclusivity and neglect of groups outside of themselves.

These kinds of rat depictions are attributed to female politicians because the female politician who is the target of this metaphor is the Chair of the Indonesian People's Representative Council, and X users feel that the Indonesian People's Representative Council is a place where a lot of people's money is embezzled through corruption. Therefore, it is not surprising that the members of the Indonesian People's Representative Council are metaphorized as rats, which are synonymous with thieves. In fact, the existing evidence shows that there is not just one but more than one perpetrator of corruption among politicians, so the metaphor of politicians as rats is also synonymous with the nature of rats being in a pack. Thus, the conceptualization of female politicians as rats carries implications of criminality, greed and harm that are clandestine, organized and seemingly sudden.

Rats are also often thought of as dirty animals and carriers of disease. Therefore, the phrase "get rid of rats" is sometimes used. It implies that rats are dangerous animals whose existence must be eliminated because they are disease carriers and dirty animals. When this phrase is used, there is potential for it to gradually lead to the decline or destruction of the object symbolized as the rat. Regarding female politicians, the metaphorical use of the rat might symbolize the exclusion of women from the realm of politics.

Apart from *rats*, *pigs* are also used to conceptualize female politicians. In fact, in the Indonesian context, the metaphor of *bipang* (*babi panggang*) or roasted pork, a typical Kalimantan dish, was also used. In British culture, for example, pigs have a derogatory connotation because pigs are synonymous with obesity, filth, ugliness, and even promiscuity (Rodriguez 2009). In Chinese culture, the pig also has derogatory connotations (Ho 2022). Therefore, the use of the *pig* metaphor is intended to refer to the characteristics of pigs, such as being dirty, greedy, and careless. Pigs also represent immorality, selfishness, and bad behavior (Waśniewska 2019). In the data above, the female politician was metaphorized as a pig because the female politician in question was seen not only as stealing people's money, but also often not responding to people's demands, thus being considered to be as greedy and selfish as a pig.

In Indonesia, where the majority of the population are Muslims, pigs are also synonymous with animals that are *haram*, or proscribed by Islamic law, to consume or even approach. The conceptualization of female politicians as pigs implies that female politicians are dirty and unclean creatures. Thus, the use of the *pig* metaphor for female politicians is intended to refer to greedy, dirty, and unclean characteristics, all of which are hated in the Islamic religion in particular and in Indonesian culture in general.

Apart from this, the metaphor of *bipang* or *roasted pork* showed the increasing level of verbal violence used because the female politician was metaphorized not only as a pig, which is a living creature, but also as roasted pork, which is no longer a living creature. The use of this metaphor depicts the lowly and inferior image of female politicians because female politicians are placed in a lower position than sentient beings. In other words, the conceptualization is that FEMALE POLITICIANS ARE FOOD.

The female politician was also metaphorized as a *dog*. In general, dogs are seen as loyal and reliable animals (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). In Europe, dogs have positive connotations because of their intelligence and loyalty. However, in many cultures, including in Indonesian culture, dogs still have a negative connotation. In Chinese, dog is an insult (Li and Liu 2012). Dogs are also irrational animals that cannot control their desires. Dogs are sometimes not domesticated and live in large packs that pose a real threat to humans. In addition, dogs are aggressive animals that live and hunt in groups.

The use of the *dog* metaphor for female politicians refers to the nature of female politicians who are seen as unable to control their desires. Female politicians, who are part of politicians in general, are also compared to dogs who live in packs and are threatening to humans. Hence, the aforementioned data employs the dog metaphor to denigrate female politicians, highlighting their assertive disposition and implying their inability to restrain their impulses.

In addition to Puan Maharani, the metaphor of verbal violence was also used against Megawati Soekarnoputri, the mother of Puan Maharani, the chairperson of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan*/PDIP), and the former president of the Republic of Indonesia. As seen in the data (6), a metaphor of verbal violence in the animal domain was used by using the word "bull". In this case, the *bull* metaphor is ambivalent because the *bull* metaphor can have both positive and negative meanings. In the Indonesian context, bulls are animals that like to gather in herds, so a group of bulls also symbolizes strength and courage. On the other hand, bulls have a closed, aggressive nature, and for some cultures in Indonesia, bulls are wild animals. *Bulls* are also used to describe troublemakers and rough animals (Li and Liu 2012). Apart from this, bulls are physically large or fat animals.

Based on the characteristics of bulls, the attachment of the *bull* metaphor to Megawati Soekarnoputri also reflects an ambivalent nature. On the one hand, the bull metaphor portrays Megawati Soekarnoputri as a figure of strength and courage. On the other hand, Megawati Soekarnoputri is portrayed as a politician who is physically large or fat, fierce and aggressive. Some internet users do not like these negative traits, so the bull metaphor is used to satirize Megawati Soekarnoputri's negative traits. In other words, animal metaphors convey various meanings and feelings that are highly dependent on the context and reference target (Andrighetto et al. 2016).

Based on the research findings, it can be seen that animal metaphors are given based on the superiority that humans feel over animals. Mason (2014) explained that before the Agrarian Revolution, humans were used to living side by side with animals. However, during the Agrarian Revolution, there was a change in human food production from foraging to farming, so humans who initially lived side by side with animals then used animals as "tools" to help them farm. It locates humans above animals in terms of power, rights, and status in the chain of living creatures, where humans are defined as creatures who exhibit high levels of conscious behavior, shown by, among other things, having the ability of complex reasoning and character, while animals are defined as lower order creatures because their behavior is based on instinct, so that their actions are always motivated by their sensations and feelings, such as hunger and fear, with low self-control and judgment (Gray, Young, and Waytz 2012). Therefore, when humans exhibit inhuman behavior, such as lacking of self-control, being irrational, and being uncivilized, humans are conceptualized as animals.

Animal metaphors are used to denigrate a social group (Ho 2022) because the metaphors intend to deny human mental capacities and human uniqueness, such as emotionality, warmth, and cognitive flexibility. By denying uniquely human attributes in humans, they are explicitly or implicitly equated with animals and seen as childish, immature, rude, irrational, or mentally backward (Bastian and Haslam 2011). In other words, to use animal metaphors is to commit social exclusion against someone. Furthermore, it is worth noting that animal metaphors are exploited to socially exclude and polarize society, as they provide an excuse for "collective aggression and violence" (Andrighetto et al. 2016, 630).

4.2 Verbal Violence Metaphors of the Physical Object Domain

The results of our analysis showed that verbal violence metaphors, including those from the physical object domain, were primarily directed against controversial or more prominent female politicians. Therefore, derogatory metaphors were found directed toward female politicians. Through the conceptualization that FEMALE POLITICIANS ARE PHYSICAL OBJECTS, female politicians are equated with physical objects rather than with human beings. Below are examples of verbal violence metaphors from the physical object domain that emerged from the data collection process.

Table 3: The Data of Verbal Violence Metaphor from the Physical Object Domain

No	Data	Translation
7	@TaufikNoor Prett,, anti kritik... Udh jelas track record jelek di mata masyarakat, mau digimnain jg bobrok , malu2in nama soekarno... Demokrasi bisa Terima pendapat dari siapapun, jgn suka matiin mic,,,	@TaufikNoor Pfft. What a defiant attitude to have... It's clear that she has bad public image. No matter what, [she is] beyond repair , a disgrace to the name of Soekarno... In a democratic society, have respect for everyone's opinions! She shouldn't just turn off the microphone [of other members of the People's Representative Council who make interruptions]...
8	@barnadi Sepertinya semasa hidupnya ibu ini banyak yg menjilat jadi ya pede-nya offside.	@barnadi It seems that throughout her life, this lady has been sucked up to by a lot of people, so her confidence is over the top.
9	@99Dahlan Mungkin ditaruh didengkul....otnya	@99Dahlan Maybe she has her brain implanted in her knees...

In data, female politicians were metaphorized as physical objects through expressions such as “being beyond repair”, “being sucked up to”, and “having her brain implanted in her knees”. In data (7), female politicians were metaphorized as physical objects that can become *beyond repair*. The word *bobrok* (meaning *beyond repair*) means “being damaged” in Indonesian. The word “*bobrok*” is commonly used for objects, not people. However, according to data (7), the word “*bobrok*” was directed at female politicians. In other words, female politicians are likened to objects. In data (8), the Indonesian word “*menjilat*” was used. In the Indonesian context, it literally means ‘to lick’ or ‘to stick out one's tongue to taste something’, where “something” is usually an inanimate object or food, but metaphorically means “to suck up to someone”. The word *menjilat* was directed at female politicians, thus equating female politicians with physical objects (food or inanimate objects) that can be licked. Meanwhile, in data (9), female politicians were compared to physical objects whose parts can be moved. In this case, the part of the woman that was removed was her brain, which was implanted in her knees. In fact, parts of the human body cannot be moved. The metaphor of body parts that refer to female politicians implies that female politicians are physical objects.

Humans consider their uniqueness and superiority over other non-human creatures (Pražmo 2020). Other living creatures, such as animals and plants, are considered inferior to humans. Moreover, inanimate objects are even inferior in position to humans, animals, and plants. Therefore, the metaphor of female politicians as physical objects aims to denigrate female politicians as inferior to animals and

plants. The metaphor implying that WOMEN POLITICIANS ARE PHYSICAL OBJECTS is objectification.

The use of the metaphor implying that WOMEN POLITICIANS ARE PHYSICAL OBJECTS gives the implication that women are not living beings. Because they are not living beings, they are not entitled to any position in the hierarchy of living creatures (Pražmo 2020). Female politicians should also be treated as artificial organisms that do not deserve compassion, empathy, rights (not even animal rights), or even humane treatment. Women politicians transcend the realm of living organisms; and in other words, women politicians are no different from objects that can be moved, damaged, or thrown away.

The objectification of women is fundamentally a denial of human existence. Haslam (2006) proposed two dimensions of humanity that others may reject: *human uniqueness* and *human nature*. Human uniqueness suggests that humans are distinctly different from animals and possess refinement, decency, morality, and higher levels of cognition. The human nature dimension refers to attributes considered common and fundamental to humanity, such as emotionality, warmth, and cognitive flexibility. When the attributes of human uniqueness are denied to people, they are explicitly or implicitly compared to animals and seen as childlike, immature, rude, irrational, or retarded. When people are denied the attributes of human nature, they are explicitly or implicitly likened to objects or machines and seen as cold, stiff, inert, and lacking in emotion.

Objectification occurs when observers focus more on women's appearance rather than their intelligence or personality, and observers feel that women are a property that can be exchanged, used, or exploited (Tipler and Ruscher 2019). Objectification is basically a rejection of human nature in which human beings are seen to be less competent, less warm, and less moral. This objectification is meant to insult humans and places women in the lowest position, even below that of non-human organisms.

4.3 Verbal Violence Metaphor from the Metaphysical Creature Domain

X users used many metaphors for verbal violence directed at female politicians. In addition to the animal domain metaphor, another verbal violence metaphor used against female politicians was the metaphysical creature domain metaphor. The metaphysical creature domain metaphor, or the monster metaphor, refers to the denial of the human nature of politicians by calling them monsters. The monster is a moral judgment, or cultural category used in various domains (Cassese 2018). In religious terms, moral judgment is related to morality and morality is considered a unique characteristic of human nature (Bastian and Haslam 2011), so politicians, who are considered to have no morality, are metaphorized as metaphysical creatures who have no concern for moral aspects.

To date, metaphors of the metaphysical domain have often been ignored in the existing literature on metaphors in campaigns and elections (Cassese 2018), so not much previous research has discussed metaphors of the metaphysical domain in political discourse. However, this research, metaphors of the domain of metaphysical beings were found to be directed at female politicians. The following data is an example of metaphors of the domain of metaphysical beings directed at female politicians.

Table 4: The Data of Verbal Violence Metaphor from the Metaphysical Creature Domain

No	Data	Translation
10	@lenzapermadin Sombong sifat dari setan..brtti dia setan	@lenzapermadin Arrogance is the nature of the <i>shaitan</i> (unbelieving spirits in Islam)... which means she is a Shaitan .
11	@kadrun_cebong iblis betina muji diri nya sendiri	@kadrun_cebong The female <i>Iblis</i> (the Devil in Islamic tradition) praised herself
12	@ijan_dzakwan Jd inget sejarah terusirnya iblis dr surga karena	@ijan_dzakwan Reminds me of the narration of why Iblis was cast out of of heaven...
13	@su57_edid Nenek Lampir	@su57_edid Nenek Lampir (Literally: Old Hag Lampir)
14	@Mc_Gobed Duh penguasa Gunung Merapi (ver dongeng radio) ada-ada saja....	@Mc_Gobed Oh, what an absurd attitude of the ruler of Mount Merapi (referring to the folklore of <i>Nenek Lampir</i> , who was narrated in a popular radio drama as a mythical witch who ruled Mount Merapi).

In the data, female politicians are metaphorized as *Devils* for their arrogant nature. This metaphor was directed at Megawati Soekarnoputri, who praised herself excessively in her political speech, causing X users to think that Megawati was arrogant. This arrogant nature is associated with *Iblis* (the Devil) because in the religious beliefs of Islam, the religion that the majority of Indonesian people adhere to, the Devil is the most arrogant of all the creatures of God. In fact, the Devil was cast out of heaven because of his arrogance. In Islam, the Devil is also considered the most evil metaphysical creature. Thus, labeling a female politician the *Devil* can be said to be the highest form of demonization (Nartey 2019). Furthermore, Nartey stated that labeling female politicians as *Devils* shows that female politicians are arrogant and evil thereby destroying the moral order.

The metaphors of *Shaitan* and the *Devil* are also associated with their nature of being frightening and causing panic, fear, and worry. The metaphysical creature metaphor evokes strong emotions of fear in the listener (Nartey 2019), and as a result, the listener wants to take drastic measures against the root cause of fear. In other words, the use of *Shaitan* and *Devil* metaphors against female politicians also indirectly brings propaganda against female politicians, and even brings propaganda to eliminate female politicians because female politicians are seen as a source of terror.

Data (11) also shows that female politicians were metaphorized as *female Devils*. The use of the *Devil* metaphor to refer to female politicians is already pejorative. Moreover, calling female politicians "*betina*" further degrades them because in Indonesian, the word "*betina*", which literally means "female", is commonly used for animals, not humans. In this metaphor, the *female Devil* metaphor increasingly shows the denigration of women because women are compared to the Devil with all his bad qualities.

Aside from *Shaitan* and the *Devil* (and the *female Devil*), female politicians were also metaphorized as *Nenek Lampir* (data 10) or *Mak Lampir* (which literally means "Old Hag Lampir") and the *ruler of Mount Merapi* (data 11). The title "*ruler of Mount Merapi*" here refers to Mak Lampir, a character in the 1998s famous historical drama *Misteri Gunung Merapi* (literally, *Mystery of Mount Merapi*). In the

drama, Mak Lampir is portrayed as an old woman with a scary face and a frail old body, always holding a staff crowned with a human skull. She had supernatural powers that made her immortal. In Javanese culture, skulls symbolize evil. Therefore, Mak Lampir cannot be accepted as a hero in any culture in Indonesia (Habsari 2008), where Javanese are the largest ethnic group. Habsari also stated that Mak Lampir is also a representation of an evil witch. She worshiped Batari Durga and Batara Kala, a goddess and a god associated with, among other things, destruction. In the television drama, set in the Mataram Sultanate era, idolatry was apparently portrayed as contrary to Islamic values. She was positioned as an enemy of the kingdom who gained supernatural powers by making a "contract with the Devil". The most important thing to note is that Mak Lampir was a witch, a person, especially a woman, who is said to have supernatural powers, usually malevolent, implying that the word "witch" is gender-specific (Carrol 2019). When people talk about witches, the first thing that comes to mind is that witches are women who practice witchcraft, and this has become a stereotype.

The conceptualization of female politicians as Mak Lampir implies that female politicians are terrible creatures and do not fit into the social order. The use of gender-based metaphysical creature narratives is not surprising given the historic status of Megawati Soekarnoputri in Indonesian politics as Indonesia's first and only female president to date. This historical status positions Megawati Soekarnoputri as a woman who is considered unorthodox, subversive, and potentially threatening to society and, therefore, must be hunted down, exterminated, or humiliated (Cassese 2018). Similarly, Tri Rismaharini is metaphorized as the *ruler of Mount Merapi*, which also refers to *Mak Lampir*. Tri Rismaharini is seen as a female politician who does not conform to the social order because she dares to appear publicly with all her controversies. In many patriarchal cultures, women who dare to go against the social order are considered a threat to the male social order.

The metaphysical creature domain metaphor is a negative campaign used by various sources and utilized against various targets (Cassese 2018), including female politicians. The witch metaphor, for example, is often used by men against women because Puritan men had a deep suspicion of women as having potential and the ability to disrupt the social and moral order (Carrol 2019). Puritans historically portrayed witches as enemies, along with the Devil, and they attributed patriarchal judgment, hatred, and oppression to women (Blackmore and Pugh 2023). Similarly, in Indonesia, where the majority of the society still adheres to a patriarchal culture, the participation of women in the public sphere can be seen as a threat to the existing social order.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that metaphors of verbal violence toward female politicians can be categorized into three main categories: the domain of animals, physical objects, and metaphysical creatures. From these domains, there are various forms of metaphors which are new findings in this research, for example, the metaphors of *bulls*, *roasted pigs*, and *Nenek Lampir*. The findings of this research enrich the findings of previous research.

The metaphor of verbal violence committed toward women shows that X users have insulted and degraded female politicians in the form of animalizing or going beyond animalizing female politicians. The use of the animal domain metaphor shows that female politicians are equated with animals, and the use of the metaphors of the domains of metaphysical creatures and physical objects has actually placed female politicians as something hierarchically below living creatures. When metaphors from the animal domain are addressed to them, female politicians are seen as animals, even as something worse than animals, below rats, pigs, dogs, and bulls. Moreover, the use of the *bipang* (*babi panggang*) or *roasted pork* metaphor and the domain metaphor of metaphysical beings and physical objects shows that the use of verbal violence metaphors against female politicians even goes beyond animalization.

The metaphor of verbal violence toward politicians is used to show X users' anger and disgust toward female politicians. The use of the animal domain metaphor shows that female politicians have greedy and dirty qualities, just as animals do. The use of metaphysical creature domain metaphors shows that female politicians have evil qualities, such as the metaphysical creatures that are the source domain, for example, *Nenek Lampir*, the Devil, or *Shaitan*. Meanwhile, the use of the physical object domain metaphors shows that female politicians do not have human characteristics, so they are objectified.

The research results show that comparing female politicians with non-human organisms, namely animals, metaphysical creatures and physical objects, means eliminating the position and quality of female politicians as human beings. The use of metaphors of verbal violence is clearly aimed at degrading female politicians in carrying out their role as politicians. As a result, female politicians may lose their basic rights to be respected, shown compassion and empathy, and treated as human beings. Moreover, female politicians seem to be particularly vulnerable to the use of verbal violence metaphors by social media users. Verbal violence against female politicians can cause them to lose their opportunities to build their political careers. The use of verbal violence metaphors against them can also consciously or unconsciously destroy the positive self-image of female politicians.

While metaphors of verbal violence can be found in various languages, it is important to note that the frequent use of such metaphors to humiliate and belittle female politicians should not be normalized. Employing metaphors of verbal aggression toward female politicians will result in a range of insults, whether metaphorical or not, that may gradually be perceived as socially acceptable humor. Unquestionably, this type of communication is detrimental to a democratic society. There is a worry that the continuous and recurring verbal aggression on X could potentially influence the real world, making misogyny towards female politicians and women in general more acceptable and commonplace.

Metaphors have the power to shape perceptions of the world. In addition, metaphors can, to some extent, influence action and shift the normative boundaries of what can and cannot be said. The repeated and consistent use of metaphors has the potential to change and direct one's view of the world. Moreover, in Indonesian culture which more often uses indirect expressions in communication, the use of metaphors to delegitimize female politicians is often used. The result is behavior in which metaphors are used, consciously or unconsciously, as important instruments in the construction and reproduction of ideology and propaganda.

This research took female politicians as its subject. Therefore, it is also necessary to conduct research that examines the use of verbal violence metaphors against male politicians to compare whether verbal violence metaphors are also directed at them or not, and to determine the pattern of verbal violence metaphors against male politicians. In addition, this research is limited to only three Indonesian female politicians. Future research can expand the research subjects to more politicians.

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استخدام استعارات العنف اللفظي تجاه السياسيات الإندونيسيات على تويتر

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الملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى تحليل استخدام استعارات العنف اللفظي على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي X (تويتر سابقاً) تجاه ثلاث سياسيات إندونيسيات، باعتباره منفذاً لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يوفر وسيلة تعبير يسهل الوصول إليها، وغالباً ما يُستخدم X لارتكاب أعمال عنف لفظي باستخدام أدوات مجازية، وجمعت البيانات من التعليقات عبر الإنترنت على حسابات X @detikcom و @kompascom و KompasTV. وأظهرت النتائج أن استعارة العنف اللفظي تجاه السياسيات استخدمت لإهانة السياسيات أو تحقيرهن، وتتكون استعارة العنف اللفظي تجاه السياسيات من استعارات لمجالات الحيوانات والمخلوقات الميثافيزيقية والأشياء المادية، وكان الهدف من هذه الاستعارات إنكار التفرد البشري والطبيعة البشرية على أنه شكل من أشكال غضب مستخدمي X واشتملواهم تجاه السياسيات، وكان استعارة العنف اللفظي ضد السياسيات مقصوداً لأنه يُنظر إلى السياسيات على أنهن ينتهكن الحدود أو الأعراف الثقافية القائمة، حيث لا تزال الثقافة الإندونيسية غارقة في الثقافة الأبوية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستعارة، العنف اللفظي، السياسيات، الخطاب السياسي، تويتر.

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